



Players of Acme Laboratories pose with team officials after completing the formalities on the second day of the players' transfers in the Corporate Cricket League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Acme dominate Day Two

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Acme Laboratories stole the limelight as they roped in as many as eight top players on the second day of the players' transfer of the Corporate Cricket League (CCL) at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar and veteran all-rounder Mohammad Rafique have confirmed their services for the top corporate house while international paceman Hasibul Hossain, Monjurul Islam, Alamgir Kabir, batsmen Hannan Sarkar, Ehsanul Haque and all-rounder Manjarul

Islam Rana were the big signings, coming late in the afternoon.

Bashar and Rafique are expected to put pen to paper today -- the last day of the bourse.

Young batsmen Nasiruddin Faruq, Marshall Ayub and wicketkeepers Sahagir Hossain, Dhiman Ghosh and Lablu Rahman were the other players to have signed for Acme.

Debutant Startel also signed in some well-known faces from local cricket including Abahani batsman Imran Ahmed, left-arm spinner Ahsanullah Hasan and fast bowler Debabrata Paul.

Rajshahi all-rounder Farhad Hossain also confirmed his name for the little known team which is now, encouragingly, are shaping up to be a serious challenge for

other big corporate houses.

Interestingly, Chittagong Port Authority (CPA), one of six new houses to be included in this year's competition, included players unknown to the Dhaka scene. Only left-arm spinner Murad Khan plays Premier League in Dhaka but otherwise, almost all the players ply their trade in the port city.

This must be encouraging, though, for players based in Chittagong who now have two teams in CPA and MM Ispahani who also historically keep players mostly from Chittagong.

But it simply echoed how the charm of the CCL has gone down over the last couple of seasons.

The signings and the overall mood in and around the under-construction venue reflected a dull

picture, similar to the one seen on Friday.

Among the other teams, Partex roped in six players, mostly fast bowlers like Wasquruni Palash, Shiran Sharif and Nazmul Hossain Milon. They also confirmed the services of batsman Hasanuzzaman Rosel.

Under-19 paceman Dollar Mahmud completed his formalities for Bangladesh Biman.

In all, 52 players participated in the transfers with the maximum going to Acme and Chittagong Port Authority on the day.

Defending champion Beximco and MM Ispahani are expected to make their presence felt today while new entries Asia Pacific Blossom Hotel and Raju Fish Culture Limited are yet to enter the transfers' fray.

PHOTO: STAR

Costly carelessness

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh cricket once again got a Mashrafee scare when the country's premier fast bowler twisted his right ankle after falling awkwardly while coming down the stairs of his uncle's Mirpur residence on Friday.

The freakish injury of 22-year-old Mashrafee Bin Mortuza ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy in India next month was disclosed only after he limped off to the Mirpur National Stadium yesterday morning, where the Tigers were preparing for the second most important one-day tournament after the World Cup.

Team physio Paul Close after having a close look, however, relieved the scared captain and coach that his injury was not a nature of serious kind.

"I don't think there will be any problems for him to play in the Champions Trophy. The only concern is that his preparation for the competition could be significantly hampered as he is likely to miss at least the first of the two practice matches," said Close.

For Mashrafee, who married only a week ago, injury is nothing new. With both his knees already operated, Mashrafee's latest freakish injury not only twisted his ankle but also bruised his right elbow.

"I was coming down the stairs in the evening and suddenly the power was cut-off and I fell down. Immediately after the incident I went to a local clinic for an X-ray and the doctor assured me that there was no fractures and just a twisted the ankle. The elbow problem is not serious," said a dejected Mashrafee, who was able to walk, albeit gingerly.

Although Mashrafee's version of the accident was pretty simple, many feel that it could not have

occurred had his family members restrained him from embarking on the stupid venture of carrying 'two luggages' of his father's.

Mashrafee might have rejected the 'luggage' episode, but given the funny history of his youthful

exuberance that cost both his powerful knees, it is not unlikely for him to pick another injury if he continues to lead a careless life off the field.

While Mashrafee apparently escaped without major worry this

time, there was no such luck for his new-ball partner left-arm pacer Syed Rasel, who is set to pay the price of an unnecessary venture on bike after attending the wedding ceremony of Mashrafee in Narail last week.

Rasel also injured his right leg while embarking on a bike ride from Narail to Jhikargacha and his chances of making it to the Champions Trophy is bleak.

"It's really frustrating that both the injuries occurred off the field just two weeks ahead of the team's departure for India. Rasel's injury is a bit different. His foot was grazed in the accident and we have kept the affected area bandaged. The skin is still delicate and not strong enough. It will need time. Hopefully he will be able to put on shoes in about a week from now and then he can start training," said Close.

"It's painful at times because you can not look after a player when he is on his own. We work very hard to maintain ourselves when we are in a group but if an injury happens outside of that then there is little we can do. I think all the players should try to be a bit more conscious of their well being," said the aggrieved physio.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed also expressed his concern over Rasel's fitness before Bangladesh play their first match against Sri Lanka on October 7.

"I have talked with the physio. I think Mashrafee's injury is nothing serious. But we are really worried about the progress of Rasel," Faruque said.

"We are not thinking about their replacement right at the moment. We can think about that after observing their conditions in next two or three days," he said.

Meanwhile, the Tigers will play two day-night practice games on September 23 and 25 most likely at Bogra's Shaheed Chandu Stadium.



Bangladesh fast bowler Mashrafee Bin Mortuza has his right foot inside an ice-bucket at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium indoor facilities in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: TIGERCRIKET.COM



Did U Know?

The United States is the only country to defeat the USSR (former Soviet Union) twice in the Chess Olympiad.

What to WATCH

TEN Sports

Hockey World Cup Final
Australia v Germany
Live at 7:30 pm

ESPN

English Premier Football League
Chelsea v Liverpool
Live at 6:25 pm
Man United v Arsenal
Live at 8:55 pm

STAR Sports

South Africa v Zimbabwe
Second ODI
Live at 2:00 pm

Primera Liga
Real Madrid v Real Sociedad
Live at 12:55 am (Monday)



Brian Lara

(West Indies cricket captain)

"For a guy coming back after six months, it showed how much of a genius he is. We just had to watch him and appreciate him. It was a very special innings."

On Sachin Tendulkar after his unbeaten 141 against West Indies.

Rain robs Australia

Cricket

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

An on-fire Mitchell Johnson took four wickets in 12 balls before rain rescued India in their DLF Cup one-day match against Australia here Saturday, which was abandoned.

The contest had initially been reduced to 29 overs after rain caused a 90-minute delay. India was 16-0 after five overs in reply to Australia's 244 all out in 49.2 overs when the match was first interrupted.

When they resumed they needed another 154 to win off 24 overs, but it was never going to happen.

They threw away five wickets in the first three overs, four of them to Johnson, a lightning fast bowler touted as the next Brett Lee.

Rahul Dravid (2) was the first to go, trying to loft over cover but finding Damien Martyn instead.

Irfan Pathan was bowled first ball and in the next over Virender Sehwag was run-out for eight in a disastrous mix up with Sachin Tendulkar.

Sehwag cracked the ball through covers but it pulled up in the soggy outfield. The batsmen ran two and Sehwag set off for the third but Tendulkar wasn't interested, leaving his partner stranded.

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Two balls later and Tendulkar (12) joined Sehwag the pavilion, nicking a Johnson delivery to wicketkeeper Brad Haddin.

Johnson got his fourth minutes later when Yuvraj Singh edged to a jubilant Brad Hogg for 0 before more rain mercifully ended India's torment and the game was called off.

Johnson ended with 4-11 off four overs.

Before the rains came comeback kings Glenn McGrath and Tendulkar had been locked in a fascinating battle.

The match had been billed as a showdown between the pair, both back after lengthy breaks from the game, and McGrath made his intentions clear in his first ball to the master batsman.

He dug it in short and smashed Tendulkar on the helmet. His next ball was unplayable and the showdown was on before rain ended the party prematurely. McGrath didn't bowl again.

Earlier, all-rounder Shane Watson hit a career-best 79 and Michael Clarke helped himself to 64 in Australia's innings.

Watson rattled off 10 fours and two sixes for his highest one-day innings since making his limited overs debut against South Africa in 2002.

Appointment of manager stirs up trouble

SPORTS REPORTER

The selection of flight lieutenant (ret) Mohammed Harunoor Rashid Bhuiyan as the national team's operations manager last Thursday has created quite a stir and put the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) in a limbo.

The ex-serviceman is yet to receive his official letter of appointment, but allegations have already been raised against him in newspapers which have forced the BCB to check his background.

BCB president Ali Asghar declined to comment on the issue but the chief executive officer (CEO) of the board Mahmudur Rahman said that they would look into the issue before confirming him the job.

"We selected him (Harunoor Rashid) but we are yet to give him the appointment letter. We have taken note of the allegations raised in the media and that's why we will definitely try to find out the truth," said Rahman.

He also expressed his utter surprise like many others about the fact that Harunoor had already got the BCB's corporate cellphone connection although the board had only confirmed him verbally.

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Ds propel Proteas

Cricket

AFP, Bloemfontein

Jean-Paul Duminy staked his claim for a future in international cricket with a classy half-century in South Africa's five-wicket win over Zimbabwe at Springbok Park Friday.

South Africa were 33 for three in reply to underdog Zimbabwe's 201 for seven when Duminy joined Boeta Dippenaar, who was playing in his 100th one-day international in this the first of three one-day internationals.

The left-handed Duminy, who missed selection for next month's Champions Trophy in India, batted with style and confidence from the start of his innings while Dippenaar showed his experience in a fluent, solid innings.

Together they put on 121 for the fourth wicket before Duminy charged down the pitch to off-spinner Stuart Matsikenyeri and was stumped for 60, made off 70

balls.

Dippenaar went on to make 85 not out as South Africa won with 6.1 overs to spare.

There was no place for Duminy in South Africa's squad for the Champions Trophy, named last week to meet an International Cricket Council debut.

He was one of four men added for the series against Zimbabwe to cover for injured players, including regular captain Graeme Smith. It was his first international match in more than two years. He played five times in 2004 with a highest score of 22. South Africa had been expected to crush the young Zimbabwe team but Vusi Sibanda, who batted with increasing confidence after a shaky start, made a half-century to enable the tourists to post a respectable total.

Sibanda made 51 off 78 balls against accurate but largely unthreatening bowling.

Justice Chibabhaba (37) and Hamilton Masakadza (34) also

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BFF cancels transfers

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) bowed to the clubs' demands as it cancelled the players' transfers for the first-ever Professional Football League.

The BFF in its executive committee meeting yesterday took the decision to cancel the bourse which was to take place from October 1 and decided to form a committee to put forward recommendations about the whole matter.

"We cancelled the players' transfers and decided to form a committee involving BFF officials, club representatives, National Sports Council representatives and journalists to see whether it would be possible to hold the league this year or not," said BFF general secretary Anwarul Haque Helal.

The clubs last Tuesday accused that the federation lacked sincerity for staging the tournament and demanded the resignation of the tournament committee unless it withdrew the last date of transfers by September 15.

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