



HAALAND'S EIGHTH NOT ENOUGH FOR DORTMUND

An astonishing eighth goal in four appearances for teenage striking sensation Erling Braut Haaland couldn't help Borussia Dortmund into the German Cup quarterfinals after they were knocked out 3-2 at Werder Bremen on Tuesday. Haaland continued his incredible run of form since signing for the Bundesliga title chasers when he tapped home in the 67th minute to pull one back for the away side after Davie Selk and Leonardo Bittencourt had put Werder two ahead in the first half-an-hour. The strike means the 19-year-old has scored in each of his appearances for Dortmund despite only making one start and playing barely two matches' worth of football since his arrival in Germany.



--AFP



Abahani and Maziya players tussle for aerial possession during their AFC Cup preliminary round first leg match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The match ended in a 2-2 draw.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'Seemed like we were playing Rahmatganj'

SPORTS REPORTER



Abahani coach Mario Lemos said that he felt as if Abahani were playing against local club Rahmatganj MFS after a come-from-behind 2-2 draw against Maziya of Maldives in the home match of preliminary round-2 of AFC Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Last edition's zonal semifinalists Abahani frustrated the home crowd after putting up a below-par performance, especially compared to their performances from last season when they notched three wins and a draw.

"I expected a little bit better from Abahani today and I'm really disappointed with the way the boys played despite having nearly a month of training. I believe we can do better," said a frustrated Lemos, who guided Abahani in last AFC Cup too.

"I did not feel that the players were playing with enough energy which is really important to play a big match. It seemed like they were playing against Rahmatganj. If you don't have energy, you will get punished. It is a shame because I really focused on many things in training and tried to show the players it was a big match," said the Portuguese.

Replying to a query, Lemos said, "Abahani looked a little bit like playing 'away match'. I felt we were always waiting to see what will happen in the game. We did not take the responsibility, rather we waited to see what happens. The boys reacted after conceding goals and this is not how to play football. I don't know why they reacted like this," said Lemos.

The Portuguese coach was also disappointed with the way the forwards reacted in the attacking third as they missed some goal-scoring chances.

"If you don't play with intensity, you can't score goals. What happened in the match is that Jibon played Sunday and Sunday played another player. If you don't have intensity and speed, you can't beat two foreign central defenders in the match," said Lemos.

His counterpart Marjan Sekulovski was happy to have shared points, especially after having scored two away goals.

"Today we played a good game and scored two away goals though we had the opportunity to score three to four goals. We are satisfied with the result but our job is not done yet. We expect to finish our job in Male because our target is to play in the next round," said the Macedonian.

Abahani salvage a draw

SPORTS REPORTER



Last edition's zonal semifinalists Abahani failed to capitalise on home advantage in a 2-2 draw against Maziya of Maldives in the first-leg of the preliminary stage-2 of the AFC Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The six-time Bangladesh Premier League champions, who fought back from a goal down twice, will face an uphill task when they play away in Male on February 12 in their bid to qualify for playoff round, which will be held later this month.

Ahead of the match, Abahani coach Mario Lemos was full of confidence about a win against Maziya despite the fact that Bangladeshi clubs suffered six defeats against Maldivian clubs in the last three seasons. On the pitch, there was not much urgency from the Abahani players as it seemed like they were playing an away match.

However, a draw against the Maldivian club could be considered a good achievement for Abahani, who suffered four defeats against Maziya and New Radiant Club in 2017 and 2018 seasons of the AFC Cup.

Right from the beginning, Abahani seemed

very cautious about not conceding a goal and they hardly pressed the opponents, who however got enough space to build the game from behind and cashed in on a half-hearted Abahani performance to leave the field with a big advantage of two away goals.

Even though Abahani looked good in their own half with their exchange of passes, they lacked cohesion in the attacking third in the first half, with long-serving Sunday Chizoba and Kyrgyz midfielder Bernhard Edgar chasing their own shadows.

Abahani	2-2	Maziya
(Mailson 45+1, Sunday 80)		(Mahudhee 42, Cornelius 65)

Maziya's Grenadian forward Cornelius Ezekiel, however, showed his class with speedy runs and dribbles as Abahani were lucky enough not to suffer a home defeat.

The visitors came close to taking the lead in the 16th minute, with Cornelius dribbling past Saad Uddin and Mailson Veriato before taking a long-range attempt, but Abahani goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel kept it out.

On the half-hour mark, Abahani saw Sunday head a free-kick off Mamunul Islam to the post

while Mailson was denied by visitors' Afghan goalkeeper Ovays Azizi in the 40th minute. But two minutes later, Maziya took an unexpected lead when Ibrahim Mahudhee Hussain darted into the box from the right and chipped the ball into the net from a very difficult angle.

It was a wake-up call for Abahani, who started to press hard for the equaliser and Brazilian defender Mailson beat Azizi in the stoppage time of the first half with a powerful left-footer after chesting down a long ball from Raihan Hassan inside the box.

After resumption, Abahani looked a bit better but Maziya restored their lead in the 65th minute as Cornelius smashed home a rebound after Sohel had parried a shot from Hasan Niaz.

Abahani were denied an equaliser as Mohamed Irufaan made a goalline save on a shot from Kervens Belfort in the 73rd minute. However, the Sky Blues levelled the margin seven minutes later when Sunday placed home a forward-pass from Belfort, who had placed a long throw-in by Raihan inside the six-yard box. The goal salvaged Abahani a point and rescued them from a fifth straight defeat against a Maldivian outfit in the AFC Cup.

Messi fires back at Abidal

REUTERS, Barcelona



Lionel Messi criticised Barcelona sporting director Eric Abidal on Tuesday for saying many in the squad were not working hard under former coach Ernesto Valverde.

Abidal and president Josep Maria Bartomeu sacked Valverde in January, replacing the coach with Quique Setien.

Abidal, a former teammate of Messi, explained why Valverde was sacked despite the team being top of La Liga in an interview in Spanish newspaper Diario Sport.

"Many players weren't satisfied or working hard and there was also an internal communication problem," said Abidal.

"The relationship between the coach and the dressing room has always been good but there are things as an ex-player that I could smell. I told the club what I thought and we reached a decision (on Valverde)."

Messi, however, hit back at Abidal in an Instagram post, circling an image of the

sporting director's quote.

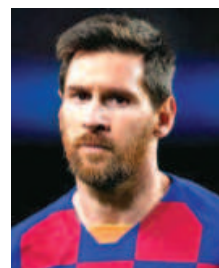
"Sincerely, I don't like to do these things but I think that people have to be responsible for their jobs and own their decisions," Messi wrote.

"The players (are responsible) for what happens on the pitch and we are the first to admit when we haven't been good. The heads of the sports department have to take their responsibilities too and above all own the decisions they make.

"Finally I think that when you talk about players, you have to give names because if not, it makes everyone dirty and gives air to things that are said which are not true."

Abidal and Messi played together at Barcelona between 2007 and 2013, with the French defender returning to the club after retirement to become sporting director in June 2018.

In his interview with Diario Sport, Abidal also said he thought Messi was happy at the club and a new contract for the Argentine talisman was currently being negotiated.



Eriksen felt like a 'black sheep' at Spurs

AFP, London

Christian Eriksen says his decision to run down his contract at Tottenham made him a "black sheep" at the Premier League club. The 27-year-old midfielder joined Inter Milan last month for a fee of around £17 million (\$22 million), ending his six-and-a-half year stay at Spurs.

"I did get the blame for a lot of stuff, for being the bad guy," he told BBC Sport. "I read I was the bad person in the changing room, that ever since I said I wanted to leave, it was no good me being there."

Eriksen said there was a sense of relief in starting a new chapter in Italy.

"England, for the last few years, was very hectic," he added. "After what I said in the summer, it was just about, 'When is he going to leave?'"

"Every game it was, 'Is he leaving? Is he not leaving?' Of course a lot of people were speaking about it.

"Even the fans you see on the street were like, 'Thank you, goodbye and good luck'. But I was still there. It was a bit weird. In my head and for my body, it is good that I am in a new place and I can start again."

The Dane said speculation over his future did not affect him but that he felt he played about 30 matches that seemed like "goodbye games".

"If you have a short contract, you will be the black sheep. Of course, I did the interview. I was very honest. I felt I had to be honest."

Liverpool youngsters see off Shrewsbury

AFP, London



Liverpool's youngest ever team proved coach Jurgen Klopp was right to rest his stars as they reached the FA Cup fifth round with a 1-0 win against third-tier Shrewsbury on Tuesday.

Klopp and his entire first team were all absent for the fourth round replay at Anfield as part of the club's winter break.

The Liverpool manager was criticised for disrespecting the FA Cup, but his youngsters proved up to the task and their mature display was rewarded when Ro-Shaun Williams headed the decisive own goal in the closing stages.

Liverpool will face Chelsea in the last 16 at Stamford Bridge on March 5 as they remain on course for a potential treble of the Premier League, Champions

League and FA Cup.

Klopp had turned over the responsibility of leading Liverpool to the club's under-23 coach Neil Critchley, who also took charge when the Reds played an under-strength side for their League Cup quarterfinal defeat at Aston Villa earlier this season.

This time, it was purely his decision to ignore the FA Cup, but it gave fans a glimpse of the next generation.

With an average age of 19 years and 102 days, it was Liverpool's youngest ever starting line-up in all competitions.

There were seven teenagers, including 16-year-old Harvey Elliott, while Pedro Chirivella was the oldest player in the team at 22.

Liverpool-born teenager Curtis Jones became the club's youngest captain at 19 years and five days.



Liverpool's young ones celebrate their winning goal against Shrewsbury Town in the fourth round of FA Cup at Anfield on Tuesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

বাংলাদেশ বেসরকারি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সমিতি
ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES OF BANGLADESH

On the occasion of the Birth Centennial Year Celebration of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB) organizes

ESSAY COMPETITION

As part of year-long celebration of the birth centennial of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB) has organized topic-based Essay Competition for school, college and university level students.

There are five topics of the Essay Competition:

1. Bangabandhu's Philosophy of Life and the Constitution of Bangladesh
2. Bangabandhu of the Oppressed: Path of Salvation of the Farmers and Laborers
3. Bangabandhu's Foreign Policy: Friendship with all
4. Bangabandhu's Education Policy: Things to do in Current Perspective
5. Bangabandhu of the Children and Adolescents

Rules of the Competition:

- The contestant must be the student of a university/college/school. A letter certified by the head of the university/college/school stating that 'The essay is written by the contestant' should be submitted with the essay.
- The contestant must submit computer-composed Bangla/English writing in maximum of 2000 words. A contestant can submit writing on maximum of two topics.
- All references from books and other sources must be cited at the end of the essay.
- Topic no. 5 is only for school students.
- A photo ID card must be attached with the essay.
- A hard copy of the essay must be sent to the address stated below, in addition, a soft copy to be submitted via email.

Terms of the Competition:

- The essay must be submitted within 15 March 2020 to the Office of 'Association of the Private Universities of Bangladesh'.
- All the essays will be evaluated by an expert committee and the decision of the committee will be considered as final.
- The selected essays will be published on the publications/memorial books of the Association.

Rewards and Honorarium:

- In each of the mentioned five topics, the committee will select 1st, 2nd and 3rd places.
- All the winners will be awarded with cash money, crest and certificate.

Address for Submission:

Convener
Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Birth Centennial Year Celebration Committee
Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB)
House no-65, Road no-17, Block-C, Banani, Dhaka-1213
Contact: 01729091134; Email: secretaryapub@gmail.com