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টেস্টসর বারবার নানা পরীক্ষায়
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Yesterday would have been the day that Tiger Woods revelled in his stunning victory at the 2019 Masters as he was supposed to host the Champions Dinner, an annual tradition that celebrates the previous year's winner. The coronavirus outbreak scuppered those plans, but not to be denied, Woods hosted the dinner at home, posting the photo on Twitter and writing alongside: "Masters Champions Dinner quarantine style. Nothing better than being with family."

PHOTO: TWITTER

Mabia worried, frustrated

ANISUR RAHMAN

Athletes of different disciplines have an opportunity to maintain their fitness by doing exercise at home, but weightlifters need special type of exercise which cannot be conducted at home.

With all types of sports activities suspended in the country since March 16, athletes of various sports have been trying to remain as fit as they can so that they can easily take to the field when sporting activities resume, but the situation for weightlifters is quite different as they will have to start from the scratch regarding fitness and improvement of performance.

Mabia Akter Simanta, a two-time gold medallist in the South Asian Games, is worried about her fitness and disappointed that she cannot go outside to have training amid the countrywide shutdown due to the deteriorating coronavirus situation.

"It is not possible for weightlifters to maintain fitness at home like other athletes. If I really want to maintain my fitness, I must go outside because I am not a big player who can afford a personal gym at home. So for me there is no alternative but to train outside," Mabia told The Daily Star.

"I think I have to start from zero when the shutdown comes to an end. It is really very tough for us to improve performance once it goes down," said Mabia, who won a gold medal each in the 2016 SA Games and the 2019 SA Games.

"Performance improvement requires perseverance, but if we stay home without any practice we will lose our endurance, patience and concentration," Mabia explained. "If we skip just one day's training,

the next day we can't do the same volume of training. Even though we don't know when the situation will come under control, but if training resumes after one month with already 15 days having gone, we will have to start from zero like a beginner."

The 21-year-old is now using her idle time to learn prepare exotic dishes, watch movies and video footages of World Weightlifting Championships as well as learn weightlifting techniques online.

She is also keeping in touch

with her teammates and she is disappointed that the young talented weightlifters are not getting performance bonus or stipend due to the postponement of the training camp under Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation (BWF).

"Everyone is alright and staying at home, but they are bored with the situation. Everyone is concerned about fitness and counting days when the situation improves," said Mabia, who had won a gold medal in Commonwealth Youth Weightlifting Championship in

Pune in 2015.

"Due to the suspension of the training camp, many players are being deprived of performance bonus as the federation provides Tk 3000 to each weightlifter for lifting one kilogram weight more than what the person had lifted in the previous month. Most of our weightlifters are coming from lower middle-class families, so the performance bonus is an assistance to their families," said Mabia, who is, however, working for Bangladesh Ansar and getting paid regularly.



This file photo shows Mabia Akter Simanta lifting weights at the Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation in Motijheel when things were normal. However, due to countrywide shutdown in the wake of coronavirus pandemic, the two-time SA Games gold-medallist cannot train currently, neither can she afford to exercise at home without gym equipments.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

CSKA Sofia defy ban for training

REUTERS, Sofia

31-time Bulgarian champions CSKA Sofia resumed team training, violating a ban that is in place to contain the spread of coronavirus, local media reported.

A video showed manager Milos Krusic, two assistants and six foreign players training at the club base on Tuesday.

Bulgaria declared a state of emergency until May 13 and imposed a ban on groups of more than two adults congregating together.

"If any (football clubs) train, then the regional health inspectorates should punish them," Prime Minister Boyko Borissov told reporters when asked to comment CSKA's violation. "They should be fined like all other people in Bulgaria."

Stokes named Wisden's best

AFP, London

Ben Stokes has ended Virat Kohli's three-year reign as Wisden's leading cricketer in the world after playing a starring role in England's World Cup win last year.

The 2020 Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, published Thursday, crowns the all-rounder the sport's pre-eminent player. He is the first England player to receive the honour since Andrew Flintoff in 2005.

The 28-year-old won the man-of-the-match award in the World Cup final against New Zealand at Lord's and then produced a remarkable match-winning innings of 135 not out in the third Ashes Test against Australia.

"Ben Stokes pulled off the performance of a lifetime -- twice in the space of a few weeks," said Wisden editor Lawrence Booth. "First, with a mixture of outrageous talent and good fortune, he rescued England's run-chase in the World Cup final, before helping to hit 15 off the super over.

"Then, in the third Ashes Test at Headingley, he produced one of the great innings, smashing an unbeaten 135 to pinch a one-wicket win. Against red ball or white, he was a force of nature."

Australia's Ellyse Perry reclaimed the leading women's cricketer in the world title from India's Smriti Mandhana.



RONALDINHO RELEASED FROM JAIL

Brazil and Barcelona legend Ronaldinho arrives at the hotel in Asuncion where he and his brother will serve house arrest after a judge in Paraguay ordered their release from jail on Tuesday. The 40-year-old was in jail for a month awaiting trial on charges of using a fake passport to enter the country.

PHOTO: AFP

Reminiscence: My first match

In these times of social distancing, we must be safe while remembering that we do not get too used to the world being at a standstill. We were meant to go watch matches together, agree with a few of our neighbours and disagree with the rest. So, we are taking turns at The Daily Star talking about our first live experience at a sports venue.

EKUSH TAPADER from Chattogram, 2008



I have been watching matches on TV since the 1996 Cricket World Cup. My love for the sport developed from watching the likes of Sanath Jayasuriya, Romesh Kaluwitharana and Brian Lara smashing fours and sixes on the small black and white TV we had back in my hometown in Sylhet. But, for some reason, I was not being able to catch a live match from the stadium. Even in 1998, when a number of international events were held in Bangladesh, we, who lived far away from the capital, had to stay content watching those on TV.

A number of international series were being held in Bangladesh after the Tigers got Test status in 2000. But the opportunity for me to go and catch a live match never came in those days as none of those games were played in Sylhet. However, I did start watching live domestic matches from

winning the toss. The Tigers restricted the three lions for a modest 225, courtesy of some excellent bowling from the three spinners -- Shakib Al Hasan, Abdur Razzak and Nayeem Islam. The whole stadium was waiting to become a part of history after such a dominating performance in the first half.

But things changed when Tigers came out to bat. Bangladesh lost eight wickets for 169 runs and thousands of spectators just saw the opposite side of the coin in just a matter of hours. Some among the crowd, the overly enthusiastic ones, could not hold their anger and started leaving but only after cursing the players. Even we were in dilemma: should we watch the agonising defeat or should we leave? But we stuck around and for that we will ever be grateful to our own judgment. And why should we not be? The ninth wicket partnership between Mahmudullah Riyad and Shafiu Islam had just changed everything.

Mahmudullah's responsibility was to keep his wicket while Shafiu made



the 2001-02 season. The National Cricket League was held at the Sylhet District Stadium and we used to flock to the ground after bunking classes to see stars such as Khaled Mahmud, Habibul Bashar and Mohammad Rafique in action. And yes, back then, the domestic leagues used to be played in front of packed houses, unlike current times.

I got the experience of catching a live international match as late as 2008 when New Zealand toured Bangladesh in October that year. The Tigers at that time were in tatters, losing a number of players to the Indian Cricket League (ICL). I remember that the third match of the series, held in Chattogram, was the first match that I caught live from the venue.

But today I will share the story of a different game. I often used to travel from Sylhet to Chattogram to meet someone special, who eventually became my life partner. It was 2011 and I was in Chattogram and this time we both had the opportunity to see Bangladesh taking on England in an enthralling World Cup fixture live from the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium.

Bangladesh, brimming with confidence, elected to field after

we realise for the first time that he too could bat, playing the role of the aggressor. We all knew that the match was hanging in the balance with Mahmudullah being the last hope for Bangladesh. Mahmudullah also knew that and even if he did not, the crowd did their part to make him realise that all hopes lay with him as thousands of people from the stands played the role of a coach and started shouting, "Riyad, please stay till the end."

Our excitement spiked just as Shafiu smashed a four or a six. It was something indescribable how we celebrated by hugging even strangers in the field after Mahmudullah hit got the winning runs by hitting a four.

By the time we were returning after having made our way through the celebratory procession, we witnessed that people who watched the games at home had thronged the streets of Chattogram. Some were even as crazy as to be wanting to take pictures with us, the ones who saw the triumph live, as if we also fought the incredible battle!

Since then I have watched a lot of games as a fan and covered a lot of matches as a professional journalist, but the win over New Zealand in 2011 will always remain special to me.

Mane would 'understand' being denied PL title

AFP, London

Sadio Mane says he would understand if Liverpool were denied the Premier League title although they are 25 points clear and agonisingly close to their first top-flight triumph in 30 years.

"I want to win the games and I want to get the trophy, it's what I would love," he said. "But with this situation, whatever happens I will understand."

"It has been difficult for Liverpool, but it has been more difficult for many millions of people around the world. For myself, it's my dream and I want to win it this year. If that's not the case, I will accept. Hopefully we will win it next year."