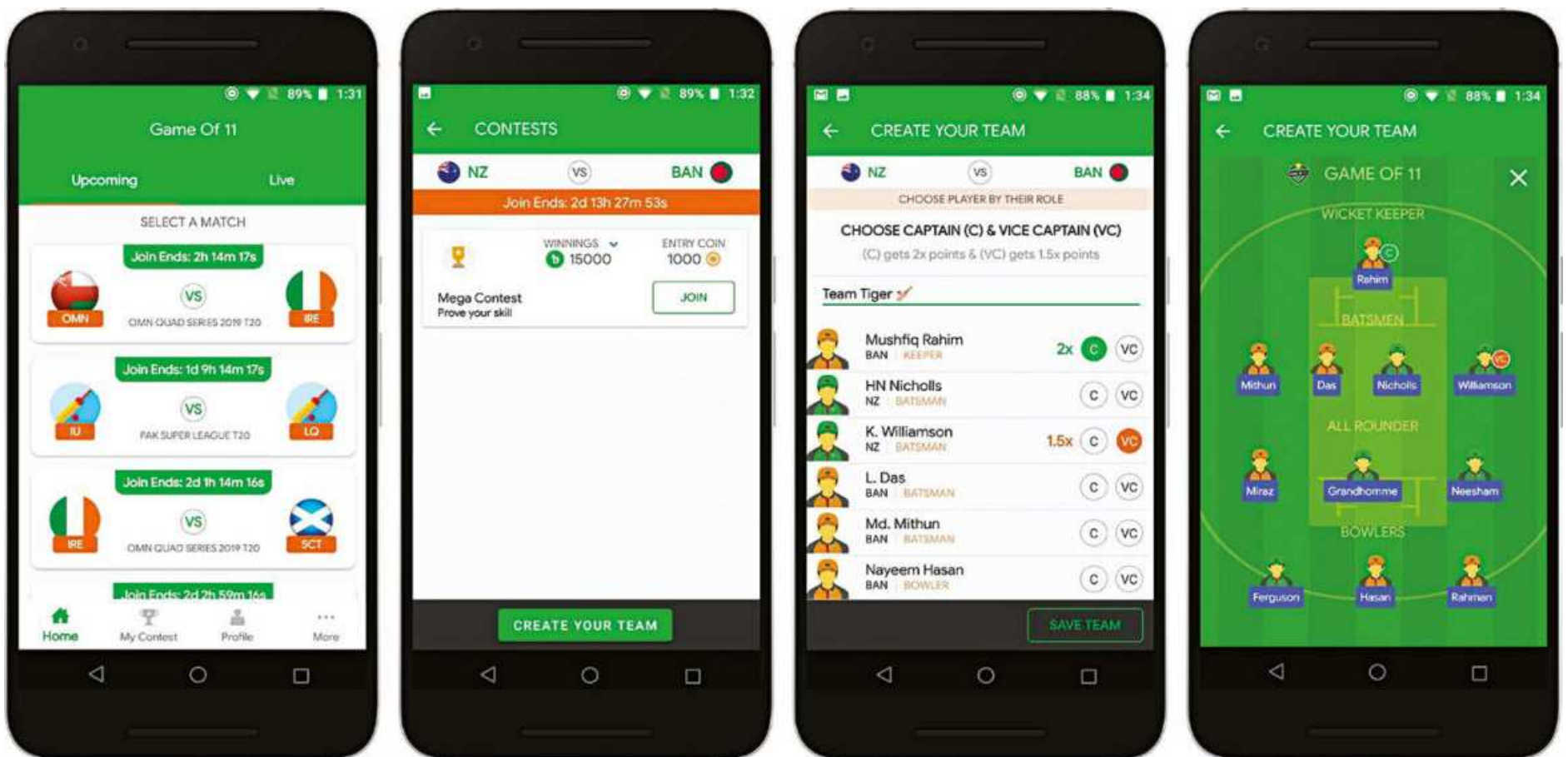


# Game of 11: A fantasy sports league of our own

SADMAN SAKIB PANTHO

Fantasy sports has been gaining popularity in Bangladesh for quite a few years now, especially Fantasy Premier League (FPL), which is the official fantasy league of the English Premier League football. Over the years, few Bangladeshis have won weekly rewards in FPL and two have even finished in the top 100 among millions of players across the world. Unfortunately, there are no other fantasy sports leagues in our country with established popularity. Cricket lovers particularly have felt a void in this category. Enter Game of 11.



## What are fantasy sports leagues?

Fantasy sports are online games where participants build imaginary teams consisting of real-life players of a franchise sports league. Participants compete with each other and when a match is taking place in the real world, players will earn points according to how they perform. Participants are ranked on the leaderboard based on their accumulated points and based on the fantasy league they are competing in, they can earn weekly rewards as well as huge prizes as the end of the season.

## The story behind Game of 11

Game of 11, commercially known as GO11, has been founded by Ashif Mujtoba and Tanvir Ahmed Palash, who are the CEO and CTO of the company respectively. The members of the core

team are all from Ahsanullah University o Science and Technology, who have been a part of GO11's journey from the very beginning in 2018. Ashif said, "The software and technical skills of our team members perfectly complemented our business model." The platform was already built by the end of 2018.

Participants can see the players list in each match and join contests. There are both free and paid contests. The paid ones range from BDT 10 to BDT 50 per match. Users get real-time updates. There's a separate prize pool in each game. The prize money is distributed among the winners of each game. For transparency, the platform will show the total number of winners and total prize money at the top of the game. The prize money is sent by bKash. In-game purchases can be made using

Rocket, cards, internet banking etc. GO11 have covered 630 cricket and 55 football matches till now. They even have a Facebook group to receive feedback from and to interact with the participants.

## The fantasy sports market

Co-founder Ashif Mujtoba said, "The youth of this country are crazy for sports right now, especially cricket and football. And they are very passionate. We want to capitalize on that." Game Plan, another Bangladeshi fantasy league startup, has also been featuring football and cricket fantasy matches. According to Ashif, there's a potential market of 1 million fantasy players in Bangladesh and the size of the market is \$420 million. GO11 already has 42,000 registered users. However,

being a fairly new business concept in Bangladesh, there are some grey areas regarding whether fantasy sports is a form of gambling by law. By no means is fantasy sports gambling since it requires understanding and analysis about a certain game. It doesn't depend on prediction. But the GO11 team has conversed with the cyber-crime unit of the police to be on the safer side of things.

GO11 is currently featuring IPL matches as a part of its fantasy cricket league. Ashif said that the team plans to increase the number of registered fantasy players in GO11 to 4 million by the 2033 ICC Cricket World Cup. Driven by the enthusiasm of local fantasy sports fanatics, the future of GO11 and the Bangladeshi fantasy sports scenario is promising.