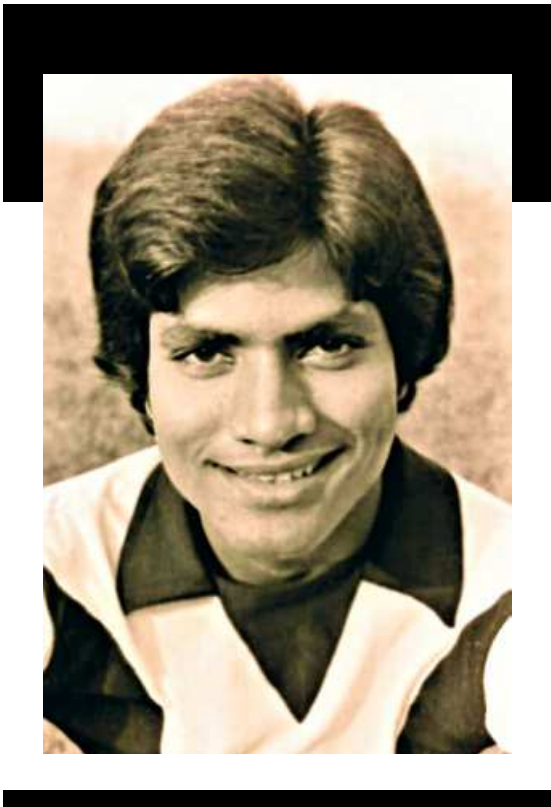


Badal Roy leaves a legacy



AL-AMIN

Badal Roy is no more. One of biggest icons of the country's football history, Roy died at a city hospital yesterday. He was 62.

He was suffering from liver cancer.

His untimely departure has cast a pal of gloom in the sports fraternity. But amid grief and sorrow, it is also about time to celebrate a sporting hero who devoted all his energy for the betterment of country's sport. He was one of the finest strikers, a true gentleman and a pioneer of promoting football at grassroots level.

But probably he will be best remembered as a true Mohammedan. He made his debut for Mohammedan Sporting Club in 1977 and retired from the famous Motijheel-based club after entertaining the fans for close to two decades, sporting that revered Black and White shirt.

Roy is one of the few footballers whose loyalty for the club as a player, as an organiser till the last

breath of his life was unmistakable. His peers in the '80s and early '90s, when football was a daily doze of entertainment, has no doubt about that. He was a Mohammedan from tip to toe.

His love for the club was undiminished even in recent times, when some officials of the club were embroiled in casino scandal. He was one of those who tried to revive the battered image of the club, once revered as one of two most followed sporting outfits alongside Abahani.

He led Mohammedan to hattrick of titles in the Dhaka League in 1986. He has always been an inspirational leader for his teammates, be it at club level or for the national team. He was uncompromising when it came down to winning a game. But he was also the best friend of his rivals off the field.

A footballer from Cumilla, Roy

As per my knowledge, Badal Roy is the only footballer to have played for a single club in the Dhaka league. He loved football too much and maybe deprived his family too because of his love for the game.

GOLAM SARWAR TIPU
Former national team captain and coach

Roy was my junior, but he was like a friend to me, one who always inspired me. I had some 30-35 years of memory with Roy, who was forced to leave sports arena. And now he has left the earth with angst.

HASANUZZAMAN KHAN BABLU
Former national footballer

has always been vocal in taking the game at the grassroots level to revive the lost glory of country's football. He believed that it was the only way of making the game popular again and the only way of finding quality player for the future.

Roy contested for the BFF presidency last month more out of

frustration, with country's football still in a bad shape. He also tried to pull his beloved club out of the mire. All his efforts were to bring the glory days back, he was once part of.

He left us trying. The onus is on us to follow his uncompromising path.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Koeman incredulous as Barca sink to 10th



As a ball over the top caught out Barcelona's defence, goalkeeper Marc Andre Ter Stegen made a mad dash that took him to almost the halfway line in an attempt to intercept the ball. But Yannick Carrasco, with one brilliant flick, nutmegged the keeper and found the net from about 35 yards.

PHOTO: TWITTER

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman was incredulous after his team lost 1-0 to Atletico Madrid in La Liga on Saturday, fiercely criticising his players for switching off at the end of the first half and allowing Yannick Carrasco to score.

Carrasco made the most of several Barca players being caught out of position when Gerard Pique lost possession in Atletico's half, latching on to Angel Correa's pass and rounding keeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen, who had come flying out of his area.

"We just cannot allow ourselves to concede a goal like that," Koeman told reporters. "The goal was our mistake, you cannot afford to lose the ball like that and concede a goal so late in the half. It's always tough to create many chances against Atletico, but when you lose the ball against them you have to do better than that."

The Catalans are 10th in the standings and nine points behind second-placed Atletico and leaders Real Sociedad.

"I'm not worried about our position in the table or the league title right now, we just need to focus on winning a series of games, that's what's most important right now," Koeman said. "The coach is the number one person responsible for a team's results and I have to keep on believing in the players I have. But we have to improve things defensively and in

attack."

Koeman's problems deepened with news that Pique had sprained knee ligaments after clashing with Angel Correa while Sergi Roberto sustained a thigh injury.

Barca said Pique would undergo further tests with Spanish media reporting he could be sidelined for about six weeks.

Meanwhile Diego Simeone savoured a first league victory over Barcelona in 10 seasons in charge of Atletico but refused to discuss whether the win proved his side were capable of winning La Liga.

"We have come very close to beating Barca before, we beat them in Saudi Arabia, we had drawn at their ground and lost by very little here before. Today it was our turn to win, but it won't change our objectives one bit," Simeone told reporters.

"The group is in very good shape, I've been saying that for a long time and it gives us the belief to keep working hard on what we are doing. Now we must maintain this energy and keep on competing."

Match winner Yannick Carrasco also shunned a question about Atletico's title credentials, saying his side were only focusing on Wednesday's Champions League game against Lokomotiv Moscow.

But captain Koke, the only surviving member of that title winning side, did not rule out the prospect entirely, pointing to the early season problems Barca and champions Real Madrid were having.

'The players were amazing'

AGENCIES, LONDON

Jose Mourinho said his "amazing" Tottenham beat Manchester City on strategy as a vintage show from the Portuguese boss sent his side top of the Premier League with a 2-0 win on Saturday.

Mourinho's side registered just four shots on goal to City's 22, but Spurs finished a day top of the Premier League table for the first time since August 2014.

"For me, I prefer the players to speak because they were fantastic, they gave everything. They follow a strategy and football sometimes, more than ever, strategy plays an important part. They were amazing," Mourinho said.

Meanwhile, Pep Guardiola was left lamenting errors in defence.



Minister Rajshahi found themselves in a spot of bother after their marquee player, Mohammad Saifuddin, who was drafted with their first call, picked up an ankle injury and was seen leaving Mirpur on crutches.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



On the same night that he won the Golden Boy award for best young player in Europe, Erling Haaland rescued Borussia Dortmund against Hertha Berlin single-handedly. The 20-year-old scored four goals in a Bundesliga game for the first time on Saturday night, all in the second half, in a 5-1 win. He also set a new league record with 23 goals in 22 games. Meanwhile, Juventus star Cristiano Ronaldo continued his run of form by scoring both goals in a 2-0 win over Cagliari in Serie A.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Open skies lift booters' mood

SPORTS REPORTER



After completing their three-day quarantine in the team hotel, the Bangladesh national team were finally allowed to breathe in the open skies as they had their first training session at the Al Aziziyah Boutique ground in Doha yesterday.

The footballers had a 90-minute training session in the serene environment after completing the mandatory quarantine ahead of Bangladesh's World Cup and Asian Cup Qualifier against Qatar on December 4.

The players were barred from using the hotel's gymnasium and pool after manager Amer Khan and physio Fuad Hasan tested positive for Covid-19. The duo test positive again in the second tests carried out on Saturday while the rest of the contingent tested negative again. They then split into small groups and used the gymnasium on Saturday.

The players looked cheerful in the footage of the first training session sent by the BFF and were in a good mood as they touched the ball for the first time since a friendly against Nepal on November 17.

"We are good and sound. We are delighted to have a first training session in Qatar and using the facilities here. If we can avail the facilities and stay well, then I believe we can get a good result as we are committed," goalkeeper Ashrafur Islam Rana said in a video message.

Assistant coach Stuart Watkiss appeared happy to have conducted a first training session under open skies.

"Today we did our first real session since coming to Qatar. It is very nice to get back on the grass. We did a lot of work on the ball, lots of passing, lots of movements and everyone practiced in the last 30 minutes," said Watkiss, who is standing in for Covid-infected head coach Jamie Day, who tested positive for the third time on Saturday.

Watkiss is looking forward to preparing his charges for the main event as well as two practice matches, the first against an amateur Qatar Army side on Wednesday and the second, on November 28, against Lusail SC -- a second division side. "We are looking forward to the next few days of training at the fabulous training center with absolutely first-class facilities," added the 54-year-old.

"We are good and sound. We are delighted to have a first training session in Qatar and using the facilities here. If we can avail the facilities and stay well, then I believe we can get a good result as we are committed,"

ASHRAFUR ISLAM RANA

Bangladesh Games in February

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) has decided to hold the Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games in February next year, nearly one year after the multisport extravaganza was suspended due to coronavirus outbreak.

The games were originally scheduled for April 1 to 10 this year with the participation of some 11,000 athletes from 31 disciplines, but BOA was forced to suspend it despite taking all preparations.

"The meeting has decided to hold Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games in next February in a small scale by reducing the number of athletes due to the coronavirus pandemic," said a press release yesterday following a meeting of the BOA executive committee at the Kurmitola Golf Club.

The BOA had earlier held discussions with the high-ups of the federations to get their opinion regarding holding the event in a small scale, to which the federations gave their nod.

The meeting also decided to send a two-member contingent to the 6th Asian Beach Games in China in April next year. It also decided to send athletes from seven disciplines to the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in Thailand in May next year.