

Cricket rain-struck

SPORTS REPORTER



Inclement weather continues to play foul at the crucial stage of the GrameenPhone Premier Cricket League.

The desperate effort of the organisers Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) to resume the League after a week of weather-forced injunction suffered again when the Super Six match between holders Mohammedan Sporting Club and Bangladesh Biman was rained out.

Mohammedan, sent into bat, managed to score 202 for eight in 50 overs when heavens opened up halfway through the match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

But rain apparently came as a blessing for Mohammedan after their right-arm paceman Ashique

bowled just three deliveries in the defence of their unimpressive total.

The Relegation League match between City Club and Brothers Union also suffered the same fate at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. It was a disappointment for City, who piled up a massive total of 319 for seven in their share of 50 overs against the traditional giants.

The First Division Cricket League also suffered because of rain. The only match decided on the day was a Second Division affair, which Uddity Club won by 8 runs against East End Club at the Mohakhali T & T Ground.

Weather permitting all the suspended matches will be played today. But the met office forecast more rain, much to the agony of the CCDM, who needs a week of shiny days to complete the Leagues this year.

But even if the sun shines they will have to vacate the all-purpose Bangabandhu National Stadium on

May 15 to accommodate the defence of their unimpressive total.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman recently turned down the CCDM appeal to extend cricket's allotment of BNS for another week so that they can hold the remaining nine Super Six games here.

"This is cruel. We wanted only a week but we were not allowed even a day," said a dejected CCDM secretary Abid Hossain. He however said that the six clubs have agreed to play at Fatullah as a makeshift venue.

Although the Premier Leagues got off to a delayed start, still it could have been finished before the rainy season had not the Bangladesh Games consumed half a month. The state minister however did not hesitate to hand over the BNS to the BOA (Bangladesh Olympic Association) despite adverse criticism all around.



Rainy day at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Disappointed Jaffer

REUTERS, St John's (Antigua)

Indian opener Wasim Jaffer was disappointed he missed his maiden Test hundred after falling for 86 on the first day of the fourth Test against West Indies.

Jaffer, playing in his fourth Test, dispatched West Indies' four-pronged pace attack to all corners of the Antigua Recreation Ground in a breezy knock that helped the tourists reach 226 for three after being asked to bat first.

"I thought I was looking good for a hundred," Jaffer told reporters. "I was determined to get it but I got out nicking a good ball. I'm very disappointed."

Jaffer was caught by wicket-keeper Ridley Jacobs from a ball by left-arm paceman Pedro Collins that was angling away from him.

"I am playing well right now," said Jaffer, who scored 51 -- his maiden Test half-century -- in the third match in Barbados.

"The wicket was easy. I had been there for two sessions so I just wanted to carry on, but these things happen."

The 24-year-old from Bombay looked particularly good against the short-pitched bowling and said it was a result of having played with rubber balls as a youngster.

"I have played a lot of cricket with rubber balls in my early days," he said.

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India on the attack

Cricket

AFP, St John's

Rahul Dravid hit a solid unbeaten 86 to help India survive a first-ball dismissal of master batsman Sachin Tendulkar in the fourth Test against the West Indies here on Friday.

Dravid put on 155 for the second wicket with opener Wasim Jaffer (86) and 58 for the unbroken fourth wicket with skipper Sourav Ganguly as India reached 226-3 at stumps on the opening day after being put in to bat.

Left-arm fast bowler Pedro Collins removed Jaffer and Tendulkar off successive deliveries before Dravid and Ganguly (41 not out) sustained their team's hopes of posting a sizeable total.

This was Tendulkar's fourth first-ball dismissal in his illustrious 95-Test career.

The 25-year-old paceman nearly upstaged Jaffer and Dravid with his 3-65 effort on a batsmen-friendly pitch at the Antigua Recreation Ground.

Ganguly survived the hat-trick ball and then went on bat aggressively in a bid to seize the initiative, hitting four boundaries and a pulled six off paceman Adam Sanford in his unbeaten 71-ball knock.

Dravid has so far struck 12 fours in his 266-ball innings.

Jaffer and Dravid had put India on course for a big total with their century stand before Collins

grabbed two wickets.

Collins threatened to change the course of the Indian innings in the fifth over after tea when he had Jaffer caught by wicket-keeper Ridley Jacobs with an angled delivery.

The same delivery accounted for Tendulkar, who edged it low to Jacobs' right for his first first-ball dismissal.

Tendulkar, who fell to Collins in a similar manner in the third Test at Bridgetown, now has scores of 0, 0, 8 and 0 in his last four innings for a rare lean patch.

Collins struck after Dravid and Jaffer had made the West Indies pace attack look ordinary on an easy-paced pitch as they gathered runs with consummate ease.

West Indies skipper Carl Hooper put India in to bat for the third successive Test, but his four fast bowlers rarely troubled Dravid and Jaffer on a track that had neither bounce nor pace.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the fourth Test between the West Indies and India at the Antigua Recreation Ground here on Friday:

INDIA: First innings	3
Das b Collins	86
Jaffer c Jacobs b Collins	86
Dravid not out	0
Tendulkar c Jacobs b Collins	0
Ganguly not out	41
Extras: (nb-6, w-1, lb-3)	10
Total: (for 3 wkts)	226

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India's Rahul Dravid square-drives one during his unbeaten 86 on the opening day of the fourth Test against West Indies at Antigua on May 10.

PHOTO: INTERNET

BLAST FROM THE PAST



PHOTO: STAR FILE

Italy captain and goalkeeper Dino Zoff becomes the oldest player in history to win this spectacular trophy. Italy are the 1982 FIFA World Cup winners in Spain, their third in total.

Ctg Abahani center

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

NITOL-TATA NAT'L FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Chittagong Abahani brightened their hopes for a semifinal berth in the Nitol-Tata National League with a 3-1 victory over Mohsin Club of Narayanganj at Rajshahi Stadium yesterday.

The star-studded port city outfit led the no-hopers from Narayanganj 2-0 at the breather.

Midfielder Julfikar Mahmud Mintu gave Chittagong Abahani a seventh minute lead with an angular shot from inside the box.

Liton, though registered with Chittagong, struck the second goal against the home side five minutes away from the short whistle, stabbing a Renedy cross into the net.

Hari Khad, the Nepalese recruit of Chittagong, gave his side an unassailable 3-0 lead in the 73rd minute with a powerful shot. A minute before Liton was denied of his second goal by the woodwork as his strong attempt bounced off the crossbar.

Ashrafur scored the consolation goal for Mohsin Club twelve minutes away from the final whistle.

National midfielder Liton was adjudged man-of-the-match.

Chittagong Abahani with seven points from four games are now leading Group B. But their fate will depend on the outcome of today's match between Rajshahi Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club.

Rajshahi Abahani, who also

have seven points, will be looking for a draw against the Dhaka giants to join their Chittagong counterpart in the super four.

Mohammedan, who have five points, on the other hand can only hope for a win to avoid an early exit from the championship like Muktiyodha Sangsad.

Green Delta hockey Lone goal win for Wari

SPORTS REPORTER

Wari Club recorded a lone goal win over Bangladesh Sporting Club in the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday.

Rajinder Singh, the Indian recruit of the oldest Dhaka club, scored the all-important goal in the 10th minute. Wari could have won even by a bigger margin had their forwards not spoiled some easy chances in the second session of the lop-sided affair.

Meanwhile, in the First Division League Mukta Bihanga defeated Police Athletic Club 3-2.

The winners led the first half 2-1. Anik scored all the three goals for Mukta Bihanga.

BCB picks age group players

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday selected 21 Under-17 players for its development programme.

The players are: Gazi Shahzid Hossain Pavel, Ibrahim Sagar, Yousof Ali Sarker Mukul, Maruf Hossain, Mehrab Hossain, SM Golam Fiaz, Mirza Sams Mahmud, Riad Khan Jony, Ali Irtiza, Faizul Azam, Saif Mahmud, Ishhaw Sohad, Mustafizur Rahman, Taibur Rahman, KMA Jubin Faisal, Alamgir Hossain, Nadif Chowdhury, Abdullah Al Jadid, Bishawajit Mondol, Sajib Dutta Sajju and Rajib Dutta Chowdhury.

The players were asked to report on Monday at 2.30 pm at the Dhanmondi Club ground.

The board also selected sixteen Under-17 Dhaka Metro Blues players to report on Monday at 9am at the same venue.

They are: Nayeem Islam, Nafis Ahmed, Ashiqur Rahman, Dhiman Gosh, Arafat Sunny, Ilias Sunny, Ifekharul Islam, Asif Newaz, Tanver Rashed, Rubaiet Haq, Asim Chowdhury, Mishi Ali Khan, Sanjib Hossain, Jubair Hossain, Mansoor Murshed and Asma Mohammed Alim Yiad.

Dillon bursts restrict India

AFP, St John's

West Indies fast bowler Mervyn Dillon grabbed two quick wickets to shatter India's hopes of posting a big first-innings total in the fourth Test here on Saturday.

Dillon took two wickets for 11 runs off nine overs and Cameron Cuffly one for nine off seven as India crumbled to 272-6 at lunch on the second day after resuming at a healthy 226-3 at the Antigua Recreation Ground.

Venkatsai Laxman was the last specialist batsman at the crease with 17, while wicket-keeper Ajay Ratna was on 12 as India failed to cope with the West Indies pace attack on a good batting pitch.

CUP CORNER



AFP, Brussels

Belgian defender Philippe Clement was ruled out of the World Cup on Friday after the injury he suffered in the national cup final was confirmed as a muscle tear in his left leg.

The 28-year-old picked up the injury playing for his club FC Bruges in their 3-1 win against Mouscron on Thursday. It will take around a month to six weeks for the injury to be treated, according to club doctors.

GERMANY'S WORNS WORRY

AFP, Freiburg

Borussia Dortmund's German international defender Christian Worns will undergo tests on his injured knee Saturday to assess whether he will be fit for the World Cup finals, assistant national coach Michael Skibbe said Friday.

If 30-year-old Worns is not fit he will be replaced by Werder Bremen's Frank Baumann who has been placed on standby.

"Christian has had problems for the past few weeks in his left meniscus. We want to know what it is," said Skibbe.

Worns, who was a member of the 1998 German World Cup final squad, began to suffer badly during last Wednesday's UEFA Cup final in which newly-crowned German champions Dortmund lost 3-2 to Dutch side Feyenoord.

TURKS MUST MAKE THE MOST OF IT

AFP, Ankara

Turkish national team coach Senol Gunes said Friday he wanted his squad to make the most of their first appearance at a World Cup finals in 48 years.

Gunes added his first aim would be to ensure Turkey made it out of their first round Group C in which they play four-time champions Brazil, Costa Rica and debutants China.

"Our first target will be getting out of our qualifying group and going to Japan," Gunes told a press conference in the southern Turkish city of Antalya.

"We got this chance after 48 years. We want to make good use of it," he added.

WC REFEREE BANNED IN BRAZIL!

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Brazilian referee Carlos Eugenio Simon, one of 36 referees selected for the 2002 World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea later this month has been barred from refereeing matches in his own country indefinitely, it was revealed Friday.

The Brazilian Referee Commission said they had taken the decision because of a number of errors in Simon's refereeing of the Brazilian Cup final first leg clash between Corinthians and Brasiense last Wednesday, which was won 2-1 by Corinthians.

Hurry up, get ready!



AFP, Paris

With 19 days to go until the World Cup finals kick off there is little time left for players to heal the wounds accumulated during the season and recharge their batteries for football's ultimate test.

Voicing the concern of team doctors, France's Jean-Marcel Ferrer said it was unfortunate that he and his counterparts had 12 days less than in 1998 to prepare their charges.

"It is now four years in which the majority of the players have been playing at the highest level," he said.

"Their status has changed in that they are now more in demand and play an enormous amount of matches."

"We had less of a problem with this in 1998. That is to say this time round we will have more battle weary players after three to four seasons at the top level."

"Their bodies have been knocked about more than last time and that is the price of success."

Also feeling the strain were

France's opponents in the opener in Seoul on May 31 -- Senegal -- whose officials were forced to cut back on warm-up matches because players claimed they were too tired after an exhausting season.

Twenty of the 23-man squad play in France and the country's first division championship only finished last weekend.

"We had no other option because the players said they were exhausted," said FSF president federation president El Hadj Malick Sy.

Meanwhile, the inevitable list of players missing the World Cup through injury grows by the day.

England's Phil Neville, Croatia's Igor Tudor and Spain's Sergi are the latest to pull out, while doubts surround such as Brazilian star Rivaldo, Argentine veteran Claudio Caniggio and Cameroon's former African player of the year Patrick Mboma.

But England icon David Beckham looks to be on the mend and has been confirmed as captain by coach Sven Goran Eriksson.

Beckham, sporting his new World Cup hairstyle, accompanied the Swede to a Downing Street reception with British Prime Minister

Tony Blair and his wife Cherie after the squad was announced.

With 13 countries out of the 32 qualifiers having already named their 23-player squads, two weeks ahead of the May 23 deadline, it is clear already that, when pushed, coaches leave no room for sentiment.

Eight years ago in the United States, two of the biggest names right through to the final were Brazil's Romario and Italy's Roberto Baggio.

Both veterans have staged comebacks of sorts this season and both harboured hopes of one last dance at the ball.

But despite popular clamour for their return in both countries, coaches Luiz Felipe Scolari and Giovanni Trapattoni resisted the temptation to turn back the clock.

Germany's 7-0 thumping of Kuwait apart there has been little activity on the friendlies front over the last two weeks.

But with most of the domestic leagues and cups wrapping up this weekend and with only the European Champions League showdown between Real Madrid and Bayer Leverkusen in Glasgow

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Did U Know?

Overwhelming victories in the World Cups are not common and one might think that the biggest wins would be way back in the past. Yet this is not the case -- the record win dates from 1982 when Hungary beat El Salvador 10:1. The Hungarians broke their own record, their 9:0 whitewash over Korea in 1954 equalled only by Yugoslavia's 9:0 against Zaire in 1974.



BTU

Nitol-Tata National Football League Mohammedan Sc vs Rajshahi Abahani Live at 5:30 pm

ESPN

Cricket Programming Super Selector Repeat at 11:00 am English Premier Football League Sunderland vs Derby County Same Day delayed at 2:00 pm & Man United vs Charlton Athletic

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Gabriel Batistuta

(Argentine ace striker) "Our objective is to do well, especially to help our people who are suffering. But I hope if we were to win the World Cup it would not be exploited by our politicians."



Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm May 24, 2002 and draw shortly afterwards

- West Indies won the third Test against India by
8 wickets 10 wickets 19 runs
- Who will lead Bangladesh A team in the Malaysia Cricket Challenge?
Akram Amiful K Mashud
- Who won the man-of-the-match award in the first Test between Pakistan and New Zealand?
M c Miltan Inzamam Afridi
- Who are the English Premiership champions?
Man United Arsenal Liverpool
- Who clinched the Hamburg

Name

Class. Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)