



Sky-blues prevail

NITOL-TATA NAT'L FOOTBALL LEAGUE

SPORTS REPORTER

An early strike from Mojibur Rahman Ritu gave Abahani Krira Chakra a lone goal victory over Mohammedan Sporting Club in the Nitol-Tata National Football League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Ritu volleyed home a rebounder in the 42nd minute to settle the issue of the first meeting between the two bitter-rivals this season.

It was also the only defeat for Mohammedan on a day where their hockey and cricketing brothers posted wins.

Although the match drew nearly five thousand spectators, both teams appeared not to waste their energy in their dress rehearsal for semifinal. But there was no doubt two teams played for pride.

Abahani dominated the first half and could have scored more than one had Ritu not missed two sitters in the first quarter of the game.

The young attacker fired a sudden thunderous side volley from the edge of the box that Mohammedan reserve custodian Bijon fisted away for corner in the tenth minute.

Eight minutes later a terrible defensive error from Masud Rana left Ritu only to beat a hapless Bijon. But he wasted the opportunity blasting the ball miles over the bar.

Ritu however made amends for his previous blunder when he drove a loose ball into the net after Bijon partially parried off a scorching left-footer from Bidyut.

Mohammedan got the only realistic chance to equalise when midfielder Arif Khan Joy headed an Alifaz corner 24 minutes into the second half but only to be denied by an airborne Abahani custodian Apel, who tipped the ball over the crossbar.

The match of the two giants however could not be finished without controversy where referee Abdur Rakib played a part. The man-in-uniform mistakenly showed a second yellow card to Abahani

left-back Mahmudul Hasan five minutes away from the final whistle. He however revoked his decision after a strong protest from Abahani players, who demanded that it was not Hasan but Nazrul committed the foul.

Although Hasan returned to the field without little opposition from Mohammedan players, but it could have been different situation if the match had any title factor attached to it.

It was Abahani's second win from as many matches in the four-team final round. They blanked Sylhet

Chaturanga 2-0 in the first match.

On the other hand it was Mohammedan's first defeat after their 3-0 thrashing of Chittagong Abahani.

Meanwhile, in the other match of the day, Chittagong Abahani defeated Sylhet Chaturanga 3-1.

Chittagong Abahani's Nepalese recruit Hari Khadka scored twice while compatriot Renedy Singh struck the other.

The winners led the first half 2-0. Saiful scored the only goal from Chaturanga.



PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka Mohammedan's Joy (L) is under pressure from two defenders of arch-rivals Abahani during their Nitol-Tata National Football League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Green Delta hockey MSC win rivals' war

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club once again showed their unmatched superiority on the hockey field when they came from behind to notch a 3-1 win against their bitter-rivals Abahani Krira Chakra in a Green Delta Premier League match at the Maulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday.

The outcome put Mohammedan, the four times winners on a trot, at the top of the table with eight straight victories under belt.

On the other hand it was Abahani's first defeat after seven consecutive wins.

The first big match of the League saw all the four goals get scored in the second session.

Abahani drew the first blood seven minutes after the break when Ashraful Islam sounded the board from a combined attack.

Meanwhile, in the First Division League, Barnak Samaj routed Police Athletic Club 5-0.

Imran scored four goals including a hattrick for the winners.



PHOTO: STAR

Scene from the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League fixture between Abahani and Mohammedan at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

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Cricket, soccer feds annulled in Kenya

AFP, Nairobi

Kenya's Sports Minister Francis Nyenze on Friday dissolved the country's football and cricket governing bodies and appointed caretaker committees to oversee new elections in three months.

Nyneze formed an investigative team last August to probe the Kenya Football Federation (KFF) following a financial scandal in which top officials were implicated.

After six months of investigations, the probe was handed to the anti-corruption unit of the police, but none of the officials has been arrested.

Nyneze said his directive was not against the rules world football governing FIFA, which do not allow government interference.

Kenya is set to host two matches of the 2003 cricket World Cup in South Africa in March next year, but Nyenze said the current officials of the Kenya Cricket Association (KCA) were unlikely to make proper preparations due to internal wrangles.

The government and the KCA have been at loggerheads over the running of cricket in the country during the past two years.

KCA officials have been accused of grossly mismanaging the association's finances.

PHOTO: STAR

Scene from the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League fixture between Abahani and Mohammedan at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

SEE PAGE 14

Mohammedan maul Bagan Ehsanul star of the year

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club rounded up their GrameenPhone Premier League campaign with a nine-wicket win against Kalabagan Krira Chakra at the Fatullah Stadium yesterday.

The victory however meant a little to the popular Motijheel outfit, who lost the crown to Victoria Sporting Club only the previous day. Victoria lifted a major League title after 26 years with an exciting 93-run victory over Bangladesh Biman at the BKSP ground in Savar on Friday.

However, the easy sail of the runners-up against their first round conquerors was fashioned by their two new-ball bowlers Safiuddin Ahmed and Taposh Bisashya.

The duo captured nine wickets among them to shot Kalabagan out for a paltry 90 in 25.5 overs.

Safiuddin finished with five for 24

other wickets in a match that finished before the lunch break.

Experienced left-arm spinner Rafiqul Islam and Manzur with 21 each were the only

two Kalabagan batsmen who could reach the double-figure mark.

Chasing an easy target Mohammedan racked up 94 for one in 15.3 overs with opener Ehsanul hammering a scintillating 51 off 48 balls.

Although it was a near-miss for Mohammedan this year despite winning all their five Super Six matches, Ehsanul has every reason to claim the League of his own.

The young right-hander finished as the top-scorer, an achievement that Pakistani players reserved for the last few years.

With this win the last year's champions finished on 26 points, two points behind Victoria.

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