

Sharif returns and ruins Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammad Sharif made a dream return to competitive cricket after recovering from a career-threatening groin injury to inspire Bangladesh Biman to a 34-run victory against Abahani in their opening match of the Green Delta Premier Division Cricket League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The 19-year-old pacer from Narayanganj, who has been out of action for two and a half years, celebrated his first competitive match with a run-a-ball 68 and then took two vital Abahani wickets to ensure an intriguing finish.

The battle of the two local giants started brightly for Abahani when they had Biman at one stage reeling at 82-7 before Sharif staged a magnificent recovery operation in company with national all-rounder Mushfiqur Rahman.

The pair added 92 runs for the eighth wicket as the national flag carrier eventually finished on 219.

Coming into bat at number eight

Sharif took the Abahani spin trio to the sword, hitting six fours and a huge six over long-on off left-arm spinner Manzarul Islam, the lone national cap for the Dhanmondi outfit.

Mushfiq on the other hand played a responsible knock of 55 off 70 balls. Manzarul however had the last laugh when he removed both batsmen in successive overs.

But more Sharif surprises were to come when Abahani, after a bumpy start, looked set to topple the modest target with Naimur Rahman and newcomer Hasanuzzaman Rosel (53 off 91 balls) at the crease.

Naimur, who is leading Abahani after Akram Khan parted ways with the club he has served for 16 years, could not have asked for a better start with a captain's knock of exactly 50.

But Sharif, an exponent with the old ball, who had an erratic first over that produced three boundaries, came back with a vengeance in the 35th over dismissing a menacing Naimur leg before. The former Bangladesh captain struck seven boundaries, but eventually paid the price for playing across the line.

Sharif then had Rosel, who hit four fours, caught at cover by

Sanwar to break Abahani's back-bone.

Manzarul scored a sedate 28 off 41 balls but the run-rate kept on climbing and the Abahani innings eventually folded in 47.4 overs.

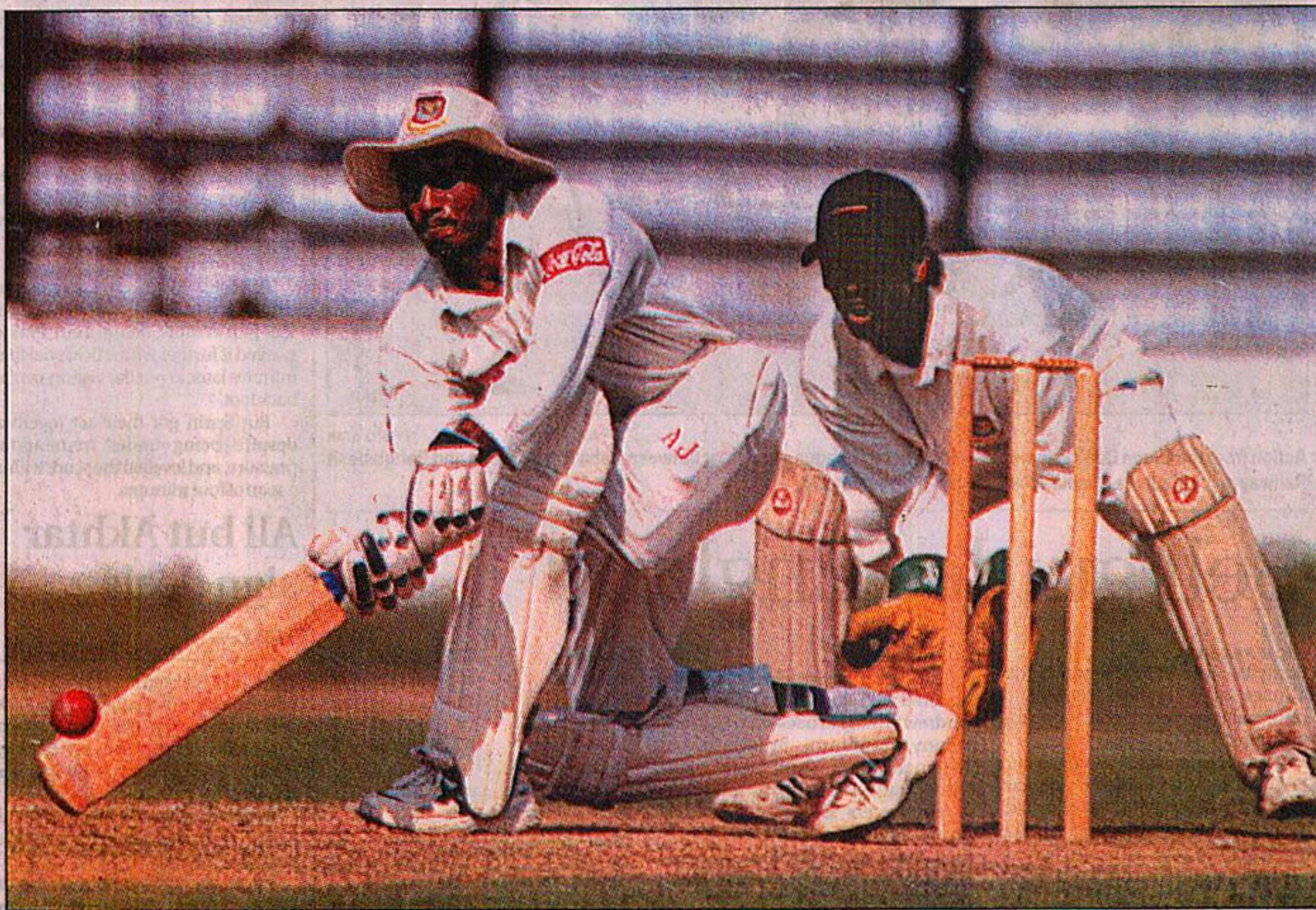
Sharif, who was later named man-of-the-match, was excited with his first real performance back from injury.

"My coaches have always inspired me to concentrate on my batting and I did that during the two-and-a-half year gap due to injury. It was a reward for my hard work. I think I'm fully recovered and also enjoyed bowling in a big match," said Sharif, whose last international appearance was against Pakistan in Chittagong in 2002.

While Sharif basked in glory, it was another disappointing day for national star, Mohammed Ashraful scored only four before becoming the first of the three run out victims in the Biman innings.

Ashraful was the third wicket to fall with Biman on 23 after Gazi Alamgir sent back both openers Rashedul Haque (14) and Sajjad Ahmed Shipon (1).

Abahani, in their chase, started in



THE NEW IDENTITY: Mohammad Sharif, the Bangladesh pacer who has recently returned to competitive cricket after more than a year out through injury, sweeps on his way to a decisive 68 at number nine against Abahani yesterday.

BCB, ESPN-STAR friends again

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and satellite broadcaster ESPN-STAR Sports have reached a compromise deal in the matter of title sponsorship of next month's home series against India, ending the threat of both parties going to the Court of Arbitration in London to settle the issue.

BCB's advisor and chairman of the media committee Rezauddin Al Mamun told The Daily Star Sport yesterday that they have resolved their differences amicably.

Under the deal the Board will no longer own exclusive rights but instead stands to gain in financial terms. On the other hand, ESPN-STAR Sports will now enjoy the right of selecting an official sponsor for two-Test and three one-day internationals when India arrive here on December 7.

"ESPN-STAR Sports will decide the title sponsor for the upcoming home series against India but the Bangladesh Cricket Board will get a handsome amount from the title sponsorship," said Mamun.

"We have agreed to give them the right because they accepted our demands. We are happy with the amount we will be receiving," he added without disclosing the actual figure.

Until now the BCB was the sole authority for selling title sponsor-

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Did U Know?

Lee Germon of New Zealand is the only player to make his debut as captain of a Test team.



TEN Sports

India vs South Africa
Second Test, Day Two
Live at 9:50 am

ESPN

Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm
English Premier Football League
Liverpool vs Arsenal
Repeat at 9:30 pm

STAR Sports

Australia vs New Zealand
Second Test, Day Four
Live at 6:25 am
Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm
Primera Liga
Real Madrid vs Levante
Repeat at 8:30 pm



Kapil Dev

(Former Indian cricket captain)
"He should get past the 500-mark by the next World Cup. I would be happy to see Kumble break my record very soon and wish him all the best."



Green Delta Premier Hockey League

Abahani vs Wari Club (1:15 pm)
Mariner Youngs vs Ajax SC (3:00 pm)
Dutch-Bangla Chess League

Kallis ton steadies SA

Cricket

AFP, Kolkata

Jacques Kallis struck a superb unbeaten ton as South Africa made a steady start in the second and final Test against India at the Eden Gardens here on Sunday.

The 29-year-old gave a fine display against both pace and spin to take the visiting side to 227-5 at close of the first day's play after they won the toss and opted to bat.

Kallis was not out on 103 with Zander de Bruyn on 15 when play was stopped due to bad light with over six overs still left for the day.

South Africa lost two quick wickets early this morning but launched a recovery led by Kallis, who struck 11 fours during his 17th Test century in 82 Tests.

Kallis played shots all around the ground, including some pulls off the pacers and fine sweeps to the spinners to get to a well-deserved first century against India. A square-drive off Irfan Pathan took him from 99 to 103.

India's pacemen overshadowed the spinners, with left-arm seamers Pathan and Zaheer Khan sharing five scalps, but Kallis was never in trouble against any bowler and steadied the ship with a useful 106-run stand for the third wicket with Jacques Rudolph (61).

"Kallis and Rudolph batted very well and I thought Rudolph could have got a bigger score," said South African captain Graeme Smith. "I hope he can continue the good work in the second innings."

Smith felt his team had a good chance in the match.

"It was wonderful to see the seamers get wickets. I think it becomes all the more important for us to get some more runs in the first innings and give our pacers a good chance to try and win the match for us," said Smith.

Rudolph struck seven fours during his sixth fifty before being bowled between bat and pad by Zaheer.

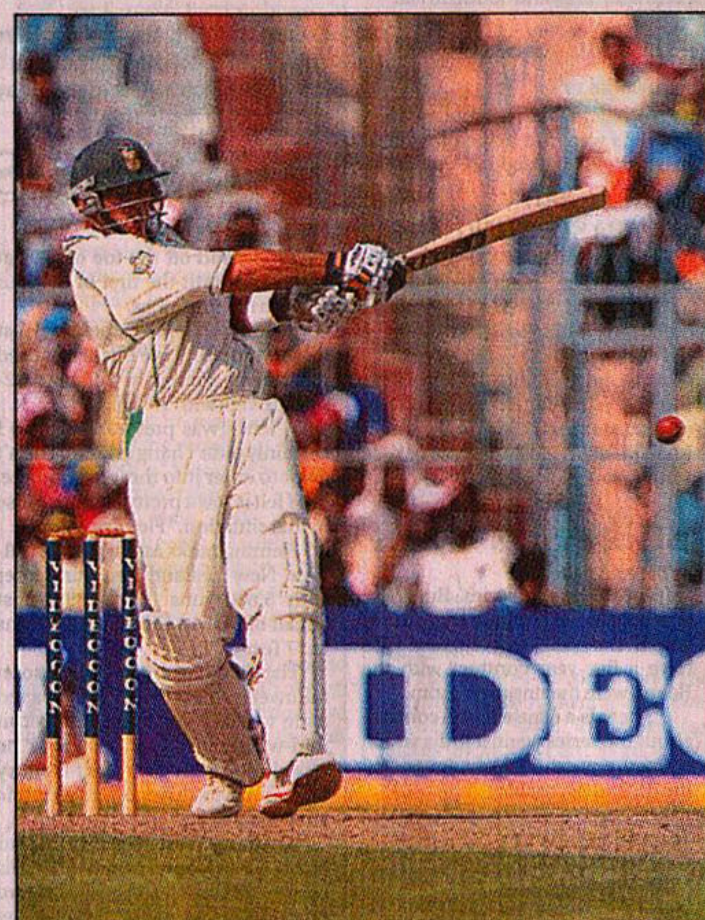
Hashim Amla (24) and Boeta Dippenaar (one) led in quick succession in the last session as Pathan

brought India back in the match by getting the ball to reverse-swing.

South Africa were also lucky as de Bruyn was ruled out by umpire Simon Taufel when he was clearly shown he had nicked a ball to wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik off Harbhajan Singh when he was on just two.

Earlier, left-hander Rudolph and Kallis did the repair-work after the cheap dismissals of openers Smith (zero) and Andrew Hall (seven) had reduced South Africa to 21-2.

Smith threw away his wicket chasing a fairly wide ball to give Pathan a success on only the second



South Africa's star all-rounder Jacques Kallis pulls during his unbeaten hundred against India on Day One of the second Test at the Eden Gardens yesterday.

Aussies strangle Kiwis

Cricket

AFP, Adelaide

Captain Ricky Ponting opted against enforcing the follow-on armed with a crushing 324-run innings lead as Australia set New Zealand up for the knockout punch in the second cricket Test at Adelaide Oval on Sunday.

The ruthless Australians, who declared their first innings at 575 for eight, bowled the Kiwis out for 251 on Sunday -- 124 runs adrift of the follow-on -- and instead of sending the battered Black Caps back in to bat, Ponting searched for even more runs.

At the close, Australia were 57 without loss and had built their overall lead to 381 runs with Justin Langer on 31 and Matthew Hayden on 21.

Ponting's decision, primarily to ease the workload on his four star bowlers in the Adelaide heat with

three home Tests fast approaching against Pakistan, virtually ensured the Test would enter a fifth day on Tuesday.

"There are still two full days left in this Test, the guys had a good bowl, we'll get maybe two sessions off to freshen up a bit and then come at them again tomorrow when we've got 500-plus on the board," said paceman Glenn McGrath, who led the Aussie bowlers with 4-66.

"In the big picture that's probably the best thing for our bowlers to freshen up, let the wicket deteriorate a little bit more, so it'll be good for Warney (Shane Warne) too."

The Kiwis have been outclassed in the series, skittled for 76 in their second innings to capitulate to an innings and 156-run defeat in last week's Gabba Test and they are, weather permitting, on course for another hiding here.

The balmy spell of weather is forecast to change with a cold front

and rain predicted on Tuesday, so Ponting will have to judge his second innings declaration to give his refreshed bowlers enough overs to bowl out the Kiwis for a second time here and claim victory.

The Kiwis are lurching towards their sixth defeat in their last eight Tests, with the only two wins coming against winless Bangladesh last month.

"The bottom line is we're being outplayed, we're being thumped," NZ captain Stephen Fleming said after the day's play.

New Zealand's main hopes of negotiating the challenging 376 follow-on target evaporated when Fleming (83) and fellow senior batsman Nathan Astle (52) were dismissed in the space of four overs in the hour after lunch Sunday.

Much hung on Fleming to stay and lead the fight against world cricket's all-beaters but he fell to a

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Usha squeeze past Railway

SPORTS REPORTER

Giants Usha Krira Chakra began their Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League campaign with an impressive 1-0 victory over Dhaka Railway at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

Despite fielding three Pakistani recruits, including captain of the Athens Olympic team, the title aspirants failed to make a flying start like Abahani, Mohammedan and Mariner Youngs.

Defender Yamin Hossain salvaged the giants netting the all-important goal in the 38th minute from a penalty-corner.

In a dull and drab first half Usha got only one clear chance to break the deadlock before the breather but Moududur Rahman Shuvo missed an open net chance. Nadeem set up Shuvo but the Usha captain's hit went wide of the mark with only Railway custodian Imran Hossain to beat.

Usha's Pakistani trio looked very ordinary in their first appearance in Dhaka hockey, Pakistan Olympic team skipper Nadeem could have

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Leonine stay on top

SPORTS REPORTER

Title aspirants Leonine Chess Club overcame a big hurdle when they beat Muktiyoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra 2.5-1.5 in the fourth round of the Dutch-Bangla First Division Chess League at the federation hall room yesterday.

All Grand Master-studded Leonine dropped first points when their Vietnamese recruit Dao Thein Hai drew with his compatriot Ni Hua, Lukdashev Saidali of Uzbekistan shared point with Russian GM Igor Rausis and Vietnamese GM Nguyen Anh Dung split points with Pakistani International Master Tahir. Local Grand Master Niaz Murshed won against International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib.

The last year runners-up, however, maintained their solo lead with 14.5 points.

Defending champions Bangladesh Biman jumped to the second spot from third position securing

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Kabaddi team lose Test series

UNB, Dhaka

The visiting Bangladesh Kabaddi team lost the six-match Test series against India when they suffered their 4th consecutive defeat in Bhopal yesterday.

The world champions India came from behind to beat the visitors 42-30 to take an unbeatable 4-0 lead. Bangladesh dominated the first session 22-18.

Earlier, Bangladesh conceded a 28-44 defeat in Ahmedabad, 39-44 defeat in Ajmer and 33-46 defeat in New Delhi.

The fifth match will be take place in Dhanbad on December 1 and final match in Muzaffarpur the following day.

Brothers shocked

SPORTS REPORTER



Young Pegasus joined the Premier Cricket League's giant-killers' list when they snatched a thrilling two-wicket win over title chasers Brothers Union at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

It was the second biggest upset following defending champions Victoria Sporting Club's stunning loss to Agrani Bank on the opening day of 12-team league.

In the day's other match Indira Road Krira Chakra recorded a com-

prehensive 68-run victory against Uttara Sporting Club.

BROTHERS V YOUNG PEGASUS

Put in to bat, the much vaunted Brothers batting line was in trouble straightaway as paceman Momenul Kabir destroyed the top order. The seamer took the scalps of veteran Jahangir Alam (1), Aftab Ahmed (18) and skipper Halim Shah (0) while Forhad Reza dismissed Test opener Javed Omar (1) as the Gopibagh outfit slumped to 40-4. Kabir finished with 3-32.

Brothers were in a more precarious position at 85-7 after Atikur Rahman got in the act with 3-27. But Bangladesh pacer Tapash

Baisya's 44-ball 42 in a brave rear-guard action steered them to a face saving 171.

Tapash, who recently notched up his career-best Test innings against New Zealand in Chittagong, maintained the good form cracking four fours and two sixes. He received solid support from only number four Mustadir Litu (38 off 114 balls).

Tapash then threatened to run through the Pegasus batting by taking four for 27. But once his spell was over, Pegasus managed to crawl their way from 63-6 to 173-8 with seven balls to spare thanks to a captain's knock of unbeaten 53 (83 balls, 6x4) by Rezaul Islam.

Asadul contributed 24 during a

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SCORES IN BRIEF

Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium BANGLADESH BIMAN: 219 all out in 47.2 overs (Sunny 20, Sanwar 27, Mushfiq 55, Sharif 68, Alamgir 2-42, Manzarul 2-41).	Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium BROTHERS: 171 all out in 47.1 overs (Aftab 18, Litu 38, Nasirul 13, Fahim 14, Tapash 42, Kamrul 14, Humayun 3-32, Forhad 2-31, Atikur 3-27).	Venue: BKSP INDIRA ROAD KC: 243-7 in 50 overs (Imtiaz 12, Sahagiri 30, Jahirul 46, Shaown 15, Gahar 53, Maola 54 n.o, Ashkur 2-34, Anisul 2-36).
ABAHANI: 185 all out in 47.4 overs (Rosel 53, Naimur 50, Manzarul 28, Russell 2-24, Mushfiq 2-35, Sharif 2-43, Rubel 3-27). Result: Biman won by 34 runs.	PEGASUS: 173-8 in 48.5 overs (Hossain 12, Asadul 24, Rezaul 53 n.o, Kamal 15 n.o, extras 44; Tapash 4-27, Ziaur 2-35). Result: Pegasus won by two wickets.	UTTARA SC: 175 all out in 42.5 overs (Mahmood 14, Shaiful 56, Anisul 25, Mostafa 4-24, Imtiaz 2-29). Result: Indira Road won by 68 runs.

Bell guides England

Cricket

AFP, Harare

A half-century on his debut by Ian Bell inspired England to a five-wicket victory in the opening one-day international of their series against Zimbabwe here on Sunday.

Bell made 77 while captain Michael Vaughan chipped in with 56 as England, having bowled the hosts out for 195 off 49.3 overs, reached

197-5 off 48.4 overs in the first of their four meetings.

Bell and Vaughan -- who said on Saturday he would quit the tour if he had to shake the hand of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe -- put on a stand of 111 runs for the second wicket after Vikram Solanki went for seven.

However England suffered a minor wobble when they lost Bell and Paul Collingwood for just five runs leaving them at 175-5 but Kevin Pietersen and wicket keeper Geraint

Jones guided them to victory against a Zimbabwe side that can be proud of its performance given their inexperience.

Earlier Zimbabwe's innings had been rescued by 18-year-old Elton Chigumbura who shared an 82-run partnership with Dion Ebrahim with the youngster scoring 52 and bring up his third one-day-half-century.

England's veteran seamer Darren Gough -- who admitted he had only come on the tour reluc

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NEVER LOSE HOPE: Two Zimbabwean fans cheer their inexperienced side in the first ODI against England at Harare yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP