

Asian Age report makes Whatmore furious

SPORTS REPORTER

Dav Whatmore on Wednesday came down heavily on a news item published in a foreign daily that said the Bangladesh coach had struck a deal with BBC to commentate during Bangladesh's tour of England next month.

"This are all rubbish. I am a coach not a commentator," said an irate Whatmore while talking to Daily Star Sport on telephone from the Tigers' camp in Chittagong.

The 50-year-old added that he had clarified his position to Bangladesh Cricket Board's chief executive office Macky Dudhia.

Bangladesh team sources said the coach was in a grumpy mood during the morning's training session at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

"He was just furious with the report. He was surprised at the idea that a professional coach could act as a commentator during a match involving his team," said a senior cricketer.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) also confirmed on Wednesday that the report in Indian daily Asian Age was baseless.

"We spoke to Dav about the matter and he assured us that he never singed any such deal. However, we will not object to it if he wants to participate in post-match summaries," said BCB advisor and media committee chairman Reazuddin Al Mamun.



PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER
FEELS LIKE ENGLAND: Paceman Mashrafe-Bin-Mortuza takes cover under a big umbrella after a sudden spell of monsoon rain spoiled the morning training session of the England-bound Bangladesh squad at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium on Wednesday.

Tipu rejects MSC claim

SPORTS REPORTER

A day after Mohammedan Sporting Club announced Golam Sarwar Tipu as their new coach, the former national footballer rejected the claim.

Talking to The Daily Star Sport yesterday, the ex-national coach said that he had only agreed to help the club in trouble but he was never interested to return to club coaching.

"I have a long relationship with Mohammedan and I feel it to be my duty to assist them. But I am not physically or mentally fit to take over as full-time coach. The club officials had talked with me about this, but it was inconclusive," Tipu said.

Mohammedan, in a desperate attempt to restore pride after their humiliating 5-1 loss to archrivals Abahani, replaced manager Amirul Islam Babu with Intiaz Sultan Johnny on Tuesday and named Kazi Jashimuddin Joshi as assistant coach to Tipu. In-charge coaches Saiful Bari Titu and Mohammad Panir, who took over after the sacking of Korean coach Man Young Kang last month, have been named assistant managers.

"They are still trying to find a foreign coach and asked me to look after the team for a limited period. They are a crowd-pulling team and they had to show some activities after the big defeat. I think this is why they hurriedly named me as coach," told Tipu, adding that he would sit again with the officials after the Federation Cup.

"I am not a magician and it would be hard to motivate the players now. Joshi, who is one of my favourite students, is in charge now and if he seeks help from me, I will contribute. But I don't want to be directly involved in club coaching any more," added Tipu, who did not attend Mohammedan's yesterday's training under Joshi yesterday.

STANCHART CRICKET

Thumping Rayer Bazar, BLS wins

SPORTS REPORTER

Rayer Bazar and BLS High registered massive victories against their respective opponents in the Standard Chartered Under-15 Young Tigers National School Cricket yesterday.

Rayer Bazar (284) overwhelmed Udayan School (82) by 202 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while BLS (311) handed a 200-run defeat on Green Leaf International (111) at the Gulshan Youth club ground.

In the day's other matches, MDC Model Institute (127) beat Mirpur Adarsha Bidyaniketan (126) by five wickets, BCIR High (150) ran away with an exciting one-wicket victory over Maple Leaf International (149), Willes Little Flower (209) edged Islami Adarsha High School (201) by eight runs and Motijheel Government Boys' High (196) defeated Lalmatia Housing Society (195) by two wickets.

A predictable last four

SPORTS REPORTER

There was a possibility of a new face from outside the four established forces in the semifinal line up of the Federation Cup. But the prospect was nipped in the bud after Sheikh Russel suffered a stunning 1-0 defeat against no-hopers Youngmen's Club Fakirerpool in the first of the two final group league matches at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Russel boys were favourites by a distance when they started their match against the Premier League newcomers, whom they were leading 1-0 before rain washed out the game after 12 minutes on Tuesday, afresh.

But the Premier League runners-up, who needed a win by a big margin to put Brothers Union under pressure, were undone by a first-half stoppage time strike by Fakirerpool captain Tabith Awal.

The defeat made the second match involving Muktiyoddha Sangsad and Brothers Union only an academic affair and the sides happily settled for a 1-1 draw after their places in the last four were

guaranteed even before the kick-off.

Muktiyoddha emerged as Group A winners and set up a semifinal clash against Mohammedan Sporting Club tomorrow while Brothers will take on Group B winners Abahani the next day.

Having sealed their place in the last four with a 3-1 win over Youngmen's and a 2-1 victory against Sheikh Russel, Muktiyoddha rested key players like goalkeeper Aminul, Arman Mia, prolific scorer Paul Nwakwuchu and defence stalwarts Hassan Al Mamun, Harry and Belal.

Brothers, who were only assured of a semifinal slot after Youngmen's Club's victory, did not have the luxury to drop so many and fielded a full-strength squad excepting Russian forward Edward, who was serving a one-match ban.

Not only the players, but also

GROUP A POINTS TABLE						
Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA Pts
Muktiyoddha	3	2	1	0	6	3 7
Brothers	3	1	2	0	7	2 5
Youngmen's	3	1	0	2	2	8 3
Sheikh Russel	3	0	1	2	2	4 1

the referee looked relaxed as he allowed Brothers keeper Tareq to play with a number-less shirt with a big print on his chest, ignoring all rules of the book.

Neither the Oranges nor the Reds looked eager to break the deadlock and there was only one shot on goal in the entire first half. It was Amin Rana who found the Brothers net in the 42nd minute only to be disallowed as offside. Rana again came close just before the final whistle, but his weak header on a cross by Titu went straight into Tareq hands.

Brothers, who lost the Independence Cup final to Muktiyoddha and started this meet with a 1-1 draw with Sheikh Russel before thrashing Youngmen's 5-0, went ahead ten minutes into the second half. It was Khokon who separated the two sides when the bald headed striker leapt in the air at the near post to nod home a left-flank corner by Parvez Babu.

Parvez once again set a chance from the left half way through the second session, but this time Khokon's header could not trouble second choice Reds keeper Titumeer at all.

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PHOTO: STAR
Muktiyoddha and national defender Rajani Kanta Barman (L) intercepts the ball before Brothers Union forward Emily can take possession during their final group league match of the Federation Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Wednesday.



Did U Know?

Soccer is the most attended or watched sport in the world.



Dean Jones

(Former Australia Test batsman)
"I've been to India 58 times and enjoy the country and the public, so my hand is up. I am interested."
While making himself a candidate for the job of India's cricket coach.

Shamsur ton powers U-19s

SPORTS REPORTER

Shamsur Rahman hit the first century on the tour of Australia as Bangladesh Under-19 team recorded a thumping 151-run victory over Regional QAS squad in their eighth outing down under on Wednesday.

The right-hander slammed 101 and captain Mushfiqur Rahim, who has got a surprise call up to the England bound Tigers squad, contributed an unbeaten 40 as the visitors amassed 268 for 6 in the stipulated 50 overs.

Mehdi was the other notable scorer with 33.

In reply, QAS were bundled out for 117. Rezaul caused the most damage picking up four wickets for 12 runs while Milon took two for 10.

Bangladesh Under-19s have so far won seven out of their eight matches on tour including two against the Australian U-19s. The other match against the same Queensland selection finished in a tie on Monday.

'I can't please everyone'

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Ace Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar on Wednesday reacted strongly to criticism that he had become a pale shadow of his former attacking self, saying his aim was to serve the team, not to please everybody.

Tendulkar, the fourth-highest scorer with 10,134 runs in 123 Tests with 34 centuries, has recently been under fire for shedding much of his flamboyance, a hallmark of his batting for long.

Critics grew in numbers especially after his 98-ball 16 in the third and final Test against Pakistan at Bangalore last month, but the 32-year-old champion said his batting style had changed with his role in the team.

He reiterated that he was enjoying his batting as much as he did when he burst on to the scene as a 16-year-old prodigy and said that he was not too concerned about public opinion regarding his craft.

"I batted with a certain style when I was 16. At 20, I batted differently. It again changed when I was 25 and again when I turned 30. With age, my role in the team changed too," Tendulkar told the Hindu newspa-

per. "It's not that my batting has assumed a new character now. Please try to read my role and contribution in a team where I am the most senior player. Like others, I too think differently as I grow."

"Today, maybe Mahendra Dhoni would think and do what I did at 20."



SACHIN TENDULKAR

When I was 16 I saw Kapil Dev, Dilip Vengsarkar, Ravi Shastri. They had a certain role to play, and I had my own.

"Look, I've played as I wanted to. Not to please some individuals, but to serve my team and my country. It's difficult to please all the people."

So why worry about them."

Tendulkar, who has spent an amazing 16 of his 32 years in international cricket, said he was not worried over the latest criticism as long as he was convinced he had been serving his team.

"It's a process that everyone experiences. In the past too, batsmen have made changes when compelled by certain factors like age," said Tendulkar, one Test hundred short of smashing compatriot Sunil Gavaskar's world mark of 34.

He is also the world's highest run-getter in one-day internationals with 13,642 runs in 348 matches and a record 38 centuries.

"I can't fight these changes. They are natural. It's easy for these so-called experts to talk from outside," said Tendulkar.

"And who are these people. Look at their records. Honestly, I don't think we need to even discuss them and their comments."

"I know what my job is. As long as I am convinced that I have done my job honestly, why should I lose sleep over what people have to say about my cricket."

Tendulkar, who made his Test debut aged 16 in Pakistan in 1989, said he had now been experiencing

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PHOTO: AFP
THE HEROES: AC Milan's Danish forward Jonh Dahl Tomasson (R) celebrates with fellow striker Andriy Shevchenko after scoring against PSV Eindhoven at the San Siro stadium in Milan on April 26. Milan won the first leg of the Champions League semifinal 2-0.