

# A sweet Orange revenge

## BU lift Fed Cup after 14 yrs

SPORTS REPORTER



An early strike by Adil Okero gave Brothers Union the Federation Cup title after 14 years as well as a place in next year's AFC Cup with a 1-0 win over Muktiyoddha Sangsad yesterday.

Although the lacklustre final failed to enthrall a 10,000-strong crowd at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, it was a sweet revenge for Brothers who had lost the Independence Day Gold Cup final to Muktiyoddha last month.

Muktiyoddha drew early blood with Nigerian striker Paul Nwakwuchi getting possession inside the rival box even before the match was 30 seconds old. But he failed to utilise the defensive lapse as his shot from 15 yards ran harmlessly across the pitch.

Brothers settled in soon and Russian forward Victor tested Aminul with a long range shot in the fifth minute. Despite making a fine save, national number one custodian Aminul was outfoxed by Brothers' Moroccan striker Adil in the very next minute.

Adil, who got the nod in absence of compatriot midfielder Hicham Inani - suspended for the game - snatched the ball from Reds defender Belal at the right side and seeing Aminul out of his post, lobbed the goalkeeper outside from the box with his left foot to separate the two sides.

Brothers went on to dominate the rest of the half as striker Khokon, who was dropped to the midfield by veteran coach Wajed Gazi to mark Arman, successfully handcuffed the playmaker.

Enjoying superior ball possession, Brothers could further increase the lead but Adil failed to convert two chances created by Victor. Victor also burst through the rival backline three times after the break, but the prolific scorer failed to finish his solo moves.

Muktiyoddha on the other hand, missed Arman in the entire second half as he was forced to leave the ground following a rough tackle by Jewel Rana on the brink of half-time. Moreover, coach Shafiqul Islam Manik unnecessarily kept the ineffective third forward Enamul on the pitch for over an hour which certainly dampened the Reds' game plans, if there were any.

When Enamul was replaced by Bidyut, the midfield looked better and pressed hard in the last ten minutes for an equaliser. Their first real chance came in the 81st minute, but Kanchan's powerful volley on a long throw-in by Belal was foiled for a corner by young custodian Tareq.

Muktiyoddha had twin chances one minute before regulation time but Paul's effort was saved from the goalline while Tareq pulled off a spectacular save on Bidyut's rising shot on the rebound to ensure the Gopibagh outfit's third Federation Cup triumph.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5



IT TASTES EVEN SWEETER: Brothers Union's Moroccan forward Adil Okero (L), whose lone strike separated the teams in the Federation Cup final, kisses the trophy while goalkeeper Tareq (R), who made a few outstanding saves, is the toast of supporters after the title-decider against Muktiyoddha Sangsad at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Tuesday.



PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN



## Did U Know?

The world's highest golf course is the Tactu Golf Club in Morococha, Peru, which sits 14,335 feet above sea level at its lowest point.



Jacques Kallis (South Africa all-rounder)

"As a youngster, I never thought I would have achieved anything like this in my career. I learnt a lot from Gary (Kirsten) and it's a bit sad that I had to overtake him, but this has been the highlight of my career."

After becoming the South Africa's highest ever Test run-getter.

## Blatter cancels South Asian tour

SPORTS REPORTER

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has cancelled his South Asian tour this month.

The FIFA boss was expected to make a 24-hour visit to Dhaka during his tour of the region but Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) informed yesterday that he has cancelled his scheduled tour.

"We have been informed over telephone that he (Blatter) would not make this trip. But it was not possible to say the reasons behind the cancellation," said BFF general secretary Anwarul Haque Helal yesterday.

## U-15 cricketers lose opener

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-15 cricket team lost their first game in the tri-nation limited-over series against hosts Sri Lanka by two wickets at the Ranasinghe Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

Batting first, the visitors scored 135. The Sri Lanka Under-15s were 55-5 when rain stopped play and the home side, set a revised target of 124, reached home losing three more wickets.

Bangladesh will take on Malaysia, the other team in the tournament, in their second match today at the same venue.

## It's Rahim's turn to prove

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Like everyone, young wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim was also surprised when the national selectors included him in the 16-member Test squad for Tigers' first full series in England later this month.

Rahim was in Australia with the Under-19 team when the Faruque Ahmed-led selection panel picked the Bogra stumper for the demanding tour from outside the 20 probabilities.

"I could not believe it when my coach (Nazmul Abedin Fahim) told me after the second match against Australia Under-19 that I have been selected for the national side. It was beyond my imagination," said Rahim, who returned home on Friday from Australia. The 17-year-old was one of the three new faces in the national squad and his inclusion was more to give long-serving wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud some respite in the warm up matches ahead of the first Test at Lords from May 26.

Mashud is the lone man doing the job for over a decade and still nobody has stepped up to challenge the doughty Rajshahi cricketer.

Rahim also knows that very well.

"No doubt I am excited with the call but realistically I know I will have to play the role of a filler because

Mashud Bhai is still the best in the business. But I am confident that I can prove my inclusion if given the opportunity to play any match during the tour," he continued.

The talent of Rahim had been spotted when Australian trainer Andrew Self said after a six-week specialist training camp at BKSP that he could be a future Bangladesh wicketkeeper.

"Actually the camp helped me a lot to improve my performance which was reflected during the Bangladesh A team's tour in Zimbabwe" he added.

Rahim said that he is trying to establish himself as a top-class batsman besides a wicketkeeper.

"I met Andrew in Queensland during the recent tour and he suggested me to improve my batting to win a place in the national side. These days you have to be a batsman in addition to your wicketkeeping prowess," said Rahim, whose role model is Australian ace Adam Gilchrist.

Rahim, who led the Under-19 team to nine wins down under, said that his Australian experience would help him a lot in England.

"We played on grassy and bouncy wickets which is not common in the country. Both keeping and batting was difficult in that condition. I think it was a great experience for us," he informed.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

## Abahani beat MSC again

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani clinched the consolation third place in the Tibet 20th Federation Cup when they defeated archrivals Mohammedan Sporting Club 4-2 in the tiebreaker in yesterday's play-off match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Both the local giants were reluctant to take part in the play-off and the rumour was rife that the two losing semifinalists, who share 15 Federation Cup titles between them, would settle for a draw and let the penalty shoot-out decide the fate.

With Mohammedan fielding a very inexperienced side, resting captain Alfaz and Abahani forwards wasting sitter after sitter, the fans and critics eventually reached a verdict that the goalless 90 minutes was nothing but a 'pure friendly'.

The most notable part happened off the field when fans, bored by the dull football played by their beloved teams, chased out Muktiyoddha supporters and their hired brass band out of the galleries halfway through the second half.

In the shootout, Joy, Ndem, Pradeep and Ibrahim converted all their spot kicks for the Sky Blues who had beaten their archrivals 5-1 in the group match. Defenders Papel and Biplab scored for Mohammedan but Scylla was denied by Abahani goalkeeper Nizam and Asad struck the crossbar from 12 yards.

## Lee can be faster

REUTERS, New Delhi

Australia fast bowler Brett Lee said on Tuesday he believed he had still to reach his maximum speed as he fights to regain his Test place for this year's Ashes series against England.

"To me fast bowling is so exciting because I haven't even hit my maturity as a fast bowler," he told reporters. "If you ask me if I can go faster, yes, I definitely do think I can go faster."

Lee, 28, who has not played Test cricket for more than a year, told reporters he was frustrated that he had not been selected for the team despite proving his fitness in the one-day arena following ankle surgery.

"It has been very frustrating. It has been close to 15 months since I played a Test match," he said. "I spent six or seven months getting the ankle right and I come back to a team which is pretty much established and doing well."

"Fifteen months ago they (the selectors) told me they wanted me to get my ankle 100 percent, make sure I'm taking wickets and make sure my pace is somewhere close to what it was earlier."

"I have done everything I have been asked to do. So it is a bit frustrating why I'm not playing."

Lee, who ranks alongside Pakistan's Shoaib Akhtar as the world's fastest bowler with deliveries around 100 miles an hour (160 kph), said he could bowl faster still.

## Lara's 400 was on his mind

Cricket

REUTERS/AFP, St. John's

Chris Gayle kept teammate Brian Lara's world record uppermost while he became the fourth West Indian to score a triple century on the penultimate day of the final Test on Monday.

Lara heads the list, with his world record 400 not out last year, and 375 in 1994 against England, both coming at the Antigua Recreation Ground.

Sobers, who held the previous world record of 365 not out against Pakistan at Kingston in 1958, and Gayle's fellow Jamaican Lawrence Rowe with his silky 302 against England at Bridgetown in 1974, have also reached such rare heights for West Indies.

Jamaican Gayle scored 317 out of the West Indies' total of 565 for five, which they made in reply to South Africa's first innings of 588 for six declared.

Lara made the world record score of 400 not out against England at the same ground in

2003-04.

"I was trying to get as close as possible to 400, but it didn't happen and I'm satisfied with my performance," Gayle told a news conference.

"It would be a long way to come back if I had to start all over again. When will I reach this stage again?"

Gayle's innings was the highest by any batsman against South Africa and the 14th highest in Test history.

But he had been focused on Lara's milestone only.

"The only record I was thinking about was the 400," Gayle said.

Gayle batted for 10 and a half hours, faced 483 balls and hit 37 fours and three sixes.

He said he felt the strain of his long innings as it dragged on. "I take it session by session and build from there, but just after lunch I found myself lapsing and I called for some water," Gayle said.

On Sunday, when he reached 184 not out, Gayle dedicated his innings to his mother, Hazelyn Gilroy.

He said he had telephoned her after Sunday's play. "She was very happy, she said, 'Go get the next one,'" Gayle said.

Gayle hoped his innings would prompt the Jamaican government to allocate more resources to cricket.

"They're focused on football, which has become the number one sport in Jamaica, but they could take a lot more interest in cricket," he said.

## WINDIES TRIPLE-TONNERS

Brian Lara	-- 400 not out vs England at St. John's, 2004
Brian Lara	-- 375 vs England at St. John's, 1994
Garfield Sobers	-- 365 not out vs Pakistan at Kingston, 1958
Chris Gayle	-- 317 vs South Africa at St. John's, 2005
Lawrence Rowe	-- 302 vs England at Bridgetown, 1974

(Lara's 400 is the world record for highest individual score)

## 'We don't lack commitment'

AFP, St. John's

Criticism that the West Indies cricket team lack application were dismissed by Ramnaresh Sarwan, one of their century making heroes in the first innings of the fourth and final Test with South Africa.

The former vice-captain shared an unbroken second wicket partnership of 285 on Sunday with Chris Gayle and Sarwan, who was recording his eighth Test century, said the team's critics didn't know what they were talking about.

"Obviously, the people who are making the criticisms do not know the kind of hard work we have been doing behind closed doors," he said.

"I can't find words to explain how hard we have been working in the last few months. People are free to say what they wish. They will have their own opinions, but it's incumbent upon us to go out there and perform."

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

## What to WATCH

- ESPN**
- URFA Champions League Liverpool vs Chelsea Semifinal, Leg-2 Repeat at 11:00 am Sportscentre Live at 8:30 pm
  - URFA Champions League Psv Eindhoven vs Ac Milan Semifinal, Leg-2 Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)
- STAR Sports**
- ATP Rome Masters Series Second Round Live at 7:00 pm Sportsline Live at 8:00 pm
  - English Premier Football League Fulham vs Newcastle United Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)
  - Brazilian Football Figueirense vs Corinthians