

Of holiday and a slice of humour

Cricket

AL-AMIN from London

The Bangladesh team management declared Monday a holiday for the cricketers and the first sight of a nice little break after the three-day mismatch at Lord's was refreshing except for the return of typical English weather.

With the sun and rain making their blissful presence, the Bangladesh cricketers took little time to get ready for an outing after having a full course English breakfast. There were desperate attempts not to talk about cricket and to find a way out to forgetting that painful defeat in the first Test. But it seems the game has become a language for even every humour.

"You see, Khaled Mashud is the only man in the camp who could

adjust to the conditions and that's why he is wearing a T-shirt," remarked national selector Athar Ali Khan standing outside the Marriott Hotel.

Athar was in a riddle immediately after that when a street-smart Shahriar Nafees also wearing a T-shirt and a three-quarter casually crossed him after having a small rain bath.

"This boy also looks smart and I think his attire shows that he ready to play in the next game," said a witty Athar, who was waiting at the gate for a taxi to take him to Oxford Circus.

And inside the hotel lobby prior to that Khaled Mashud was trying to give the impression that he might be a good commentator. He was throwing all the questions to teammate Mohammad Rafique while the left-arm spinner appeared in front of a Bangladeshi private TV channel.

It was an animated discussion with Mashud at one stage asking why Rafique refused to bowl from the Nursery End, which has been a feature of Lord's as spinners tend to bowl from there.

The answer from the slow-left arm bowler can be best described as humorous as it can get.

"Is it written in the law book that I will have to bowl from that end? I've decided bowl from the other end because I felt comfortable from that end."

Mashud then asked what drives him to bowl so confidently in any condition and against any opponent.

"I'm a professional. My job is to start bowling in the morning and finish it off before night," said the leading wicket-taker of the country.



Wanderers goalkeeper Sohel leaps in the air to grip the ball from a Muktijoddha corner during their Premier League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Monday.

Reds make solid start

SPORTS REPORTER

Left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak Raj captured five wickets but BCB Red still managed a decent total on the first day of the three-day trial match against BCB Green at BKSP yesterday.

Alok Kapali won the toss and decided to bat however the Reds were struggling at 89-5 before a 88-run sixth wicket partnership between Hasanuzzaman and Shahin Hossain enabled them to finish on 259-7.

Hasanuzzaman made 70 off 120 balls that featured eight fours and two sixes before he was one of three lbw victims of out-of-favour Raj while wicketkeeper Shahin, a successful run-getter in the National League, remained not out on 77 (153 balls, 10x4, 1x6).

Number nine batsman Alamgir Kabir shared a fruitful 74-run association for the unbroken eighth-wicket stand with Shahin. Alamgir scored not out 35 off 63 balls.

Raj finished the day with five for 59 in 30 overs while Shafiqul Jabir and Sakib Al Hasan took one wicket each.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BCB RED: First innings 259-7 in 90 overs (Imran Ahmed 20, Golam Rahman 0, Nasiruddin Faruque 20, Alok Kapali 26, Farhad Reza 0, Hasanuzzaman 70, Shahin not out 77, Mosharrif Hossain 1, Alamgir 35 not out, extras 10, Shafiqul 1-63, Raj 5-59, Sakib 1-23).

Aussie greats want B'desh expelled

REUTERS/AFP, undated

Struggling Bangladesh should not be at playing at Test level, says Australia leg-spinner Shane Warne.

"At the moment, I feel sorry for the Bangladesh players because they are getting mauled time and time again," Warne wrote in a column for the Times newspaper on Monday.

"It is all very well to say that they are gaining experience, but how do you improve when you are being embarrassed and humiliated in public week after week?"

"Looking at international cricket overall, it is clear that taking away Bangladesh and Zimbabwe would free up time in the schedule."

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Fazal Mahmood no more

Cricket

AGENCIES, Lahore

Former Pakistan cricket great Fazal Mahmood, known here as the "Hero of the Oval", died at his Lahore home after suffering a heart attack, his family said. He was 78.

Mahmood was famed for taking 12 wickets at The Oval ground in London in Pakistan's first year in Test cricket in 1954, as well as in the country's two inaugural wins at Lucknow, India.

"Mahmood suffered a heart attack which he couldn't survive. He was otherwise healthy and used to go to his office even after a prostate operation," his son Shahzad Mahmood told AFP.

Known as the Alec Bedser of the Pakistan game because of his metronomic accuracy and ability to move the ball both ways, Mahmood played 34 Tests, taking 139 wickets and also led Pakistan in 10 Test matches between 1952 and 1962.

Before the partition of India and Pakistan Mahmood played in the Ranji Trophy for Northern India and although selected for India's tour to Australia in 1946 he chose to migrate to Pakistan where he earned a living as a police officer.

He was remembered for his devastating leg-cutters as a medium pacer, often unplayable on the matting pitches used on the

subcontinent before grass turf pitches were introduced.

He took 12 for 99 at The Oval on Pakistan's 1954 tour, highlighted by the British media which reported: "England Fazal-ed."



FAZAL MAHMOOD ... 1927-2005

Mahmood, a tall medium-pacer with immaculate control and deceptive late movement, also played a lead role in Pakistan's first ever win over Australia, taking 13 for 114 at Karachi in 1955.

Mahmood, however, will forever be remembered for his heroics at The Oval in a thrilling series-leveling victory. His second-innings figures of 6 for 46 included the prize scalps of Peter May and Denis Compton, as England slumped from 109 for 2 to 143 all out, to lose by a mere 24 runs. That performance earned him the accolade of being

one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year in 1955.

Often compared to Australian all-rounder Keith Miller for his charisma and ability to appeal to both male and female fans, he was also regarded as the Imran Khan of the 1950s.

Alongside his contemporaries, Imtiaz Ahmed and Hanif Mohammad, Mahmood was often referred to as one of the icons of Pakistan cricket, and the Pakistan Cricket Board was swift to send its condolences to his family.

Former opening batsman Hanif said, "Mahmood was a great human being, always willing to help anyone who sought his advice. He was the doyen of Pakistan bowlers in the formative years and all our wins since we started playing Test cricket were indebted to him. It was just because of his bowling feats that Pakistan achieved the rare honour of beating every country in our early series in 1950s and 60s."

His former teammate Nasimul Ghani said, "I played with him for three years and he was a true fast bowler, a great gentleman and great ambassador for the game." Current fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar said, "A great chapter of fast bowling has ended today. Mahmood was always kind and generous to me and it's a loss for all the cricket players in Pakistan for he was the torch bearer."

Giles to miss 2nd Test too

AFP, London

Ashley Giles will miss the second and final Test against Bangladesh starting at the Riverside on Friday with the same hip problem that sidelined him from England's win over the Asian minnows in the first Test at Lord's on Saturday.

"He won't be ready for the next Test, we leave him out and hope he will be ready for the one-dayers," said England coach Duncan Fletcher of left-arm spinner Giles, who could yet need surgery on the problem cartilage.

Worcestershire off-spinner Gareth Batty, who neither batted nor bowled at Lord's, is likely to retain his place in the side. England name their squad for the second Test on Tuesday.

Pepsi v'ball from June 7

SPORTS REPORTER

The final round of the Pepsi inter-district volleyball competition begins at the Dhanmondi Women Sports Complex on June 7.

Defending champions Rajbari, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Pabna, Khulna, Gazipur, Tangail and Magura will take part in the final round.

The teams has been asked to report on June 2 at 7pm at the venue.

Abahani, Mukti off the mark

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Just like Brothers Union, title contenders Abahani and Muktijoddha Sangsard also won their Premier Bank Premier Football League opener with identical 2-1 wins yesterday.

But unlike the defending champions, Abahani and Muktijoddha both had to sweat against their understrength opponents to return with full points from the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

MUKTIJODDHA-WANDERERS
Kanchan and substitute Amin Rana utilised two setpieces by Arman Mia as Muktijoddha edged Dhaka

Wanderers in the day's first match.

After a dull start, Arman's 20-yard freekick was thwarted by Wanderers keeper Sohel in the 25th minute but he had no clue to another Arman setpiece four minutes later. The Muktijoddha midfielder floated the ball with the outside of his right foot and Kanchan made no mistake to put a glancing header past Sohel.

Wanderers fought equally and came close to equalising in the 41st minute when Aminul choked on a long-range shot by Apu but a lurking Sadeq placed the rebound back to the Muktijoddha goalie.

They finally drew level seven minutes after the break when midfielder Jalaluddin placed a rebound home after Nurul Islam's shot came off Aminul's grip.

The Reds, who finished fourth last year, rode on experience to grab

the match winner from a 78th minute freekick. This time, the Wanderers backline failed to clear Arman's chip from the right and Rana, who came to the pitch after halftime, fired the ball through a packed defence.

Woodwork helped Muktijoddha conjure a great escape deep in injury time when Wanderers' veteran striker Milon rattled the sidebar after Jalaluddin did the hard work on the left.

Yellow cards: Saiful, Biddyt (Muktijoddha) and Sohel, Jhontu (Youngmen's).

TEAMS
MUKTIJODDHA: Aminul, Harry, SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Most players are not internally motivated

Richard McInness, Bangladesh Cricket Board's first High Performance Manager and coach of the Under 19 and A teams, will leave the country for his native Australia on Wednesday as he has already joined the Commonwealth Bank Cricket Academy in Brisbane. The 30-year-old, who had led the Under 19s to the Plate Championship in the U-19 World Cup in Bangladesh in 2004 where they defeated Australia and also seen the majority of the boys he had worked with graduate to the Test level during his tenure, spoke to RABEED IMAM Of Daily Star Sport on Monday about his two-year experience in Bangladesh.

Rabeed Imam (RI): Are you leaving because your contract is about to expire?

RICHARD MCINNESS (RM): The contract wasn't supposed to expire until September, so I'm definitely leaving on my terms. I was offered a very good position with the BCB but in Australia if you don't take the kind of offer I had received from Cricket Australia, the next chance might not come in another three years. We were very happy here and I would have continued if Cricket Australia hadn't showed interest. Infact my wife was pretty disappointed that we had to move. She had made some friend friends here but with a new addition to the family and due to some other con-

siderations, I thought this was the



RICHARD MCINNESS

time.

RI: Are you satisfied with the work you have put here?

RM: Well, the under-19s, they are a lot better players than they were two years ago. They are a little bit out of their level playing against the second best team in the world at the moment, but we have definitely

"Unfortunately Dav never asked me. But with so many of my boys in the team, it would have been useful because I know what to tell Rajib when he is down or any other player of that group for that matter."

made a lot of progress.

RI: Did you ever feel frustrated that some of your young players were being picked for the main team before they were ready?

RM: It was frustrating at times but having said that, I also understood the reason. These guys are probably the best in their positions in the team. I agree that it is too early to pick Rajib (Shahadat Hossain), Nafees (Iqbal), Rahim (Mushfiqur), Aftab (Ahmed), Abeer (Shahriar Nafees) and all those guys who should not be playing Test cricket in another five years. But saying that, there is no one in Bangladesh who will do any better than they will.

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Did U Know?

Bangladesh lost their 18th overseas Test out of the 20 played till date. Their two successive drawn Tests on foreign soil have been - vs. Zimbabwe at Bulawayo in March and vs. West Indies at Gros Islet in May/June last year.

What to WATCH

TEN Sports
French Open
Singles Quarterfinals, Day 9
Live at 4:00 pm
ESPN
Sportscentre
Live at 10:30 pm
STAR Sports
Azlan Shah Cup Hockey
Pakistan vs Australia
Live at 4:00 pm
India vs South Korea
Live at 6:00 pm
Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm

DAY'S EVENT

Premier Football League
Mohammedan vs Arambagh (5:00 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Men's champ Gaudio crashes out

Sharapova-Henin qtrs clash



AP, Paris

Maria Sharapova won in 10 minutes Monday at the French Open. Justine Henin-Hardenne took a lot longer.

Henin-Hardenne played for 3 hours, 15 minutes and overcame two match points for a fourth-round victory over reigning US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova, 7-6, 4-6, 7-5.

The Belgian's opponent in the quarterfinals Tuesday will be second-seeded Sharapova, who swept the final three games to complete a match suspended overnight because of rain. She beat Nuria Llagostera Vives 6-2, 6-3.

Both 2004 men's finalists were eliminated. Defending champion Gaston Gaudio blew a 4-0 lead in the final set and lost to No 20 David Ferrer, 2-6, 6-4, 7-6, 5-7, 6-4. Number eight seed Guillermo Coria, beaten by Gaudio in last year's final, was eliminated by No 12 Nikolay Davydenko 2-6, 6-3, 7-6, 6-2.

Ninth seeded Guillermo Canas advanced to the quarterfinals when Nicolas Kiefer withdrew hours before their match because of a sore neck.

Ana Ivanovic became the third teenager to reach the women's quarterfinals. The 17-year-old Serb beat Francesca Schiavone 6-4, 6-7, 6-3 and will next play Nadia Petrova.

Henin-Hardenne occasionally grimaced from a back injury that has bothered her for weeks, but she still rallied past Kuznetsova, sweeping



PHOTO: AFP

Russian starlet Maria Sharapova exults on winning a point in her match at the French Open on Monday.

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