



Bangladesh all-rounder Khaled Mahmud (R) takes a look at his handycam while Khaled Mashud sits beside him at the Derbyshire County Cricket Club ground on Thursday.

Whatmore's demand

Bangladesh-Derbyshire 1-dayer today

Cricket

AL-AMIN from Derby

Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore wants a kick-start from his boys in the first practice match before they launch their campaign in the triangular one-day series against hosts England at The Oval on June 16.

The 50-year-old Australian also said that every member of his side will get their fair share of opportunity in the two warm-up games including the second match against Worcestershire on June 12 where Pakistan pace demon Shoaib Akhtar is likely to bowl against them.

The team management meanwhile announced the eleven for Friday's game against Derbyshire

with three of the four players, who joined the one-day squad after the Test series was over, getting the chance of much-needed match practice after having little or no training at home.

They are all-rounder Khaled Mahmud, batsman Tushar Imran and paceman Nazmul Hossain. The selectors decided to rest Mohammad Ashraful, young Shahrir Islam, left-arm spinner Manzurul Islam and paceman Tapash Baisya, who has complained of having pain in his right knee.

Skipper Habibul Bashar will lead the side in the day-night game.

"This is an opportunity to get used to one-day cricket, back to facing the white ball and try to do better than what we did here in September when the ball moved a

bit and we lost lot of wickets early," said Whatmore after appearing in an interview with TransWorld International at the Derby ground.

The Bangladesh coach was understandably not happy with the just concluded Test series that the Tigers lost 2-0 and was also feeling the pinch of a poor showing when Bangladesh came here last September to feature in the ICC Champions Trophy.

"We want to start well whether we bat first or bowl first and it helps things when you start well and that's what we have not done yet," Whatmore said.

Asked how difficult would it be for the four cricketers to adjust to conditions after having no practice at home, Whatmore said that he was

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First big match today

SPORTS REPORTER

The third round of the Premier Football League ends today with Mohammadian Sporting Club taking on Muktijoddha Sangsads in the first big match of the most coveted domestic competition.

The top-of-the-table clash will kick off at 5pm at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Both teams have six points from two wins but Muktijoddha, who began the season with more promises, have struggled in the league. Unlike the Reds who edged Dhaka Wanderers 2-1 before upsetting a fiery Arambagh 4-3, Mohammadian won both their matches comfortably.

The Black and Whites, who lost to Muktijoddha twice in two tournaments and failed to reach any of the finals, flourished in the league with their all-local side beating Arambagh 3-1 and Dipali 4-1.

Mohammadian, however, are expected to field their first foreign player in the league today. Having watched seven foreign imports at training, they have finally selected Moroccan midfielder Mohammed Regeragui and Sierra Leone's Donald but only the Moroccan's transfer papers have arrived.

Regeragui's inclusion will give Jashimuddin Joshi -- the third Mohammadian coach this year -- some relief as he will miss two regular players, Faisal Mahmud and Manju, through injury. This match will also be the first of a series of big matches for Mohammadian who play Abahani, Sheikh Russel and Brothers Union next.

His Muktijoddha counterpart Shafiqul Islam Manik also has a new face in Nigerian striker Ernest Jeremiah, who joined the Reds from Kolkata giants East Bengal. He will fill the absence of injured Moni but the Mukti coach was unsure about an immediate impact.

"He has had just one day's practice with us and how he copes with the new team will depend on him. He is a professional and I think it won't be much difficult," commented Manik on the latest arrival.

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Argentine midfielder Juan Roman Riquelme (C) starts celebrating his goal against Brazil on Wednesday at the Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires. PHOTO: AFP

CONMEBOL ZONE QUALIFIERS

Argentina book ticket via Brazil



REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Argentina qualified for the World Cup in the best possible manner on Wednesday, with a 3-1 home win over arch-rivals and world champions Brazil.

Colombia and Chile won home matches for the second time in five days, beating Ecuador 3-0 and

Venezuela 2-1 respectively, to boost their chances of emerging from the 10-nation South American qualifying group.

Meanwhile, Paraguay, thumped 4-1 by Brazil on Sunday, reversed the scoreline against Bolivia to stay in contention.

Argentina stunned their opponents in Buenos Aires by rushing to a 3-0 half-time lead with two goals from striker Hernan Crespo, who took his tally in the tournament to seven, and a world-class strike from Juan Roman Riquelme.

Brazil recovered to dominate the second half, pulling one back with a

trademark Roberto Carlos free kick and hitting the post through Adriano in the 84th minute.

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira said: "Beating Paraguay wasn't paradise, so this isn't hell. Our target is still intact."

Argentina lead the standings with 31 points from 15 games and secured their place in Germany with three matches to play.

Brazil, the only country to have played at all 17 World Cups, is second on 27 and need only three more points to maintain their proud record.

Ecuador (23), Paraguay (22) and

Colombia and Chile (20) appear to be fighting for the other two direct places or fifth spot, which earns a two-leg play-off against the winners of the Oceania region.

Uruguay (18), who drew 0-0 in Peru on Tuesday, still have an outside chance while Peru (15), Venezuela (15) and Bolivia (13) are effectively out of the running.

Brazil paid dearly for a shoddy start when they left Crespo all alone to open the scoring in the fourth minute.

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Derby relish Tigers' visit

Cricket

AL-AMIN from Derby

Bangladesh's tour of England is not about to get any easier.

Fresh from being whipped inside three days by England in both their two Tests, the tourists learned on Wednesday that they would come up against Pakistan's Shoaib Akhtar in a one-day match against Worcestershire on Sunday.

It will be the pace bowler's first appearance for the English county and, ominously for Bangladesh, it is being billed as an opportunity for him to demonstrate that Pakistan were wrong to drop him from their Test squad.

"Shoaib has settled in well since arriving last week and this game is an ideal opportunity for him to show everybody how well he is bowling," Worcestershire chief executive Mark Newton said.

If the Bangladesh batsmen are concerned about the prospect of facing one of the fastest bowlers in world cricket, their management are not letting on -- they agreed to let him play although his Worcestershire contract does not officially begin until July 1.

The match against the county is part of Bangladesh's preparation for a one-day triangular series against England and Australia which starts next week.

1969 clinched the Sunday League in 1980, the Benson and Hedges three years later and finish runners-up in the NatWest Challenge trophy in 1998.

Derby might be fielding a side minus a star name with Zimbabwean all-rounder Travis Friend unavailable due to a stress fracture.

Friend said he would have liked to play against Bangladesh after his first game at Dhaka three years ago.

He felt that Bangladesh had a better future than Zimbabwe in Test cricket.

Friend said he saw the two-Test series against England and rubbed the claim that Bangladesh should be stripped of their status.

"I have seen a lot of youngsters

Full mark for Mohakhali

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohakhali Ekadash maintained their impressive run in the First Division Football League when they blanked Wari Club 3-0 at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Zakir opened the account in the 37th minute while Alauddin and Sumi added the rest in the second half for Mohakhali, who raised their tally to 13 points with their fourth win from six encounters. Wari's fourth defeat left them on four points after same number of matches.

Pabna-Rajbari final today

SPORTS REPORTER

Pabna will take on Rajbari in today's final of the Pepsi inter-district women's volleyball tournament at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex.

Pabna defeated Rajshahi 25-22, 25-23, 14-25, 17-25, 15-11 in the keenly contested second semifinal while Rajbari eliminated Tangail 25-11, 25-11 and 25-19 in the first semi yesterday at the same venue.

What to WATCH

STAR Sports

Wimbledon Official Film 1986
Taped version at 4.30 pm

Sportline

Live at 8 pm

TEN Sports

South American WC Qualifier
Argentina v Brazil

Repeated at 2.30 pm

ESPN

Sportscentre

Live 8.30 pm

Tipu rescues Abahani

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

A late equaliser by substitute striker Shahjuddin Tipu salvaged one point for Abahani who slumped to a 1-1 draw against Arambagh Krira Sangha in the Premier Bank Premier Football League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Thursday.

Arambagh, who came to the third round match without a single point, were leading the first half 1-0 through a spectacular strike by Abu Morshed but could not sustain the lead under tremendous Sky Blues pressure.

Title contenders Abahani, who won both their earlier two games, must blame their forwards for wasting a series of chances and drop valuable points. Abahani could have gone ahead 12 minutes after the start but Farhad, set free by Cameroonian midfielder Ndem, took a feeble shot straight to Arambagh keeper Shakil inside from the box.

Arambagh went ahead in the very next minute on a counter-attack, utilising a misunderstanding between Abahani defender Shipon and custodian Nizam. Morshed intercepted Shipon's backheader toward an outrushing Nizam at the right side of the box and magnificently lobbed the ball into an open net with his left foot.

Abahani did not produce the polished passing game they had played in their 4-1 defeat of Dhaka Wanderers in the previous match but created enough chances to take full three points. But captain Joy's chip from the edge of the penalty

area went out after kissing the crossbar three minutes later.

The Arambagh backline, which conceded six goals in two matches, looked much better with the arrival of Ghana's Charles Ghansah who was released by Muktijoddha for the league.

And the tall centre-back, also an ex-Abahani player, pulled off a superb goal-line save nine minutes

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before the whistle.

Tipu, who had been on the bench

since the start of the match,

came on in the 75th minute and

scored the equaliser.

Abahani's Russell (R) tries to keep possession against Zahid of Abahani during their Premier Bank Premier Football League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Thursday.



PHOTO: STAR

DAY'S EVENT

Premier Football League

Muktijoddha vs Mohammadian (5:00 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium