

Rajin stumps everybody

AL-AMIN from Worcester

It was a scary sight when Bangladesh came onto the field with Rajin Saleh wearing the wicketkeeper's gloves.

The middle-order batsman was not supposed to play in the second practice game and he was actually 12th man in the team list provided before the game.

So what happened to the inseparable Bangladesh wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud?

"He complained of a pain in his right thumb during practice before the game. So, we decided to rest him and asked Rajin to put the gloves on," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed.

But Faruque said that Mashud would be okay before Bangladesh's first one-day international against England at The Oval on June 16.

"He sustained the injury in the first practice game at Derby and looked uncomfortable in the morning. Since he is our key player we did not want to take any chances."

Rajin might have been struggling for runs so far on the tour, but the dapper right-hander enjoyed the surprise role behind the wicket, taking a low catch to dismiss Worcestershire opener SM Davies off the bowling of Nazmul Hossain. He also stopped some wide deliveries down the leg side.

All depends on Qamar's return

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) has decided to go for another coach if their Pakistani trainer Qamar Ibrahim fails to join by first week of July.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5



PHOTO: COURTESY

Bangladesh paceman Nazmul Hossain (R) is elated after dismissing Worcestershire opener Steven Davies during their one-day match at Worcester on Sunday.

Nazmul Tigers' spark

Cricket

AL-AMIN from Worcester

A local reporter called it disgusting weather with tons of cloud hanging over the Worcestershire County Cricket Club ground. But thankfully it did not rain and Bangladesh enjoyed a field day in damp weather.

And for a handful of Bangladeshi supporters among the two thousand-odd crowd it was a refreshing experience watching the bowlers getting on top of the home side after stand-in Worcestershire captain Ben Smith won the toss and decided to bat. Regular captain Graeme Hick, one of the most successful batsmen in county cricket with 97 first-class hundreds decided to take rest.

Sri Lankan paceman Chaminda Vaas, who took a hat-trick against Bangladesh in the 2003 World Cup in South Africa, also decided to rest.

Young Nazmul Hossain playing

his second match of the tour was again very impressive following his two wickets in Derby.

Bowling from the Basil D'Oliveira stand, named after the famous South African cricketer who played 44 Tests for England, the right-arm removed both the Worcestershire openers Moore (9) and left-handed Davies (11) to effectively end the possibility of fireworks in the first 15 overs.

He bowled Moore with a fast and furious delivery that nipped back and knocked the off-stump. Left-handed Davies edged another inswinger from Nazmul and Rajin plucked it diving forward.

Together with more experienced Tapash Baishya, Nazmul really tested the opponent batsmen in the first 12 overs that yielded 43 runs and earned Bangladesh two wickets.

Nazmul then returned to bowl in the 37th over from the other end and dismissed wicketkeeper Pipe for 22.

Khaled Mahmud with his military

medium pace took two wickets in one over and then returned to remove the last batsman in the 45th over to finish with 29-3 in 7.1 overs.

Left-arm spinner Manzarul Islam got a wicket in his first over and then bowled Pakistan paceman Shoaib Akhtar (11) to finish with 21-2 in nine overs.

Shoaib making his debut for Worcestershire entertained the crowd with two lusty blows for four but was caught in no mans land as he charged down the ground against Manzarul.

Aftab also bowled his 10 overs and took the wicket of Mitchel (2).

Bruyn top-scored with 34 for Worcestershire and hit the first six of the match – a huge heave over mid-wicket against Tapash Baishya.

Tapash also got his reward for maintaining a disciplined line. He dismissed Zimbabwean off-spinner Raymond Price (7) to finish with 41-1 from his 10 overs.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Inzamam looks ahead

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan's failure to win their Test series against the West Indies is a black spot for the country's fast-maturing side, captain Inzamamul Haq said Sunday, while voicing hopes for a good result against England and India this year.

"We have players who have been there for two years now and although the team is maturing, not winning a Test series is worrying for me," said Inzamam.

"The coming season is very important and I hope that we produce some good results, win a Test series and show the signs of a top

team."

The team returned late on Friday from Jamaica where Inzamam's century lifted his side to a 136-run win last week, ending the series in a 1-1 draw, after Pakistan scored a 3-0 win in the one-day series against the West Indies.

Before the Caribbean tour, Pakistan also tied a Test series 1-1 in India earlier this year following a 1-1 draw against Sri Lanka at home last year.

Pakistan lost 3-0 to Australia in the 2003-2004 season and suffered a 2-1 home series loss to India last year, but beat New Zealand 1-0 in January last year.

Pakistan hosts England for a three-match Test and five-match one-day series from October-

December this year followed by another home series of three Tests and five one-dayers against rivals India early next year.

They also host the Asia Cup one-day tournament in February next year to be participated by India, Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates and Oman beside defend

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4

Shoaib the showman!

AL-AMIN from Worcester

Shoaib Akhtar is showy and that is what many people believe. But the Pakistani pace bowler can afford to be like that because it hardly affects his performance on the ground.

The 'Rawalpindi Express' has been out of the international scene for quite sometime but he has got a quite strong fan following wherever he goes.

He was playing his first game for Worcestershire against Bangladesh on Sunday and the holiday crowd here cheered his every noticeable movement on the field.

After hitting two cracking boundaries the Pakistani pace demon took the ball in his hand when Bangladesh came out to bat needing 168 runs for victory. He was really hitting the deck and Javed Omar had no clues as those thunderbolts flew past him.

"Do you like it this way," remarked Shoaib as he strolled to third man after finishing his first over amidst applause from the stands.

His first spell read 4-1-4-1 that included the wicket of Rajin Saleh, who fended a sharp rising ball behind the wicket.

He also entertained the crowd when he fixed a new footmark for umpire Steve Garrath who went along with the fun.

And finally Shoaib drew children like honeybees and cheerfully obliged those tiny autograph hunters.

Enamul will join BD A camp next week

SPORTS REPORTER

Left-arm spinner Enamul Haque will not join the Bangladesh A team camp today due to groin injury.

"It is nothing serious but the doctor advised that I need at least another week to recovery. So, I will join the camp next week," said the young bowler over telephone from Sylhet.

The teenage tweeker, who had played only two practice matches in England, returned home a few days ago along with four other players after Bangladesh's two-match Test series against the home team.

A 15-member second string Bangladesh team was announced on Saturday for the July-August trip in England but only ten players are expected to join the camp today as four players -- captain Shahriar Nafees, Nafees Iqbal, Tushar Imran and Aftab Ahmed -- are now touring with the senior side.

Coach Shaun Williams will conduct a residential camp at the BKSP with the assistance of four local coaches.

The team is expected to leave Dhaka on July 15 to play five three-day games and four limited-over matches.

Div I soccer

SPORTS REPORTER

The lone First Division Football League match between Wari Club and BRTC Sporting Club ended in a 1-1 draw at the Birsheshthra Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalpur yesterday.

Nazmul put Wari ahead in the fourth minute but Shamim ensured BRTC enjoyed a share of the points with a goal in the 30th minute.

Wari finished the first-leg securing five points while BRTC bagged three points from seven matches.

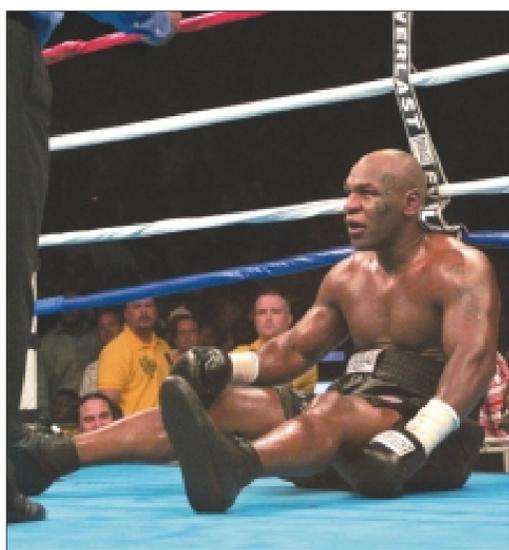


PHOTO: AFP

KNOCKED OUT FOR GOOD: Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson lies on the canvas after being pummeled by Kevin McBride of Ireland at the MCI Centre in Washington DC on Saturday.

MSC officials irk Emeka

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Emeka Ezeugo looked an unhappy man as he watched Sunday's Premier Football League fixture at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

A Nigerian Olympian in 1988 and a World Cupper in 1994, Emeka had enthralled the local football fans in the late 80s and had returned to Bangladesh with high hopes after being promised a coaching position with his old club Mohammedan. But what he has found out to his dismay is that the standard of football has gone down remarkably in this country and the present officials of the Black and Whites are not the warm, dedicated souls he used to know.

"I had played some great games with great players here but now all I see is rubbish," said the 38-year-old.

"Players do not move with the ball now. Only two or three are involved with the ball while the others just watch. They play like school kids. It just can't go on like this."

Emeka was also puzzled by the way the Mohammedan officials have treated him since he arrived in Dhaka last month following repeated requests from the club.

"They were desperate to bring me here. They were almost weeping on the phone. They begged me to join as coach and also to bring some footballers for the club as the team was going through a crisis. But now, two top officials of the club have shut the door on my face saying they can not afford me."

"They have chosen to field a foreign player who is not even good

enough for 90 minutes while rejecting the boys I have brought along with me. They had requested me to bring cheap players who would cost between 3-5 thousand dollars. It would have been possible for me to bring Kanu (Nwanko) or Jay Jay (Okocha) even if they could afford such big players."

Rumour had surfaced that Emeka demanded about US dollars

and salvage the club I love, but things here are not like they were in the past," said Emeka who is now settled in New York.

"I had reached great heights after playing here so my love for this country and Mohammedan is everlasting. I came here to repay my debts but the club officials but those who are running it now are not working for the interest of the club. They are only interested in their businesses. This is the reason why Mohammedan have not won any trophies recently," said Emeka who last played for the club in 1988.

"Mohammedan is a people's club but the supporters are dead. How could this happen to such a great club? The men who were there when I was here, are no longer in the limelight."

Emeka had to spend three years in a London hospital following a severe road accident in Nigeria in December 1994 after he had played for the Super Eagles in the USA World Cup earlier that year. He was recalled in the 1998 World Cup squad but decided not to join.

"The entire left side of my body was broken after a truck ran over my car. I recovered and my country thought I was fit to play. But I got involved in coaching and decided to stay out of the national team," said Emeka, who played in Holland, Spain and Hungary after leaving Bangladesh.

Emeka, who last coached Peru's Premier League club Deportivo Municipal, is a UEFA B-licence holder from Holland. He added that he was looking forward to staying in Bangladesh a little longer and was prepared to help other clubs if things did not work out with Mohammedan. Already a few clubs have shown interest in his service, said the Nigerian.



EMEKA EZEUGO

18,000 per month as salary but the Nigerian refused that saying he was prepared to work for 5,000 dollars a month.

"I was supposed to start a coaching job in New York from tomorrow for 20,000 dollars per month. I have made great sacrifices to come here



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Russel KC's Moroccan striker Majid (R) puts the ball past Arambagh goalkeeper Shakil (L) in their Premier Bank Premier Football League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Sunday.

Majid makes his mark

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Moroccan striker Abdul Majid scored twice on his Dhaka debut as Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra returned to winning ways in the Premier Bank Premier Football League with a 2-0 defeat of Arambagh Krira Sangha yesterday.

Russel did not look impressive in the goalless first half in spite of including their third foreigner Majid - who replaced their top scorer Yusuf -- but a lively performance

after the break saw last year's runners-up pull off their second win at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The victory increased Russel's

tally seven and they are now joint third in the standings.

On the other hand, Arambagh who snatched their first point in the last round from Abahani, suffered their third loss.

Russel, who came to the fourth round game on the back of a draw against Dhaka Wanderers, created three half chances but Majid failed to threaten the rival keeper Shakil on the first two occasions. The best chance came on the stroke of the halftime when Nayan set him up inside the box but Shakil tipped the ball out for a corner.

Arambagh earned their lone chance five minutes after the break but Russel custodian Biplab made a fine save at the near post to deny Kenyan striker Dominic, who fired the ball from close after his second

attempt off a square pass from Ridon.

Majid then broke the deadlock in the 55th minute, the skinny striker tapping in a rebound after Shakil failed to hold on to a scorching 30-yarder by Russel midfielder Nayan.

Nayan, who earned a first-team place for the first time, should have scored a couple of minutes later but the midfielder placed a pass from Hanif wide of the open net.

Russel did not have to wait long to seal the victory when Majid, shrugging off his marker Ramjan with a through from compatriot Rachid, coolly placed the ball past an outstraining Shakil on the hour mark.

Russel dominated the rest of the

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4



Did U Know?

Danish Kaneria became the second Pakistani bowler to claim five wickets in an innings at Kingston. Imran Khan had claimed 6 for 90 in 1976-77.



George Weah

(Liberian soccer superstar) "I'm no longer a professional player but football is still part of my life."

DAY'S EVENT

Premier Football League
Muktijoddha vs Dipali Sangha (5:00 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium