

LIPRO
Presenta
HIMOINSA
DIESEL GENERATORS
FROM SPAIN

Lipro Energy Ltd.
Call: 8817147, 8817918, 8818082

More Than Just A Job Site
A Platform for Employers and Job Seekers to Meet and Exchange Information
Chakri
chakri.com.bd
www.chakri.com.bd
SignUp Now!!

Muktijoddha take sweet revenge



SPORTS REPORTER

Muktijoddha took revenge of their away defeat to Chittagong Mohammedan in the B. League when the Dhaka giants recorded a 2-1 win over the visitors in the opening match of the second leg at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Veteran Alfaz Ahmed opened the account after 12 minutes while Parvez Babu doubled the lead midway through the first half as the Reds took lead in the table with 21 points. It could well be temporary as a win will put either Mohammedan or Sheikh Russel on the top of the table by the end of the ongoing 12th round.

The Chittagong side, who had upset Muktijoddha 1-0 in the first leg, pulled one goal back through Asif Yousuf's 58th minute penalty and stuck to 17 points.

Abu Yusuf left a number of veterans in the bench and got immediate reward for fielding a younger team as young Enamul Hossain's lively display created early openings for Muktijoddha.

Hassan Al Mamun and skipper Moni both served the bench while Arman even failed to find a place in the first 18 for the Reds, who lost

stand-in captain Ghansah just 20 minutes after kick-off.

The Ghanaian centre-back limped off the ground shortly after Alfaz latched on a right-side cross by Titu to score his fifth league goal.

However, it was Enamul who was in the heart of the counter attack, picking up the ball from deep before feeding overlapping right-back Titu.

Muktijoddha, however, could have gone ahead in the fourth minute when Matiur Munna's 30-yard powerful drive beat Mohammedan goalie Tito but came off the base of the sidebar.

Titu once again showed his weakness in low balls when the keeper conceded the second goal as his near post when left-back Parvez drilled the ball through a forest of legs after Enamul's effort was cleared by the rival defenders out of their area.

The black and whites from Chittagong hardly looked like the outfit that impressed everyone in the first leg but showed signs of a comeback when Asif's freekick from the right curled away from the far post on the stroke of the breaker.

Yusuf pushed fresh legs and Kanchan set a chance for Titu who failed to test the opposition custodian near from the penalty spot, submitting a feeble shot straight to Titu.

In injury time, both sides invaded the rival boxes but Momolu lost possession and an exhausted Alfaz, kept on the pitch as the coach ran out of options having made all three changes, took a pathetic effort that flew miles over the bar.

Yellow cards: Munna, Maruf,

Kanchan (Muktijoddha) and Saikat, Camara (Ctg Mohammedan)

TEAMS

MUKTIJODDHA: Titumir Titu, Ghansah (Deen), Rajani, Parvez, Brahim (Kanchan), Arman Aziz, Maruf, Munna (Moni), Alfaz and Enamul.

CTG MOHAMMEDAN: Tito, Tareq (Jashim), Sohel, Saikat, Sanwar, Towhid, Asif (Pavel), Camara, Zahid, Momolu and Yusuf (Dipu).

Referee: Tayeb Hassan.



Chittagong Mohammedan stopper Saikat (R) tries to thwart an attack from Muktijoddha striker Enamul during their B. League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

ESPN-Star's rescue act

Afro-Asia Cup to go ahead

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

deal will be significantly lower than the original sum."

The series begins with a Twenty20 match on June 5 in Bangalore, which will also host the first one-day on June 6.

The remaining two one-dayers will be played in Chennai on June 9 and 10.

Mumbai-based Nimbus Sports, which held the marketing and TV rights for the event, withdrew late Wednesday, saying the absence of top stars was making it difficult to find sponsors.

But ACC chief executive Ashraful Haq told the Cricinfo website that the pan-Asian ESPN-Star network had agreed to telecast the series for an undisclosed fee.

"The circumstances were such that the tournament could not be cancelled, considering that the matches were designated as official one-dayers," the Kuala Lumpur-based Haq was quoted as saying by Cricinfo.

"We're happy that ESPN-Star have agreed to telecast the event."

While ESPN-Star was not willing to reveal the financial details, Cricinfo said "it is understood the

Asoka fails umps' test

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's first-class umpires have cried foul over a competitive examination conducted in English by the cricket governing body to rank them for international matches.

Umpires who lacked English knowledge protested and walked out blaming the authorities for not holding the test in Sinhalese, or the official language on par with Tamil in this former British colony.

"We felt that we were discriminated by not having the examination in Sinhalese," an umpire who boycotted the exam told AFP.

"Had we gone to courts based on the fundamental and the constitutional right of citizens to conduct business in the language of their choice, we could have obtained an order to annul the examination."

Just five out of the 28 first class umpires who sat the examination late last month were able to obtain pass marks.

Among those who failed were Asoka de Silva, an ICC international panelist who had also served on the elite panel of the world governing body.

The exam was conducted by Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) umpires committee to rank the first three local umpires in order to be nominated for the ICC's international panel.

Currently only two Sri Lankans,

SEE PAGE 22 COL 1

Kaif's brush with fate



Cricket

INTERNET, undated

It is the house at the end of the road. The black gates are firmly outside; the security guards outside look suspiciously at every passer-by.

They can't be bothered to do more than glare though -- it is far too hot on Tuesday, even in the shaded avenues of this posh colony.

When you state you're there to meet Mohammad Kaif, one guard ostentatiously mops his head, creases himself up and lets you in after checking on the intercom.

The house is beautiful, an interior decorator's dream in muted cream and bronze, a sudden splash of colour lending it an artist's touch.

It is a different world from the 6 feet by three pigeonhole, separated from the rest of world by a threadbare piece of cloth, that was Kaif's home for several teenage years, his piece of a tacky Green Park hostel room in Kanpur. Kaif walks in, in the familiar royal blue of India's training kit.

You ask how it feels to call a veritable mansion like this home. He smiles. "It is home." And what of Allahabad and the crowded, familiar sights and sounds of the town he once lived in? That is home too, it is different of course, but they are both home." And then he adds, looking around anew, "I have been

blessed." And smiles wryly.

The feeling is genuine, the smile perhaps a tad self-deprecatingly after all, he is well aware that it is exactly six months to the day that he played his last one-day international for India. November 29, 2006, at Port Elizabeth.

"It's been very tough," he agrees, asked the obvious question. "It's been my longest ever break from the team. The last year-and-a-half hasn't been good. I've not been in the XI consistently, played a couple of games and then been out for a few, it's been a rollercoaster ride, a time of ups and downs, I've had to come to terms with a lot of things, learnt some things about myself."

He insists though that it hasn't got him down. "I would be lying if I said it hasn't affected me at all, of course it has, but I've decided to use this time to just work harder, work on things I think needed to be worked on."

So what does he think went wrong? "I'm not sure. I hear this and that but unfortunately, have never been told specifically that this was the exact problem. That would have really helped. But being out of the team is also beneficial if you take it in the right spirit. You can sit back and take stock, play state and company matches, train, have the time to experiment, work on you game. On my eldest brother Asif's advice, I've adjusted my grip slightly, a minor shift that

gives me far greater power, done a little bit with my stance. I made 151 not out against Rajasthan in a one-day for UP hitting a few sixes, I'd never made 150 in my life! It is a power game now and I needed to work on that and what I've done seems to be working."

Kaif says that while he's happy with whatever he's contributed so far to India's cause, he's also realised that there were some things he could have done better. "Life is so unpredictable. There have been times when I've been doing really well, feeling in the zone, getting some runs, but for some reason or the other, I've found myself not in the playing XI for the next game. Positions have moved up and down, you lose that rhythm. Every batsman wants to bat when he's feeling good about it. Then again, there have been times when I could have used an opportunity better and did not. Having said that, these things happen in cricket."

And, he's decided to be philosophical about it. In fact, as he says, his getting his first big break itself (making the eventually World Cup-winning u-15 India squad) was by chance. "When you go for these age-group trials, luck plays a huge part. You have 700 (now about 2000) boys each facing about four balls each before someone decides if they move to the next round. One unplayable ball somewhere and

SEE PAGE 22 COL 2

Ivanovic trounces Mirza

AFP, Paris

India's Sania Mirza was sent packing from the French Open on Thursday losing 6-1, 6-4 in just 64 minutes to Serbia's Ana Ivanovic in a second round tie.

The 20-year-old from Hyderabad, who once again had heavy strapping around her right knee, was no match early on for the power-hitting of the seventh seed and she ceded the first set in just 23 minutes.

She steadied the ship by holding her serve after a marathon opening game to the second set and shook Ivanovic at times with some of her trademark bludgeoning forehands.

Mirza stayed the pace until 4-4 when Ivanovic profited from some loose play on the Indian's part to dominate the rallies.

She grabbed the vital break of serve she needed after forcing Mirza on to the back foot from where she slapped a despairing forehand long.

Ivanovic made no mistake in wrapping up the win on her following service game concluding it with a backhand drive down the line.

The 19-year-old Ivanovic, who scored the biggest win of her young career in taking the German Open title last week, goes on to a third round tie against Romanian qualifier Ioana Raluca Olaru.

SEE PAGE 22 COL 8



PHOTO: AFP

Indian tennis star Sania Mirza is a picture of dejection during her second round match against Serbian Ana Ivanovic at the French Open at Roland Garros on Thursday.

Whatmore leaves today

SPORTS REPORTER

Dav Whatmore will leave Dhaka today after a four-year stay with the Tigers. The 53-year-old will be off to Australia this afternoon by a Thai Airways flight.

Yesterday, Bangladesh Cricket Board accorded the outgoing national cricket coach a farewell at its Gulshan office.

Captain Habibul Bashar, BCB general secretary Mahbubul Anam, vice-president Shah Nurul Kabir Shaheen, joint secretary Rafiqul Islam, other officials and employees were present during the simple ceremony.

Whatmore was presented with a bat signed by all eleven players of Bangladesh's first-ever Test win and a Bangladesh team jersey signed by the entire squad that played in this year's World Cup.

"I am overwhelmed. All my life I have been associated with nice people and I think I have been blessed in that respect. I have had four very good years in Bangladesh," said Whatmore to the BCB officials and employees.

"I leave Bangladesh on a very happy note and I might return again, even as a coach. I think the door will remain open," hoped Whatmore.

SEE PAGE 22 COL 8



Outgoing Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore (C) receives a bat signed by members of Bangladesh's first Test winning team from captain Habibul Bashar (L) and BCB general secretary Mahbub Anam at the board's office yesterday.

PHOTO: TIGERCRICKET.COM