

Axe falls on Rahim

Four new faces in Tigers' one-day side

SPORTS REPORTER

WARID Cricket Series

Four newcomers including wicketkeeper Dhiman Ghosh have been called up in the Bangladesh one-day squad for the three-match series against South Africa starting in Chittagong on March 9.

21-year-old Dhiman from Dinajpur replaces Mushfiqur Rahim while all-rounder Mosharraf Hossain Rubel was predictably drafted in. Batsmen Nazimuddin and Rokibul Hassan, who had a prolific National Cricket

League, made 40 dismissals in the first-class competition and struck two fifties in the one-day competition.

"We think he can be quite destructive as a batsman in the one-day form of the game," said the former national player.

Mushfiqur had a miserable run of 7.2, 15 and 4 in four innings against South Africa in the just-concluded Test series. But Mushfiqur was hailed when he replaced Khaled Mashud during the World Cup last year but has since only scored one half-century in his eight-match career.

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MOSHARRAF HOSSAIN RUBEL



DHIMAN GHOSH



ROKIBUL HASSAN

League, were also included.

"We have preferred Dhiman as wicketkeeper because Mushfiqur Rahim is badly out of touch," said chief selector Rafiqul Alam while announcing the squad in Chittagong yesterday.

"He (Mushfiqur) is keeping fine but has not delivered with the bat. Dhiman is an aggressive batsman who is in good form. He has been



SAB tv

New Zealand v England
First Test, Day Two
Live from 3:30am (Thursday)

TEN Sports

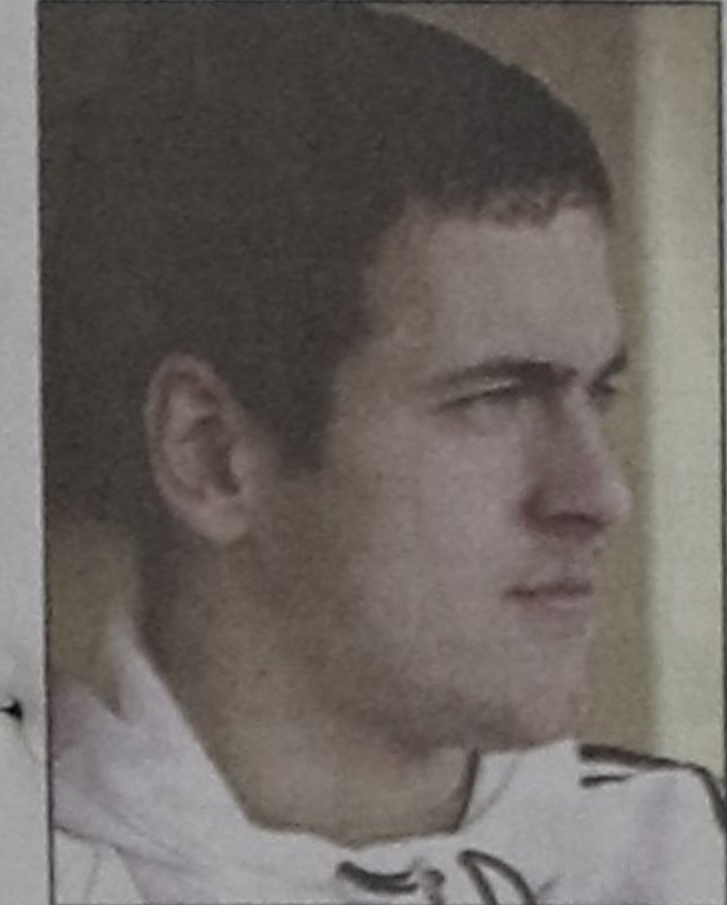
UEFA Champions League
Chelsea v Olympiakos
Live from 1:45am (Thursday)
Porto v Schalke
Delayed from 3:45am (Thursday)

ESPN

IFA Shield
Churchill v Mahindra
First Semifinal
Live at 3:30pm
Mohun Bagan v Santos FC
Second Semifinal
Live from 6:30pm

STAR Sports

Bangalore Open
Second Round
Live from 5:30pm



Joe Cole
(Chelsea's England midfielder)

"I don't get too involved with all the dramas surrounding the club. My job is to try and perform as well as I can when selected."



Premier Div Cricket League
Abahani v BKSP
Venue: Dharmadi Cricket Stadium
Mohammedan v Partex
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium

A reward for Yusuf

Former int'l to coach national team

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Abu Yusuf will coach the national football team in the two coming international tournaments, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) confirmed yesterday.

The former national centre-back, who has the experience of guiding age-group national teams at under-17, -19 and -23 levels, will be given a contract today to serve for the AFC Challenge Cup and the SAFF Championship.

Yusuf, who had the charge of the national boys back in 1998 for a friendly tournament in Qatar, succeeds Indian coach Syed Nayeemuddin who was originally recruited by the BFF for the SAFF soccer.

Nayeemuddin was let go by the BFF in October after the regional event was deferred.

It would be the first time Bangladesh will compete in the South Asian football extravaganza under a local man after playing the first four editions under foreign coaches -- Otto Pfister (Kathmandu, 1997), Samir Shakir (Goa, 1999), George Kottan (Dhaka 2003) and Diego Cruciani (2005, Karachi).

Everyone believes it was recognition for a coach whose match reading is perhaps the best in the country and who has done hard work for many years.

"There are many reasons that everyone relies on foreign coaches. Maybe the authority feels safe with them. I am happy that I have got this chance," said Yusuf, who has coached all the big teams like Mohammedan, Abahani and Muktijoddha with success but every time was shown the door midway through a campaign.

"Yes, it's a sort of challenge but I don't have a magic wand to change everything overnight. Still I believe that it's possible to get success at this level," he hoped.



ABU YUSUF

Yusuf, who fell out with Muktijoddha officials during last year's inaugural professional league, took charge of Senior Division side Victoria this year and once again proved his guile by taking the team to the second place at the end of the first leg.

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Bashar, Mashud steer Torun

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Veterans Habibul Bashar and Khaled Mashud joined in force to salvage Surjo Torun to a three-wicket win over City Club in the Premier Cricket League yesterday.

Two other scheduled matches were washed out following heavy overnight shower but a 39-overs match got underway at the Fatullah Stadium where this year's Twenty20 League finalists City Club got on top after winning the toss.

Chasing 150 for win, Surjo Torun who lost to holders Abahani in the league opener, were reeling at 21 for five after nine overs but Bashar and Mashud swung the match their way with an 80-run partnership for the sixth wicket.

One-down Bashar, who was ignored for Bangladesh's second and final Test against South Africa in Chittagong this week and had lost his place in the Tigers' one-day

side long before, watched rival new ball duo Arafat Salahuddin and Shafiq Al Jabir run havoc before finding an ally in skipper Mashud.

Bashar, the only cricketer to have played 50 Tests for his country, made 65 not out while Mashud, also ignored by the selectors for lack of form with the bat despite the fact that he is still the best wicketkeeper, made 40 off 74 balls to help Torun reach the target with one over to spare.

The two former national captains defied the City attack for 21 overs before Mashud finally perished. He hit four boundaries.

Man-of-the-match Bashar kept cool and despite losing Nazmul Hossain Milon, who contributed a quickfire run-a-ball 16, finished the job with half a dozen fours.

Pacers Shafiq and Salahuddin each chipped in with three wickets.

Earlier, City elected to bat but failed to make most of the advantage after the two openers departed early.

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His phone finally rang

MOHAMMAD ISAM

While the Peninsula Hotel in Chittagong was abuzz yesterday with the announcement of three new Tigers, Rokibul Hassan was getting prepared to attend the Zohr prayers along with some of his National Cricket Academy teammates at the Academy house in Dhanmondi.

His cell phone rang and the news he received was most pleasing to his ears.

The young man, who hails from Jamalpur, is among the three new faces who have been selected in the Bangladesh squad for the forthcoming one-day series against South Africa.

The 21-year-old Rokibul tried to keep himself oblivious to the happenings of Chittagong till that phone call came as he had a feeling that this was his time but still didn't want to expect anything.

"Someone from the cricket board called me and when I heard that I was selected, I was over the moon," said an animated Rokibul later in the evening.

But his call-up was not entirely unexpected. Ever since he smashed a triple century in the National Cricket League in 2006-07, he was earmarked as one for the future.

He was drafted into the National Cricket Academy this year where his work ethic was received with

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Roma coaches to run workshop in Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

Three coaches of Italian giants AS Roma will run a football workshop in Dhaka in May this year.

The programme will be organised by Singapore-based advertising firm DENTSU and YKK Bangladesh under the auspices of YKK of Japan.

The Roma coaches -- including former Roma defender Maurizio Turone who won 227 caps for the Serie A side from 1979-87 -- will run the three-day workshop among 350 kids (boys and girls) between the age of 10-14 years.

They will also work with 30 local coaches.

The 55-year-old Turone was Lazio's technical director from 1992-97, the technical director of Genoa's Serie A and B sides from 1998-2005 before joining as technical director of AC Roma School of Oceania in 2006.

In this regard, a joint meeting was held at the BFF Bhaban on Monday among YKK managing director Hiroaki Nakamura and vice-president Hiroshi Ikusaka, DENTSU business director Alam Lim and BFF high-ups SA Sultan, Manzoor Hossain Malu and others.

India clinch series

Sachin & Praveen script thrilling win

AFP, Brisbane



Sachin Tendulkar led India to the triangular one-day cricket title when they beat Australia in a thrilling second final here Tuesday.

The tourists made 258-9 in their 50 overs then restricted the home side to 249 to claim a thrilling nine-run win and take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the last of the three-match final.

Tendulkar, 34, led the batting with a fine 91 before newcomer Praveen Kumar tore through the Australian top-order, claiming Adam Gilchrist, skipper Ricky Ponting and Michael Clarke with just 32 runs on the board.

"Once again we found ourselves three for 30 and behind the eight-ball," a rueful Ponting said.

Kumar came back at the death to bowl Brett Lee and finish the match with 4-46 from 10 overs to signal his arrival on the international scene, one of many young Indians to take their chances in this one-day series.

"Most of those guys don't have a

secure place in this team right now," Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni said.

"But this win will give them ample confidence -- the kind of security and assurance they need that they are part of the team."

"Ultimately this will be the core of the (future Indian) team."

Australian all-rounder James Hopes led a rearguard action, scoring a career-high 63, but he kept losing batting partners and was the last man out when caught at mid-off trying to take the runs off the final over.

India made a magnificent start in the field when Gilchrist, in what turned out to be his last innings for Australia, edged a ball from Kumar to wicketkeeper Dhoni to be out for just two.

Kumar struck again in his next over when Ponting (1) tried to pull a shorter ball and spooned an easy catch to Yuvraj Singh at mid-on.

Clarke (17) then followed after he lazily tried to pull a straight delivery only to see it crash into the top of off-stump, leaving Australia staggering at 32-3.

Andrew Symonds (42) and Matthew Hayden (55) recovered brilliantly and got the Australians

back on track until Hayden was run out with the hosts at 121.

Symonds also proved his strength when he flattened a streaker who ran on the pitch part of the way through his knock.

The match appeared as good as over when Harbhajan Singh trapped Symonds in front to leave Australia 123-5.

Mike Hussey and Hopes set out on a rescue mission and put on 76 before Hussey feathered a Shanthakumaran Sreesanth delivery to Dhoni with Australia on 199.

Although Hopes got Australia close, the task was always out of reach and the young Indian side celebrated wildly as their opponents ran out of deliveries.

"Once we started to get the momentum back again with Hayden and Symonds, we lost one (wicket), then we lost two and all of a sudden all the momentum's gone and India get a long way back in front of the game again," Ponting said.

India had been at 205-3 at one stage in their batting and heading for a score of 300-plus.

But when an injury-hampered Tendulkar was dismissed for 91, the scoring rate slowed and Australia's

bowlers began to gain control.

Tendulkar was well supported by Yuvraj (38), Dhoni (36) and Robin Uthappa (30), but India were at least 50 runs short of where they should have been.

After 50 overs, their 258 may have been within the reach of the hosts but in the end it was just enough to earn them the series.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the second tri-series final between Australia and India at Brisbane Cricket Ground on Monday:

INDIA	
Uthappa c Hopes b Clarke	30
Tendulkar c Ponting b Clarke	91
Gambhir c Johnson b Clarke	15
Yuvraj c Hayden b Symonds	38
Dhoni c Clarke b Bracken	36
Sharma c Symonds b Clarke	2
Pathan b Bracken	12
Harbhajan lbw b Lee	3
Kumar c Ponting b Bracken	7
Chawla not out	6
Sreesanth not out	1
Extras: (lb-5, w-12)	17
Total: (For 9 wickets in 50 overs)	258
Fall of wickets: 1-94, 2-121, 3-175, 4-205, 5-209, 6-237, 7-240, 8-249, 9-255.	

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THE CHAMPS: Indian team celebrate with the CB Series trophy after their nine-run triumph over Australia in the second final of the one-day triangular tournament in Brisbane yesterday. India clinched the series by winning the first two games.

PHOTO: AFP



TIME OUT: South African captain Graeme Smith relaxes under the glorious sunshine while a bearded Hashim Amla walks through the sandy beach of Cox's Bazar yesterday. The Proteas enjoyed an unscheduled day off after their victory by an innings and 205 runs against Bangladesh in the fourth morning of the Chittagong Divisional Stadium on Monday.

PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN/SKIDER