

Barisal's chance to further lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Barisal take on Sylhet today in one of three eighth round matches of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 10th National Cricket League.

On top of the points table with 81 points, Barisal face a weak Sylhet side who so far had five losses and two drawn games. They face at Sylhet's home ground, the Sylhet Stadium, after a two-day rout over Khulna in the seventh round game.

Rajshahi, on 72 points, will again remain right behind the leaders Barisal as they face Dhaka at the swank Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. The hosts moved to third place after the draw with Sylhet and are now on 65 points.

At the Birsreshtha Shahid Flight Lieutenant Mafur Rahman Stadium in Khulna, the hosts take on Chittagong.

Both sides suffered big defeats in the last round and

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Did U Know?

Mark Boucher scored his fifth century on the third day of the second and final Test against Bangladesh at Centurion Park on Friday. It was the most by a South African wicketkeeper.



Steve Waugh

(Former Australia cricket captain)

"At present we have Pakistan cricket crippled by the threat of terrorism. Sri Lanka regularly blighted by a civil war and Zimbabwe mismanaged by corrupt administrators and government. The game is on the verge of a crisis and clear, concise thinking will be required from the various cricket bodies to make sure that the correct decisions are made."



STAR Cricket
Australia v New Zealand
Second Test, Day 5
Live from 6:00am (Tuesday)
ESPN

Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm
English Premier League
Liverpool v West Ham
Live from 1:55am (Tuesday)



Nat'l Cricket League
(Four-Day, Day 1)
Khulna v Chittagong
Venue: Khulna Divisional Stadium
Dhaka v Rajshahi
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National
Stadium
Sylhet v Barisal
Venue: Sylhet Divisional Stadium
Citycell B. League
Abahani v Brothers Union
Time: 4:30pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National
Stadium



Mohammedan's winning goal scorer Nasir (L) exploits the gap at the right flank to cross the ball past Farashganj defender Ramjan during their Citycell B. League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nasir spurs MSC

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan buried their recent poor form in the Citycell B. League with a dramatic come-from-behind 2-1 win against Farashganj at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Black and Whites, who had taken just five points out of maximum 12 in their last four matches, looked set to slump to their second successive defeat but Alamu Bakola and Nasir Hossain struck inside the last 14 minutes to ensure their fourth victory in eight games.

Maruful Haque's side moved to third place with 15 points, still four and two points behind Abahani and Sheikh Russel respectively while Farashganj, who failed to hold on to Enamul Haque's opener, stuck to nine points after their third defeat.

Smarting from Thursday's shocking 1-0 loss to Rahmatganj, Mohammedan began with authority and Bakola came close to breaking the deadlock in the 17th minute. The Nigerian striker controlled a centre by Faisal Mahmud inside the area but his effort was brilliantly parried by goalkeeper Titu.

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Farashganj took the lead against run of play when Enamul, who made his first international appearance for the national team last October in the Merdeka Cup but missed out on the Myanmar trip, fired a scorching drive into Aminul's top left corner following a low cross by foreign import Kalu Johnson at the right side of the box.

The old-Dhaka outfit perhaps went too early into the defensive shell although they managed to stop a barrage of Mohammedan raids till the break.

Mamun Mia made a goal-line save in the 41st minute when the defender kept out Nasir's volley on a cross by Faisal while Robin headed the ball onto the sidebar after meeting a freekick by Ripon in the stoppage time.

Mohammedan's top-scorer Bakola then wasted a golden chance ten minutes after resumption when he shrugged off his marker with Egyptian midfielder Hazem's chip. However, his placing shot past the outrushing Farashganj keeper was just wide of the target.

There was more annoyance at the Black and Whites tent when Sharif rattled the crossbar in the 73rd minute but luck finally shone on the Federation Cup champions three minutes later.

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TOP SCORERS

Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Abahani	8	6	1	1	16	4	19
Russel	8	5	2	1	16	6	17
Mohammedan	8	4	3	1	18	7	15
Ctg MSC	8	3	4	1	7	5	13
Rahmatganj	7	4	1	3	8	7	13
Brothers	7	2	4	1	10	8	10
Ctg Abahani	9	2	4	3	4	7	10
Farashganj	8	2	3	3	7	8	9
Arambagh	8	1	3	4	4	10	6
Muktijuddha	8	1	1	6	4	19	4
Khulna Abahani	8	1	0	7	6	19	3

7 goals: Alfaz (Russel)
6 goals: Bakola (Mohammedan)
5 goals: Robin (Mohammedan), Emeka (Abahani), Idris (RMFS), Emily (Abahani)
4 goals: Youness (Russel)
3 goals: Mehdi (Khulna Abahani), Raphael (Ctg MSC), Nasir (Mohammedan)
2 goals: Enamul (Farashganj), Oniya, Manju, Tapu (Brothers), Towhidul (Ctg MSC), Mithun, Sakhawat Rony (Ctg Abahani), Kanchan (Muktijuddha), Ibrahim (Abahani) USA

India calls off Pak tour?

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

India's government has refused permission to send a cricket team for a full tour of Pakistan in early next year following the deadly Mumbai attacks, Indian television reported on Sunday.

The tour was cancelled amid a government probe into Pakistani links to the assaults on the country's financial capital by heavily-armed militants that left nearly 200 people dead.

The NDTV and CNN-IBN news channels, quoting unnamed government sources, said the matches were also unlikely to be played at neutral venues.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) declined to comment on the reports, saying its request for a security clearance for the tour was pending with the government.

India were scheduled to play three Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 match during the five-week tour from January 13 to February 19.

It was to be the fifth bilateral series between the two countries since 2004, when cricket ties resumed after a 15-year gap due to political

tensions between the warring neighbours.

The tour was first put in doubt earlier this month when the Indian government denied permission to the national junior hockey team to visit Pakistan.

Australia cancelled a Test tour of Pakistan in March and the International Cricket Council put off the high-profile Champions Trophy there in September due to security concerns.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief Ijaz Butt had said on Friday the fate of India's tour lay in the hands of the respective governments.

"The security situation is out of our control and after what has happened in Mumbai, the decision on the Indian team's tour of Pakistan is now in two governments' hands," Butt said.

"Relocating the home series to neutral venues was a huge financial loss in the past so it's detectable but in an effort to give our players some cricket we will have to do that, but as a last resort."

Cricket officials in the United Arab Emirates had offered to host the series.

The BCCI is also waiting for England to confirm next week's two-Test tour of India after the last two one-day matches were cancelled and the tourists returned home following the Mumbai attacks.

The BCCI shifted the second Test from

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Dinajpur last into semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Dinajpur set up a semifinal clash with northern rivals Rangpur after a four-wicket win over Moulavibazar in the last quarterfinal of the 29th National Cricket League at the Shamsul Huda Stadium in Jessor yesterday.

In a low-scoring affair, Dinajpur's Minhaz Reza remained the difference after he took three wickets in the Moulavibazar innings to wrap them up for just 64 runs in 34.1 overs. Later, Minhaz struck a crucial 14-ball 13 that saw Dinajpur home after a minor hiccup.

The setback came through the work of Moulavibazar

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Rooney century sinks City

AFP, Manchester

Cristiano Ronaldo was sent off for the third time in his Manchester United career as Wayne Rooney's 100th goal in club football sealed a 1-0 victory for Sir Alex Ferguson's men against Manchester City at Eastlands on Sunday.

Rooney's goal -- his first in seven games -- settled the 150th meeting between the Manchester neighbours and cemented United in third spot in the Premier League.

But United were forced to play the final twenty-one minutes with ten men after Ronaldo was dismissed for handling the ball from Rooney's corner -- his second booking in the space of nine minutes.

With five other players booked, United now face an FA fine for failing to control their players, but Ferguson will not be concerned by that having sealed a crucial victory.

City hadn't landed back in Manchester until

early on Friday morning following their UEFA Cup tie against Schalke in Germany, and United went into this game with the advantage of having had an extra two days to prepare.

The extra freshness within the United ranks showed in the first half as the European champions dominated possession and created the best chances.

Not for the first time this season, though, Ferguson's team failed to capitalise on their early dominance and, just as happened at Liverpool, Everton and Arsenal earlier this campaign, United struggled to kill off their bitter rivals.

The visitors could have gone ahead as early as the eighth minute when City keeper Joe Hart fumbled a Rooney shot, but Darren Fletcher failed to convert the loose ball from six yards.

Moments later, Ronaldo went close to opening the scoring when he rose above the City defence to head Rooney's corner inches over the crossbar.

City, who won both derby clashes against

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Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney (R) prods home past goalkeeper Joe Hart to score in their Premiership derby match against Manchester City at the City of Manchester Stadium on Sunday. It was Rooney's 100th goal for United.

SL whitewash Zimbabwe

AFP, Harare

Sri Lanka beat Zimbabwe by 19 runs here on Sunday to complete a 5-0 whitewash in their one-day series.

Zimbabwe could only manage 133 runs in reply to Sri Lanka's 152.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the fifth and final one-day internationals between Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club on Sunday.

SRI LANKA

Tharanga B. Rainsford	6
b Muparwa	0
Sangakkara c Taibu	
b Matsikenyeri	28

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Haddin drives Aussies

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The wicketkeeper and the series, which they lead 1-0. At stumps the visitors, who started with a deficit of 265, were 0 for 35 from nine overs.

Arriving with Australia at 247 after two wickets in the third over of the morning, Haddin gave Clarke a start of 48 but reached three figures two overs after the vice-captain registered his third century in consecutive matches at the ground. Haddin continued to score freely after Clarke departed and showed, finally, that he is a long-term prospect.

As the breakthrough innings wound down Haddin maintained his tempo, striking two sixes off the legspin of Aaron Redmond, and finished



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A sprawling Zimbabwe wicketkeeper Tatenda Taibu tries to stop the ball as Sri Lanka batsman Jehan Mubarak looks on during the fifth ODI yesterday.

with 24 fours during his 222-ball occupation. On a day of firsts -- he did not own a Test half-century when he walked out -- he brought up his 150 with a sweep from out of the rough and was charging in the manner of his predecessor. When he was ninth-out, having been caught by Peter Fulton