



PHOTO: STAR

Mohammedan and national middle-order batsman Rokibul Hasan drives the ball on the off-side during his fine knock of 102 against City Club in a Premier Division Cricket League match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Big guns all win Shakib snares four

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

World's number one ODI all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan shone with the ball in a batsman's day as Biman took the solo lead in the Premier Division Cricket League with a four-wicket victory over Old DOHS at BKSP yesterday.

The left-arm spinner bagged four wickets to maintain Biman's all-win record but it was a rare batsman's day in the domestic competition as three achieved the milestone of reaching three-digit figures.

Mohammedan saw twin tons from Shamsur Rahman and Rokibul Hasan as the Motijheel outfit bounced back to winning ways after two consecutive defeats which put their title race in jeopardy.

The effort of the right-hander, who shared 194 runs in a third-wicket stand, gave Mohammedan a massive total of 317, only the second time in the league that a team crossed the three-hundred mark after Abahani's 320 against CCS, to secure an emphatic 98-run victory against winless City Club at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Imran Ahmed was the star at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium as defending champions Abahani rode on the right-hander's hundred to record a comfortable 53-run win against Victoria to register their fourth success in five games.

BIMAN-DOHS

It was a face-off between the two table-toppers and Biman finally overcame the hurdle when veteran Javed Omar played an anchor role scoring a 137-ball 75 after man-of-the-match Shakib's four-wicket haul.

DOHS made a confident start after being put into bat first but pacer Mohammad Shahjada removed Anhoor Newaz to give the first breakthrough as well as make the inroads for Biman.

DOHS lost wickets at regular interval and captain Mehrab Hossain's 41-run knock was not good enough to put up a challenging total on the board as they were bundled out for 192 in 49.3 overs.

In reply, Biman made a poor start when Nazmus Sadat was dismissed by Abul Hasan in the second over but Javed and Zahurul Islam repaired the early

damage by associating 46 runs in the second wicket stand.

And then Shakib made 44-ball 32 as Biman reached 195-6 in 46.2 overs.

ABAHANI-VICTORIA

Dashing national opener Tamim Iqbal made a second-ball duck after Abahani decided to bat first but a 70-run second wicket partnership between Rony Talukdar and Imran Ahmed gave a platform to put up a fighting total of 280-7.

Inform Rony was dismissed for 39 off 48 balls that featured six boundaries but Imran continued his leather hunt to hit his first hundred with a 140 ball 109 that contained nine boundaries.

Nasir Hossain was the other notable scorer who exhilarated the run-rate during his 51-ball 66 that saw six fours and two sixes.

Taposh Ghosh picked up three wickets for 48 runs.

Abahani were however given a run for their money with Amit Majumder and Arman Hossain progressed in the opening stand as the pair contributed 114 runs before Arman was dismissed by Indian Venugopal for 56 runs.

Amit was quick to follow him for 55 runs and after that Victoria lost the momentum despite Arafat Salahuddin's 54-ball 52 and were ultimately restricted to 227-7 in their share of 50 overs.

MOHAMMEDAN-CITY

Nothing could have been worse than the way Mohammedan started their innings after deciding to bat first. The under-pressure Twenty20 champions were in big trouble when Shafaq Al Jabir removed both the openers with the scoreboard reading two.



PHOTO: STAR

Mohammedan captain Shamsur Rahman salutes the sparse crowd after scoring his hundred against City Club yesterday.

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Did U Know?

Women's pole vaulting was first included in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.



What to Watch

TEN Sports
Pakistan v Sri Lanka
First Test, Day Three
Live from 11:00am

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

English Premier League
Hull City v Tottenham
Live from 2:00am (Tuesday)



Premier Div Cricket League
Young Pegasus v Cricket
Coaching School
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National
Stadium, Mirpur

BKSP v Surjo Tonon
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Partex v Gazi Tank
Venue: BKSP



Talk Turkey



Andy Flower
(England's interim cricket coach)
"I have really enjoyed doing it so far. I am sure there are many experienced, fine coaches out there but I haven't quite made my decision yet."
While considering to apply for permanent head coach's role.

Records roll in Karachi

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Mahela Jayawardene and Thilan Samaraweera smashed double hundreds during a world record stand of 437 as Sri Lanka left Pakistan with a mountain to climb in the opening Test here on Sunday.

Jayawardene ended on 240 and Samaraweera struck a career-best 231 as the tourists declared their first innings at 644-7, their best ever total against Pakistan, on the second day at the National Stadium.

Pakistan, who must score 445 to avoid the follow-on in their first Test in 14 months, were 44-1 at stumps with debutant Khuram Manzoor on 18 and Younis Khan yet to score.

With the twin threats of Ajantha Mendis and Muttiah Muralidaran, the world record-holder for Test wickets, looming large on a pitch likely to take spin, Pakistan's task looks daunting.

"We need to bat sensibly," said Pakistan coach Intikhab Alam, who replaced Australian Geoff Lawson in October last year.

"The Sri Lankans batted well on a lifeless pitch and we bowled poorly on the first day. I am not happy with the pitch."

Muralidaran gave signs of what is in store when he dismissed opener Salman Butt for 23 in the penultimate over to underline a dominant day for the tourists.

Skipper Jayawardene and Samaraweera, who came together on Saturday evening with their team on 177-3, punished the new-look Pakistan attack with their partnership, which was the eighth best for any wicket in Test history.

The overnight pair batted with authority to beat the previous best fourth-wicket stand of 411 between England's Peter May and Colin Cowdrey against the West Indies at Birmingham in 1957.

Resuming at 406-3, they also beat Sri Lanka's previous best fourth-wicket stand 240, set by Asanka Gurusinha and Arjuna Ranatunga against

Pakistan in Colombo in 1986.

The partnership also took Sri Lanka past their highest Test total against Pakistan -- 528 at Lahore in 2002. Samaraweera improved his previous highest Test score of 142 against England at Colombo in 2003.

The two batted through all but two overs in the first two sessions before the Pakistani bowlers were rewarded with three wickets for an unchanged score of 614.

Jayawardene fell when he miscued a sweep shot off spinner Shoib Malik and was caught one-handed by diving wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal

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PHOTO: AFP

SPRINTING INTO RECORD BOOKS: Sri Lanka's Thilan Samaraweera (R) and Mahela Jayawardene run between the wickets on the second day of the first Test against Pakistan at the National Stadium in Karachi yesterday. The pair added 437 runs, a fourth wicket record in the history of Test cricket, surpassing the previous best of 411 between England's Peter May and Colin Cowdrey against West Indies at Edgbaston in 1957.

B. League players can't transfer for Super Cup

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) ruled out any chance of a mini transfer window before next month's Super Cup.

Tournament committee chairman and BFF member Harunur Rashid, also the ex-BFF general secretary, informed that no team would be able to rope in players from any other B. League team.

The top eight teams in the B. League are competing in the Tk two-crore event with the winners set to take one crore in cash.

The BFF at one stage considered allowing footballers of the bottom three teams play for the qualifiers. Also, the title contenders began talks with other teams' foreign players, whose contract ended with the conclusion of the B. League.

But the latest notion has put an end to it. However, teams will be permitted to recruit non-professionals from other leagues.

It was learned that one of the top four clubs all but settled talks with cash-starved Mohammedan's Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola, the top scorer of the competition with 18 goals. Bukola and Egyptian midfielder Hazem Mahmud's contracts ended with the black and whites with the B. league but it seems that both will have to play for Mohammedan, who are likely to sign two more Nigerian players.

Abahani, meanwhile, will add one more Ghanaian player to their three-member foreign squad.

Awudu Ibrahim, who is now in Holland, is expected to bring with him attacking midfielder Adjah Tetteh on February 26.

The sky-blues have already extended the contracts of Ibrahim, 17-goal Emeka Christian and Samad Yussif till May as they will compete in the AFC President's Cup.

Out of five foreigners, four are to stay with Sheikh Russel till March and the other till April while Brothers look forward to go with local boys with Henry Quay's agreement ending earlier this month.

Div I Cricket Lalmatia have the last laugh

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Lalmatia Club rode on Prangon Ghosh's 77 and Shaikot's 3-40 to beat Brothers Union by 23 runs at the Dhaka University Ground in the Dhaka First Division Cricket League yesterday.

The winners opted to bat after winning the toss and accumulated 229-7 in the allotted 50 overs. Brothers kept losing wickets at regular intervals and eventually were restricted to 206-9 in 50 overs, giving Lalmatia their second win.

U-13 football festival from today

Cricket

The Under-13 Development Football Festival begins today at eight venues across the country.

A total of 40 district teams will compete in the qualifying stage with eight group winners making it to the final round. Two matches will be played every day at each venue. The venues are Comilla, Chapainawabganj, Bagerhat, Thakurgaon, Bhola, Mymensingh, Narail and Noakhali.

BFF's development committee chairman Kazi Nabil, also the tournament committee head, told at a press conference at the BFF Bhaban yesterday that this tournament is being organised with two goals.

"We hope to create football craze among the youngsters with this tournament and the

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Pakistan can win the WC, says Akram

Cricket

Former captain Wasim Akram has pitched his support to retain Younis Khan as Pakistan skipper till the 2011 World Cup, saying that under him the country can win cricket's most coveted trophy.

"Younis is a very talented and strong cricketer. He has leadership qualities and if he remains captain, then Pakistan can win the 2011 World Cup," Akram said in a television interview.

Akram, however, said Younis must learn to keep his cool and develop a patient temperament.

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India Buchanan's bet

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

John Buchanan, the former Australia coach, believes India are favourites to beat New Zealand in the upcoming series. Buchanan, in Christchurch with the England Lions for their contest with New Zealand A, felt the home side were inexperienced and in a transitional phase.

"This will be a little bit of an indication [of how good India are], how they play in New Zealand. I am expecting them to do well," Buchanan said. "India is on a resurgence, there is no doubt about that. So it will be interesting to track India's performance."

"New Zealand are presently a young side, obviously with [Daniel] Vettori the mainstay. They have a few experienced players, but not the depth. They are very reliant on the group that they have got. They have a new coach and a new support staff. They are in a bit of transitional phase."

India have not had much success in New Zealand, many feel, because of the tough conditions but Buchanan said it was about adjusting to the pace and bounce of the local pitches. "The ball just doesn't come on to the bat. Generally there is a bit of swing and generally

there is grass on the wicket, so your top-order batsmen need to make that adjustment. After that it's pretty good for batting."

Similar to what happened with Australia, India have key seniors nearing their retirements. Buchanan felt the transition was working out in a better manner for India as opposed to Australia, whose entire senior pack went in pretty quick time. "In the Indian side they have a wealth of experience. [Virender] Sehwag and [Gautam] Gambhir are well and truly settled. [Sachin] Tendulkar is still there, [Mahendra Singh] Dhoni has been around for long. There is Zaheer [Khan] and Harbhajan [Singh]," he said. "They have the strength of players there who can help the newer guys, the Sharmas and Rainas, really settle in that pack. It all is going very smooth for India."

Buchanan, who enjoyed success in three out of four Ashes series from 2001 to 2006-07, didn't feel Australia were one of the pack just yet. "Let's play it out over a period of time. Obviously South Africa and India will get a little more of a feel, but I still think Australia will be in the top three for a long time to come," he said. "I think No's 1, 2 and 3 are not defined by one year or one series. It's defined by a minimum of five years, when you have played most of the opposition in most of the conditions, both home and away."

World record beckons Rani

Chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Rani Hamid eyes her name in the Guinness Book of World Record as the veteran IWM chases her 18th national women's chess title.

Seventeen-time winner Rani Hamid defeated WFM Zakia Sultana in the opening round of the Parachute 30th National Women Chess Championship to begin her campaign for the world record run on the right foot

yesterday at the chess-room.

The reigning champion told reporters that she would write to the Guinness authority to put her name in the record book if she retains the title this year.

In other matches, last year's runner-up WFM Samima Akhter Liza beat Jahanara Haque Runu, Sharmin Sultana Shirin beat Rokhsana Titli, Nazrana Khan Eva beat Ahely Sarkar, Masuda Begum beat Farjana Hossain Anne and Protiva Talukder beat Amena Khatun.



PHOTO: STAR

RANI OF BANGLADESH CHESS: Rani Hamid, whose first name refers to English word 'queen', ponders her next move while playing in the first round of the 30th National Women's Chess Championship at the Federation hall room yesterday. Rani is eyeing her 18th national crown.

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