

Booters warm up with 1-0 win

SPORTS REPORTER

Ahead of their AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers, Bangladesh national football team managed a morale-boosting victory when they won their one-off warm-up match against Nepal Police 1-0 in Kathmandu yesterday.

Ace midfielder Arman Aziz separated the teams in front of some two-thousand spectators by capitalising on a free kick in the 19th minute on the uneven surface in the Police ground.

"All the players tried their best but failed to perform according to our head coach's (Edson Silva Dido) instructions because the ground was uneven as well as very small," informed coach Shafiqul Islam Manik adding that Bangladesh team played the match in the 4-2-3-1 format.

Brazilian coach Dido took the opportunity to give all his charges chance in the match ahead of his first assignment in the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers which will begin from April 26 in Dhaka.

Bangladesh failed to create

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Did U Know?

The word 'karate' means the 'empty hand' or the 'Chinese hand', and it has been given this name because it involves a rapid use of hands and legs in an extreme close combat.



Kaka

(AC Milan's Brazilian superstar)

"I like modern football, I like players who know how to attack and defend. If it was down to me I would sign some one like Steven Gerrard who for me is the complete footballer."



SET Max

Indian Premier League

Delhi Daredevils v Punjab Kings XI

Live from 4:30pm

Deccan Chargers v Kolkata Knight Riders

Live from 8:30pm

ESPN

English Premier League

Tottenham v Newcastle

Live from 8:25pm

STAR Sports

English Premier League

Man City v West Bromwich

Live from 7:55pm

Primera Liga

Real Betis v Sporting

Live from 2:00am (Monday)

SETBACK FOR IRELAND

WC qualifier final today

AFP, Centurion

Ireland will lack star batsman Eoin Morgan when they face Canada here on Sunday in the 2011 Cricket World Cup Qualifier final.

Team manager Roy Torrens told AFP Ireland and English county team Middlesex struck a deal that Morgan would stay with his country until they qualified for the 2011 World Cup.

That happened last

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PHOTO: INTERNET

Master batsman Sachin Tendulkar gave IPL a perfect start. Here the right-hander plays one over extra-cover for his side Mumbai Indians during a superb knock of an unbeaten 59 against Chennai Super Kings in the opening match of the multi-million dollar Twenty20 tournament at Newlands in Cape Town yesterday.

Missing that vital cog

Cricket

MOHAMMAD ISAM

As yet another 'invasion' halted play at the Dhammardi Cricket Stadium, a disgruntled player yelled at the intruder: "This is a serious cricket match, you're not supposed to be inside like this."

However, the man carrying his daily groceries and walking merrily had a ready reply much to the surprise of the player.

"What match is this? There are no signboards," exclaims the culprit who was clearly taking a shortcut on his way home. He then walked off the centre nonchalantly but left behind a point, however naive.

In this world where image matters so much, advertisement boards around a cricket ground does put an impression on the mind of the onlooker. One cannot deny that what happens in the middle is the substance, but a bit of garnish definitely adds to the flavour. But that garnish was missing from the Dhaka leagues this year as the sponsors went missing in the Premier League. Even the Twenty20 competition failed to draw any money from the corpor-

rate houses. Without doubt it was a disappointment since cricket is the biggest sport in Bangladesh and the Premier League its biggest drawing card in the domestic arena.

Without sponsors, the board had to provide all the finances including the large payments they make to the various clubs (according to the position), umpires, groundsmen, logistics, etc. With the aid of a sponsor, the board could have augmented the facilities during the match that went badly missing this season in all league competitions.

Cricket in Bangladesh should be the easiest sport to sell but even the lure of international stars playing for big clubs was not tempting enough for the sponsors. What could be better for a sponsors' logo in Mashrafe's chest when he was smashing sixes for Abahani? Sadly, external factors have a part to play when money is involved and it was no different in the case of the sponsor-less Premier League.

According to Bangladesh Cricket Board's marketing committee chairman Aziz Al-Kaiser Tito, the time between the committee distribution after the board elections and preparation for the Premier League was too little.

"We were given the committees at a time

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ICC rejects ICL plea

Boards to decide players' fate

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has rejected the Indian Cricket League's (ICL) application for official recognition and has said the status of the league's players will be decided by individual member boards.

The decision was taken by the ICC at its board meeting in Dubai on Saturday. The application had been filed last year by the ICL, which is owned by India's largest media group, Zee Telefilms, and is not recognised by the Board of Control for Cricket in India or the ICC.

A statement from the ICC said it had exa-

mined the application against existing criteria for approving such requests, including whether the home board's approval had been secured.

"The Board gave the matter careful consideration but, looking at the criteria set out in the regulations, felt the application for approval could not be granted," the ICC's chief executive, Haroon Lorgat, said.

Asked about the legal implications of the decision, Lorgat said: "If it becomes a legal action we will take it as it comes and will not make any comments on that."

"It's absolutely unfair and extremely disappointing," Kiran More, an ICL board member, told Cricinfo. "We will now definitely take the legal route for resolution of this issue. We could have done that earlier but were hoping for a fair

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PHOTO: AFP

HAPPY TO BE ON THE BENCH! Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful (C) was not considered in the playing eleven for the star-studded Mumbai Indians side, but he still looked happy while watching the proceedings of the opening match against Chennai Super Kings at Newlands in Cape Town yesterday.

Sachin has first laugh

IPL extravaganza underway

AFP, Cape Town

Sachin Tendulkar hit an unbeaten half-century as he led the Mumbai Indians to a 19-run win against the Chennai Super Kings in the opening match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) at Newlands on Saturday.

Tendulkar's 59 not out provided the foundation for Mumbai's 165 for seven after they were sent in on a blustery, grey day.

Former Australian opening batsman Matthew Hayden hit 44 and captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni 36 for Chennai but the 2008 runners-up could only manage 146 for seven.

Sri Lankan fast bowler Lasith Malinga bowled superbly to take three for 15 in four overs for Mumbai.

Mumbai's innings was anchored by Tendulkar, who largely played conventional cricket, punctuated by lofted off-drives.

Although he opened the batting he faced only 48 balls, hitting seven fours.

Tendulkar and Sri Lanka's Sanath Jayasuriya (26) put on 39 for the first wicket. He then shared a second wicket stand of 43 with Shikhar Dhawan (22).

Batting conditions were tricky under grey

skies and Mumbai were struggling at 102 for four in the 15th over before the left-handed Abhishek Nayar lashed 35 off 14 balls in a fifth wicket stand of 46 with Tendulkar.

Nayar slammed three sixes in an over from Andrew Flintoff which cost 22 runs. Flintoff, who is on a 1.55-million dollar a season contract, was the most expensive Chennai bowler, conceding 44 runs in four overs.

Flintoff made 24 in Chennai's reply as he helped Hayden put on 52 for the third wicket. He hit two fours and a six off 22 balls before he heaved a ball from Harbhajan Singh high in the air for the off-spinner to take a catch off his own bowling.

Hayden hit his 44 off 35 balls before Zaheer Khan took a stinging catch in the cover off a fierce drive against Jayasuriya's left-arm spin. Dhoni hit 36 off 26 balls before being bowled by Malinga in the final over.

SCORES IN BRIEF

MUMBAI INDIANS: 165-7 in 20 overs (Tendulkar 59 not out, Nayar 35; Gony 2-32).

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS: 146-7 in 20 overs (Hayden 44, Dhoni 36; Malinga 3-15, Jayasuriya 2-34).

Result: Mumbai Indians won by 19 runs. Man-of-the-match: Sachin Tendulkar.

BFF to go for huge publicity

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to go all out on the publicity front for the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers.

The Group A qualifiers will begin from April 26 in Dhaka and BFF has taken different initiatives to draw the public's attention to the competition to bring them into the stadium.

"To target huge publicity, the federation has taken different initiatives ahead of the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers," said BFF general secretary Al Musabir Sadiq yesterday.

The BFF will install five big billboards in different parts of the city, arrange a horse caravan, release 50,000 leaflets, stage street drama and televise advertisement on giant screens in different spots in the city.

Bangladesh have been drawn in Group A in the tournament along with Myanmar, Cambodia and Macau.

Yasir stars for U-15s

SPORTS REPORTER

Yasir Ali slammed 63 as BCB Under-15s managed a decent total on the first day of the two-day match against visiting Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) Under-15 at the Mymensingh Stadium yesterday.

The number five batsman

Yasir hit a 75-ball 63 that featured nine fours and a six after opener Anik's patience knock of 137-ball 49 as the home boys scored 230 before being all out in 78.5 overs.

Mithilesh Das captured five wickets for 50 runs.

In reply, CAB Under-15 made 58 runs without any loss before stumps were drawn for the day.

It's unjust: Pakistan

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

Pakistan's top cricket officials and players Saturday slammed the decision by the sport's world governing body to strip their country of its 2011 World Cup matches, saying the decision was "unjust."

"I am hugely disappointed," said Pakistan coach Intikhab Alam, who is in Dubai for the limited overs series against Australia starting Wednesday.

"Pakistan has been singled out for security, which is unjust and has hit our cricket with a big, big blow which will be hard to overcome for years," Alam told AFP.

A meeting of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) executive board Friday stripped Pakistan of its 16 matches in the 2011 World Cup after noting the country's "uncertain political situation" and growing security

concerns.

Doubts about Pakistan hosting World Cup matches intensified after the terror attacks on the Sri Lankan team bus, in Lahore on March 3. Eight people were killed, with seven Sri Lankan players and their assistant coach wounded.

The 2011 World Cup had been awarded to Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, but after Friday's decision the tournament will be played only in the latter three countries.

In Pakistan, Salim Altaf, the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) chief operating officer, said the board was "devastated" by the ICC's decision.

The PCB had presented the ICC with a comprehensive security plan for the 2011 World Cup which had nevertheless failed to reassure the ICC board.

"It's disappointing to lose the hosting rights of the World Cup, we are devastated," said Altaf.

Pakistan's Sports Minister Pir Aftab Shah Jilani blamed the PCB for poor planning.

"They (PCB) have taken a security plan for

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Bollywood actor and owner of Rajasthan Royals Shilpa Shetty shows her colours while watching the opening match of IPL at Newlands in Cape Town yesterday.

SL U-19s' practice game from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Mahmudul Hasan will lead a Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Under-19 side against visiting Sri Lanka in a two-day practice match at the BKSP on Saturday.

The all-rounder will lead a 15-member squad which consists of newcomers like openers Mohammad Rubel and Saddam Khan and left-arm Shaker Ahmed.

Also in the squad are two legspinners - Sabir Ahmed and Noor Hossain. Both performed exceptionally well in the Premier and First Division this season with Noor taking a record-breaking 47 wickets in the lower league. Abahani's revelation Shahadat Hossain

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KKR's point to prove

Strong Daredevils raring to go

AFP, Cape Town



Their owner may have been the most visible presence in the pre-tournament build-up, but the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) will seek to show they are capable of playing good cricket when they open their Indian Premier League (IPL) campaign against the Deccan Chargers at Newlands on Sunday.