

Tigers score 146 for six

SPORTS REPORTER

Mahmudullah Riyad and Shakib Al Hasan helped Bangladesh put up a descent total in their first T20 practice match against New Zealand at the Wormsley Cricket Ground in England yesterday.

Bangladesh scored 146-6 in their share of 20 overs.

Riyad top scored with 43 and Shakib added 35.

Dashing opener Tamim Iqbal made 19 and captain Mohammad Ashraful scored 17 runs after the Tigers had decided to bat.

The other notable scorers were Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (15 not out) and Nayeem Islam (11 not out).

After this game the Tigers travel to neighbouring Kent to play the second additional practice game against Netherlands tomorrow while their third match is scheduled for May 29 against Scotland.

Bangladesh's official practice games are against Australia on June 1 and Sri Lanka the next day at Nottingham.

The Tigers, who have been pitted in Group A, will play their first group match against India on June 6 and second match against Ireland on June 8 at Trent Bridge.



PHOTO: STAR

Action from yesterday's Citycell School Football Championship match between Azimuddin High School of Kishoreganj and Zia Shar Karkhana High School of Brahmanbaria at the Brothers Union ground in the city. Azimuddin High won 2-1.

Rasel, Humayun take National to club title

SPORTS REPORTER

National Cricket Club of Nilphamari clinched the National Club Cup cricket title with a 22-run victory over Nazrul Pathagar of Barisal in a low-scoring game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Left-arm spinner Humayun Kabir helped fashion the win with three wickets as Nazrul Pathagar were bowled out for 164 in 48.3 overs after the club from north themselves scored a modest 186 from 50 overs.

Out of the three, Humayun picked up the dangerous Maydul Islam, who made 60 off 82 balls with the help of four boundaries and two sixes.

SM Jaide and Mohammad Hussain took two each while Nadim Sheikh, Rajib Prasad and Jamiul Alam had one each.

Earlier, Mohammad Rasel hit a patient 103-ball 59 that including five boundaries. For the Barisal club, Mohammad Mahin took four wickets while Piar Amin took two wickets.

Rajib's hatrick seals victory

SPORTS REPORTER

Riding on Rajib's brilliant hatrick, Barguna Zilla School crushed Nilphamari Kayagola Hat High School 5-2 in a final round match of the Citycell National School Football Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Khulna Koyra Madinabad Secondary School beat RSKH Institution Mohammadia of Magura 2-1 at the same venue. Mamun and Wahiduzzaman scored one goal each for Koyra while Raju netted the lone goal for RSKH Institute Mohammadia.

At the Brothers Union Ground, Kishoreganj Azimuddin High School defeated Brahmanbaria Zia Sar Karkhana High School 2-1. Ashraful and Golam scored one goal each for Azimuddin High School while Tuhin pulled one back for Zia Sar Karkhana High School.

In another match, Moulvibazar Victoria High School blanked Cox's Bazar Ramu Khizari High School 4-0 at the same venue. Billal struck twice while Kazi and Ismat scored one goal apiece for Victoria High School.

At the Abahani ground, Rajbari Raja Suriyakumar Institute edged past Jhenidah Moslemuddin Secondary School by a solitary goal scored by Bandhan. In another match, Pabna Yunus Ali High School drubbed Barisal Town Secondary School 2-0 goals also at the same venue.

Shahid and Mainuddin netted one goal each for Yunus Ali High School.

Prior, Shah lift Eng

Cricket

AFP, Birmingham

Matt Prior's one-day international best of 87 was the highlight of England's record total against the West Indies of 328 for seven at Edgbaston here on Tuesday.

Together with Owais Shah, who made an entertaining 75, wicketkeeper Prior put on 149 in 126 balls for the third wicket as England surpassed their previous ODI best against the West Indies of 306 for five at The Oval in 1995.

It was further proof, after their six-wicket win at Bristol on Sunday, that England could function effectively without injured stars Andrew Flintoff and Kevin Pietersen.

England captain Andrew Strauss (52) and Ravi Bopara (49) gave the hosts a solid start after West Indies captain Chris Gayle won the toss and chose to field in a match the tourists had to win to end the series all square at 1-1.

But first change Fidel Edwards, in his first over of the series, almost took a wicket when Strauss on 16, cut to backward point where Kieron Pollard, diving forward, failed to hold the difficult, low chance.

England's fifty came up in 62 balls and Bopara continued to find the boundary with some superb square-cuts and drives in a spell of four fours in

nine balls faced. But Bopara was one short of his fifty when, after pushing forward with an angled bat against Dwayne Bravo, the ball struck his pad before rolling onto his stumps.

Bopara's runs had come off 54 balls with seven fours and England were now 81 for one off 15 overs.

England captain Strauss though did get to fifty, off 65

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PHOTO: AFP

Matt Prior drives during his 87 against West Indies in the third and final one-day international in Birmingham yesterday.

Akhtar barred from T20 meet

CRICINFO, undated

Shoaib Akhtar has been barred from playing in the national Twenty20 tournament by the Pakistan board after they had him replaced in the World Twenty20 squad because he was suffering from a skin infection.

Shoaib had been named captain of the Islamabad Leopards squad two days after he was cut from the Pakistan team. A PCB official, however, said the board had informed the Islamabad Cricket Association (ICA) that Shoaib would be violating his central contract if he played for them despite medical advice advising 10 to 12 days' rest.

"The (Pakistan) board has sent us the medical report and a copy of the central contract, which states that a player playing against medical advice can be fined," Shakil Shaikh, president of the ICA, told Dawn.

Shoaib was initially a part of Pakistan's 15-man squad for the World Twenty20 but he missed the training camp in Bhurban because of a skin infection and was advised 10 days rest by a three-member medical panel appointed by the PCB. The panel's decision prompted the board to replace Akhtar with medium-pace Rao Iftikhar Anjum.

Goal fest at Barguna

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani Krira Chakra of Barguna wiped out Bara Bari Boys Club of Patuakhali 9-0 in the Bashundhara Champions Club Cup at the Barguna Stadium yesterday.

Shamim scored a hatrick, netting his three in the 10th, 65th and 85th minutes, while Mamun (6th, 55th), Mohon (12th), Nantu (23rd), Mohon (29th, 35th) completed rest of the honours for Abahani.

It was another high scoring match at Rajshahi where Alor Dishari Club of Chapainawabganj beat Shingra Upazilla of Natore 5-2 in front of an estimated 3,000 people. Royel (8th, 63rd), Romnobe (67th), Faisal (71st) and Taposh (76th) scored the goals for the winners while Shakil and Enamul netted the two consolatory goals for the team from Natore.

In other matches, Fantose Sports Association drubbed Agnishikha Sangsad (Lalmonirhat) 3-0

at the Rangpur Stadium. Lauyai Sporting Club (Sylhet) defeated Young Tiger Nurpur (Habiganj) 2-0 at the Habiganj Stadium, Bangamani Football Academy (Chuadanga) beat Crescent Club (Kushtia) 3-2 at the Meherpur Stadium and Shamabesh Club (Munshiganj) beat Shonali Otit Club (Manikganj) at the Tangail Stadium.

At the Habiganj Stadium, Telinagar New Sporting Club (Brahmanbaria) got a walk-over against Young Star Club (Moulvibazar).

Ghagra Sporting Club (Sherpur), Abahani KC (Mymensingh), Sabuj Shena Club (Faridpur), Shamyo Krira Goshti (Thakurgaon), Ummochon Club (Bagerhat) and Chittagong Mohammedan all drew their respective matches.

At the Bhasha Shaheed Salam Stadium in Feni the match between Mohammedan SC (Comilla) and Chowrasta Club (Laxmipur) was abandoned due to bad weather.

Sania blames injury for exit

AFP, Paris

India's Sania Mirza blamed a lack of match practice after being eliminated in the first round of the French Open here on Tuesday.

The world number 95 is trying to regain form after an injury-plagued 2008, but looked short of sharpness in a rain-hit 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) defeat to Kazakhstan's Galina Voskoboeva.

"It was tough conditions to play in, going on the court and then going off, and it was windy," said Mirza.

"I haven't had too much practice as well because I injured my wrist again after (the) Madrid (Open) and had to head back home and get that treated. And it's not one of my favourite surfaces to play on!"

"But I take nothing away from her. She played really well, she served really well and I think that was the difference."

Mirza held to love in an

emphatic opening service game before the heavens opened, forcing the players off with the score 1-1.

The 22-year-old surrendered her serve in the first game after the rain delay and spurned two chances to break back in game six, letting another two break points slip by at 4-3 down as Voskoboeva, 24, closed out the set.

The players exchanged breaks twice in the second set before Russia-born Voskoboeva, the world number 81, took advantage of her opponent's misfiring serve to clinch victory in the tie-break, sealing her win with an ace.

Voskoboeva will play Russian seventh seed Svetlana Kuznetsova in round two.

Mirza became the first female Indian player to earn in excess of one million US dollars in 2008, despite a season disrupted by a recurring wrist injury that caused her to miss last year's French Open.

Her Australian Open mixed doubles success in Melbourne this year, with partner Mahesh



PHOTO: AFP

Indian tennis sensation Sania Mirza serves to Kazakhstan's Galina Voskoboeva during the French Open first round match at Roland Garros in Paris yesterday.

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T20 test for Ricky

CRICINFO, undated



Ricky Ponting flies to England on Wednesday as one of Australia's most accomplished Test and one-day players, but his reputation in the Twenty20 set-up is less certain.

While Ponting is about to join previous heroes such as Steve Waugh, Allan Border and Don Bradman as players to have gone on four Ashes tours, his high standing as a modern batting master does not guarantee success in the game's shortest form.

Australia are carrying a relatively old, yet inexperienced, team to the World Twenty20 and when Ponting leads his men against West Indies on June 6 he will be playing only his 16th international. Often when this sort of engagement arrives Ponting takes a rest and his wild talents are much better suited to the longer styles.

Seeing him attempt slogs so early in an innings is unfair on his style, although he is not a tortoise, scoring his 376 career runs at a strike-rate of 131.

Even Ponting, an undoubted great in the other environments, struggles when rating his performance in the freshest genre. "Batting where I do in the top order of Twenty20 cricket, it can sometimes be a bit difficult," he said during the team's pre-tour camp on the Sunshine Coast. "Obviously the earlier you get in the better chance you've got of making a big score but you're expected to play in a certain way. Top-order batsmen are always going to have their ups and downs in that sort of game."

Ponting has not passed 38 in his previous four Twenty20 matches and knows his record. "The past couple of games I've played have been very poor," he said. "In the two games in South Africa I made 1 in each. It's not great form

going into a World Cup."

Matthew Hayden and Adam Gilchrist showed in the IPL that age was no barrier in 40-over affairs and while Ponting is only 34, it's possible that he will not be embracing all three formats when the next Twenty20 World Cup is held in 2010. Australia's selectors have grown used to chopping older players from the one-day side if they are not going to be around for the next global tournament, but Ponting would not be drawn on when he would shave Twenty20 from his schedule.

He rejoined the Australia squad on Sunday after missing the series against Pakistan to rest and is fresh and excited ahead of the five-month trip to England. The World Twenty20 acts as a two-week warm-up for the Ashes in July, when Ponting will walk out hoping his developing Test squad can retain the urn after a side full of established personnel dominated England in 2006-07.

Ponting, Michael Clarke, Simon Katich and Brett Lee are only men in the current set-up who have played a Test in England and there is a strong desire to prepare the younger team members for the experience. "I'm embarking on my fourth Ashes tour, so I've been around the block," Ponting said. "It will be important to me to get to the younger guys to talk about what to expect when we arrive."

The first stages of the preparation started on Sunday when most of the Twenty20 squad members, who depart on Wednesday, and national contract holders arrived in Coolm. There are a few missing faces with Andrew Symonds and Cameron White still in South Africa after their IPL commitments while Michael Hussey joined his team-mates on Monday night. Hussey crossed the Indian Ocean twice in the past week after making

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BFF & DIU sign MoU

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) and Daffodil International University (DIU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to improve national and age group footballers' language and presentation skills at the BFF House yesterday.

Under this one of a kind agreement, DIU will provide technical and theoretical assistance to the national and age group players to strengthen their abilities in English, at their language laboratory.

"We want to spread education to all the working professionals of our country including sports. As an institution this agreement with the BFF will enable us to contribute in the nation building capacity. Through our English programme the players will be able to work efficiently and smartly, there are lots of talented players who go abroad for their game and face the media so our input will aid them," said Mizanur Rahman, registrar of the DIU.

BFF expressed their sincere gratitude to DIU for the initiative and said it was a noble

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Did U Know?

The greatest trophy in world club football was proposed on July 20 in 1871 by honorary secretary of the Football Association, Charles Alcock. Three months later, his plan was approved and the FA Cup was born.



Talk Turkey



Adam Gilchrist

(Deccan Chargers captain) "He's a great personality and a wonderful talent on the cricket field who can turn matches." On Andrew Symonds.



TEN Sports

UEFA Champions League Final Man United v Barcelona Live from 12:45am (Thursday)

ESPN

Sportscenter India Sports News Live at 8:30pm

Zia wins 3rd game

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman drew his second round game against Lau Yiping of China but won the third board against Jony Habla of Philippine in the 2nd Subic Open International Chess Tournament which is now being held at Subic Freeport, Olongapo City in the Philippines.

After the third round Zia improved his tally to 2.5 points to share the second spot along with eight other players.

Another Bangladeshi Grand Master, Niaz Murshed secured earned two points as he lost the third round against International Master Richard Bitoon of Philippines.