

Hannan named BCB XI skipper

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday announced a 13-member BCB XI for two practice matches against visiting Zimbabwe with Hannan Sarkar captaining the side.

The first of the two practice matches takes place at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium today while the last match will be held on Sunday at the same venue.

Opener Imrul Kayes, Mehrab Hossain and Mahbubul Alam, who were on Bangladesh team during the series in Zimbabwe, failed to find a place on the national side this time around, but they have been named in the 13-member BCB XI squad.

Shamsur Rahman will be Hannan's deputy.

BCB XI

Hannan Sarkar (captain), Shamsur Rahman Shuvo, Imrul Kayes, Mehrab Hossain, Nafis Iqbal, Faisal Hossain, Sahagir Hossain, Ziaur Rahman, Talha Jubair, Tareq Aziz Khan, Raihan Uddin Arafat and Mahbubul Alam.

ZIMBABWE XI

Prosper Utseya (captain), Forster Mutizwa, Stuart Matsikenyeri, Hamilton Masakadza, Charles Coventry, Chamu Chibhabha, Graeme Cremer, Brendon Taylor, Tatenda Taibu, Raymond Price and Kyle Jarvis.



Ricky Ponting

(Australia cricket captain)
"He's going into his 20th year in international cricket, which in itself is a remarkable feat within itself. The records he has set in Test and one-day cricket would be hard for anybody to tame down the track."
On Sachin Tendulkar.



STAR Cricket

Champions League T20 Final
New South Wales v TBC
Live from 9:30pm

ESPN

Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 9:30pm



Bangladesh U-19 v England U-19
First Youth ODI
Venue: Chittagong Divisional Stadium

U-14 cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT from Thakurgaon

An Under-14 cricket tournament involving four teams got underway at Muktijoddha Sirazul Islam Stadium in Panchagarh on Thursday.

In the opening match Panchagarh beat hosts Thakurgaon by 50 runs. Winning the toss, Panchagarh scored 118 in 45 overs. In reply, Thakurgaon were bundled out for 68 runs.

Other two teams taking part in the meet are Dinajpur and Nilphamari.

Earlier, local lawmaker Mojiburul Haque Prodhan inaugurated the event as chief guest.



Zimbabwe cricketers are taking part in fitness drill at the practice ground of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday ahead of their five-match one-day series against the Tigers.

Utseya quietly confident

SPORTS REPORTER

Zimbabwe captain Prosper Utseya tried to shrug off the memory of a 4-1 reverse against Bangladesh at home earlier this year and looked to build on their current good form to play some good positive cricket when they take on Bangladesh in the five-match Grameenphone Cup ODI series next week.

"We just played against Kenya at home and won the series 4-1. We want to carry the momentum when we play against Bangladesh. I hope we will play better cricket than the last time we did against Bangladesh," said the soft-spoken captain of Zimbabwe during a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Utseya though recognized the fact that they are starting as underdogs in the series and a big challenge lies ahead. "Playing against any team at their home isn't easy. But it is important we realize that and we give our best shot. In the last series, we were dominated by Bangladesh. So, we want to make sure we play to the best of our ability to produce good results."

However, Utseya thinks that the conditions

here are familiar to them as are the players who they will be playing against.

"We've faced most of their bowlers, and we've played here before. Our batsmen have done their homework. It's just a matter of exhibiting that when you play."

As to the bowling, he thinks that the appointment of former fast-bowler Heath Streak as the assistant coach will boost the performance of the bowlers greatly.

The Zimbabwe captain was focusing only on this current series, though he believes that every tour they take part and every good performance is part of the longer process of being reintroduced into Test cricket, from which Zimbabwe cricket have withheld themselves for the last three years, after the policy changes and subsequent exodus of some of their best cricketers.

The visitors had an afternoon practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. They kick off their tour with a warm up match against a BCB XI at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah today. Another warm-up against the same side is scheduled for October 25. The first ODI of the five-game series is on October 27.

NSW a class apart

CRICINFO, undated



There must have been a few Chelsea and Manchester United fans who felt a little odd when the two teams clashed in the 2008 Champions League final. The venue, Moscow, was 2,500 km away from the scenes of their usual skirmishes, Stamford Bridge and Old Trafford. Compared to the sense of displacement felt by supporters of New South Wales and Victoria in Delhi on Wednesday night, that was nothing though. As the crowd flies, it's 10,193 km to Melbourne, 10,416 to Sydney. For one of sport's most ancient rivalries -- spanning 262 games and 117 years -- this truly was a step into the unknown.

New South Wales have been dominant both at Sheffield Shield (45 wins to Victoria's 27) and 50-over cricket (nine triumphs to four), but the

Twenty20 format is one in which the poorer cousins from Melbourne can claim greater mastery. They were well on course for a fourth consecutive success in the Big Bash last January until Ben Rohrer's 20-ball 44 and a bye off the final ball gave NSW the trophy for the first time.

On a slow and low pitch where both had previously excelled -- Victoria thrashed the Delhi Daredevils, while NSW were way too good for both Eagles and Sussex -- you expected a closely-fought game. Apart from a Shield match at Albury (countryside NSW, in 1989) and a 50-over contest in Canberra (2006), the contest had never strayed too far from the traditional venues in Melbourne and Sydney, but never had there been so much at stake as on this early winter's night at the Feroz Shah Kotla.

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Sajjad ousted in 2nd round

SPORTS REPORTER

Gold medalist Sajjad Hossain was eliminated from the second round of the 5th Asian Archery Grand Prix, but his teammates Imdadul Haq Milon, Ziaul Haq Zia and Sajib Sheikh moved into the quarterfinals of the 70m recurve bow at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan yesterday.

Sajjad, who grabbed gold in the 4th Asian Archery Grand Prix in India, failed to qualify for the last eight after going 115-103 down to Indian archer Pawan Xalxo.

After elimination, Sajjad rued that he never thought of being ousted from this stage, but he promised to bounce back in the upcoming SA Games.

Milon beat Pang To Jin of Singapore 110-98, Zia defeated Nemiuwang of Myanmar 110-108 and Sajib beat Jaw Win Streeki 110-106.

In the women's recurve group, Mathoi Pru Marma advanced into the quarterfinals beating her Myanmar rival.

Milon faces Iranian Hamza, Zia takes on Indian Pawan and Sajib plays against Indian Kapil in the quarterfinals today.

Vettori obtains top NZ award

AFP, Wellington

Daniel Vettori was named New Zealand cricketer of the year Thursday as part of a hattrick of awards for the captain of the national team.

Vettori also picked up the award for all rounder and most successful first class bowler.

"Daniel has been an inspiration to his team and to New Zealand cricket fans," New Zealand Cricket chief executive Justin Vaughan said.

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Tigers name ODI squad Shakib retains captaincy

SPORTS REPORTER



There were no big surprises when the Rafiqul Alam led selection panel announced the Bangladesh team for the first three ODIs of the five-match one-day series at home against Zimbabwe that starts on October 27.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) named a 14-member squad, which will continue to be led by all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan. The left-hander stays at the Tigers' helm as

There were only two changes from the team that toured Zimbabwe in August as paceman Shahadat Hossain and left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak came into the side. The four dropped from the previous touring party are Imrul Kayes, Mehrab Hossain, Syed Rasel and Mahbubul Alam.

While Rasel and Robin continue their recuperation from injury, the others have been left out to streamline the squad, which features a surprise look with four frontline seamers and only two specialist spinners in Razzak and

Enamul Haque.

"All the matches are day-night and if you factor in the dew, the conditions are going to be quite challenging for the spinners. Thus we decided to go with four frontline seamers," explained Rafiqul.

Shahadat comes into the side to form a formidable looking pace line-up alongside Dollar Mahmud, Nazmul Hossain and slinger Rubel Hossain who returns from injury.

"Shahadat had been dropped after the West Indies tour due to a lack of form."

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SQUAD

Shakib Al Hasan (captain), Mushfiqur Rahim (vice captain/wicketkeeper), Tamim Iqbal, Zunaed Siddique, Mohammad Ashraful, Rokibul Hasan, Mahmudullah Riyad, Nayeem Islam, Enamul Haque Jr, Rubel Hossain, Dollar Mahmud, Shahadat Hossain, Abdur Razzak and Nazmul Hossain

Mashrafe bin Mortaza is yet to return to training; his comeback from knee surgery slated for the middle of next month.

"Mashrafe is definitely not playing against Zimbabwe," Rafiqul told reporters at a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.



Chief selector Rafiqul Alam (R) makes a point while announcing the national squad for the first three one-dayers against Zimbabwe at the conference room of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Renamed League kicks off Sunday

SPORTS REPORTER



Holders Abahani will host newcomers Beanibazar SC in the opening day of the Citycell Bangladesh League on Sunday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The announcement came at the logo unveiling ceremony of the Bangladesh League, the country's professional football league, at a city hotel yesterday. Representatives from all 13 participating teams were present at the ceremony followed by a stage show by singer Bappa Majumder.

Players from the clubs also took part in a catwalk.

The third edition of the league will see the previous name of B. League revert to the more conventional Bangladesh League to avoid confusion as the word 'B' often has the negative connotation of been considered as the second category meet.

Title contenders and Federation Cup champions Mohammedan will face Feni Soccer Club on Oct 26.

Club Cup champions Shuktara Jubo Sangsad of Narayanganj have been placed just behind last season's bottom finisher Muktijoddha Sangsad while Club Cup runners-up Feni Soccer Club and BFF choice Beanibazar SC filled the remaining spots.

With the inclusion of three new teams, the

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Bangladesh Football Federation's senior vice-president Salam Murshedy (2nd from R) stands in front of the new logo of the Bangladesh Football League during the logo unveiling ceremony of the country's lone professional league at a city hotel yesterday. Also stand with him are actor Bijori Barkatullah (R) and singer Bappa Majumder (L).

Pato brace sinks Real

AFP, Paris



A double from Alex Pato saw AC Milan win the battle of the European giants on Wednesday as they beat Real Madrid 3-2 in the Bernabeu for a crucial victory in their Champions League campaign.

Milan's victory saw them draw level with Real in Group C.

Both English clubs preserved their perfect records with Manchester United beating CSKA Moscow 1-0 in Moscow at the scene of where they beat Chelsea in the final last year.

Antonio Valencia's goal not only gave them their first ever European win over Russian opposition but also equalled Dutch giants Ajax's Champions League record of 14 successive matches unbeaten away from home.

Chelsea had a much easier time trouncing a sorry Atletico Madrid side 4-0 with Ivory Coast striker Salomon Kalou scoring a double and Frank Lampard getting another.

It was his first since August but more importantly was his 133rd for the club, pushing him one ahead of legend Jimmy Greaves in terms of all-time scorers for the London side.

Valencia's first Champions League goal for the club was enough to garner them the three

points and move alongside Ajax, leaving manager Sir Alex Ferguson purring at the feat.

Real had been on the back foot against Milan for the opening exchanges but that changed once the visitors goalkeeper Dida performed an absolute howler as he allowed a straightforward shot slip from his grasp right into the path of Raul.

The Real great was not going to let the chance pass him by and he slotted home.

However, Milan regained their composure as a humdinger of a long range effort by Andrea Pirlo levelled the scores and then a rare misjudgement by Iker Casillas saw Pato give the Italians the lead.

Real, though, restored parity when substitute Royton Drenthe scored with just over 10 minutes remaining.

But Pato was on hand to restore Milan's advantage with just two minutes remaining.

The Bayern and Bordeaux clash in Group A was also a thriller.

All the goals came in the first-half with Bordeaux defender Michael Ciani putting into his own net with an inadvertently impressive backheel in what was incredibly one of seven own goals over the two Champions League evenings.

However, he redeemed himself when he produced an even better version of the backheel to level matters and then Bayern's

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AMAZING TURNAROUND: Milan starlet Alexandre Pato celebrates scoring the winner against Real Madrid during their Champions League match at Santiago Bernabeu on Wednesday. Pato scored twice as Milan came from a goal down to stun Real Madrid 3-2.

PHOTO: AFP