

Elton torments Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

Elton Chigumbura stole the show with a clinical all-round performance as the Tigers suffered a five-wicket defeat in the first one-day of the five-match series against Zimbabwe at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

It was however Shakib Al Hasan's men's dismal batting show, which ensured that the visitor's drew the first blood in the series although they started the battle with a tag of "underdog" and with a bitter memory of losing the last series 4-1 against the same opponents at home in August this year.

Chigumbura first caused the damage with his military medium pace bowling and then showed character with the bat as Zimbabwe recovered from Abdur Razzak's magical spell to achieve the target of 189 for five in 34 overs under lights in 35.4 overs with five wickets in hand.

Left-arm spinner Razzak revived hope by taking three wickets in the eighth over but Chigumbura, who hit an unbeaten 60 off 50 balls, and Stuart Matsikenyeri made sure that their bowlers' effort would not go into vain. Matsikenyeri added an unbeaten 47 off 55 balls.

The crowd showed their anger throwing empty mineral water bottles into the pitch while the two batsmen almost confirmed their team's victory which stopped the play for a while.

It was guessed that the team winning the toss would like to bat first considering the fact that the dew later on could be a major factor in the day-night affair but Zimbabwean skipper Prosper Uteya had different planning and it clicked owing to mindless batting from the local batters.

It's true the visiting bowlers kept it tight to justify their captain's decision of fielding first but it was poor batting approach of Jamie Siddons charges, which helped Zimbabwe to take the upper hand in the season's first battle.

From a dire state of 62 for 6, Bangladesh could manage a decent total of 186 before being bundled out in 46.5 overs thanks to sensible batting from vice-captain Mushfiqur Rahim and a brilliant power-hitting display from

Dollar Mahmud, who entertained some 20,000 present by hitting four boundaries and three sixes during his 30-ball 41.

The wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur did exactly what was required from the top order batsmen against the medium pace attack led by Elton Chigumbura, who made the early damage by taking three wickets.

The 21-year old right-hander, during his 78-ball 56 that hit five boundaries and completed his fourth half-century with a lovely shot

Left-arm spinner Ray Price broke the partnership when Nayeem swept and got a top edge to reach at deep backward square leg where Charles Coventry took a simple catch to put an end to the right-hander's 47-ball 21 knock.

Then Dollar took charge to give some life in the match as the right-hander launched a counterattack against Kyle Jarvis, who set the tune for Zimbabwe with the new ball, by smashing two fours and a six in an over which was followed by two consecutive sixes against Price on the following over.

The right-hander associated 54 runs with Rahim in the ninth wicket and his effort salvaged the blushes of the home team as well providing a total for the bowlers to defend under floodlights.

Before that it was all about a suicidal effort from Zunaed Siddiqui, Tamim Iqbal, Mohammad Ashraf, Rokibul Hasan and captain Shakib Al Hasan.

Zunaed started the rot when the left-hander drove without any bite against a wide off stump delivery from Chigumbura only to reach at the safe hand of Matsikenyeri at cover while his partner Tamim fell to the same bowler trying to drive through the off-side without any footwork to take an edge to keeper Tatenda Taibu.

Ashraf looked well but again it was Chigumbura who dismissed the ace batsmen when the right-hander unnecessarily went for a big booming drive through the off side but edged it to Taibu.

And then it was stupid run out which deepened the woe. A tossed up delivery from Uteya and Rokibul worked it away behind square on the leg side and got a call from Shakib for single but captain changed his mind after taking couple of steps. It was too late for Rokibul as

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



Zimbabwe all-rounder Elton Chigumbura follows through on a delivery during a fine overall show in the first ODI against Bangladesh at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Chigumbura took three wickets and effected a superb run-out to restrict the hosts. He then hit an imperious unbeaten half-century under pressure to propel the Africans to a five-wicket win.

PHOTO: STAR

Unacceptable behaviour

SPORTS REPORTER

Sporadic crowd disturbances added salt to the wounds as Bangladesh slumped to a five-wicket defeat in the first ODI of the Grameenphone Cup against Zimbabwe yesterday.

The Tigers' tag of favourites seemed to have been taken too much to heart by a select few present at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, as sections of the crowd started to hurl plastic bottles into the ground expressing their displeasure at the performance of their heroes, in a match most had expected to win. The sad incident in the 29th over during Zimbabwe's chase stopped the game for a few minutes before security personnel took the situation under control.

But the ugly scenes are set to prove red flags for the eagerly watching International Cricket Council (ICC) representatives who have an altogether keener eye on proceedings since Bangladesh is all set to host the 2011 edition of the World Cup at this very stadium.

Although a loss at home is always disappointing, fans have traditionally avoided expressing their displeasure in an overtly showy manner. However, these scenes will do nothing to enhance the reputation of Bangladesh as hosts with the World Cup knocking on the door.

As responsible cricket fans, it should be the duty of each present at the stadium to ensure that they do nothing untoward to put the safety of the players into question.

Bangladesh have historically been identified by their fanatic but safe cricket following.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



Did U Know?

Karate means "empty hands" or "Chinese Hands".



Adam Gilchrist

(Former Australia wicketkeeper)
"Dhoni is a wonderful cricketer. He has amazing calmness. He doesn't ever seem to panic." While praising India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni.



Neo Cricket
India v Australia
Second ODI
Live from 4:00pm

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 9:30pm
German FA Cup
Eintracht Frankfurt v Bayern Munich
Live from 2:00am (Thursday)



Citycell Bangladesh League
Brothers Union v Muktiyoddha (5:30pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Abahani's mediocre show

SPORTS REPORTER

Giants Abahani uncharacteristically formed a mediocre hockey team after signing up 12 players of the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan yesterday, three days before the closing of the inter-club players' transfer for the Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

Roping in the BKSP students means the star players like playmakers Ehsan Rana, Musa Mia, Mosharraf Hossain Kuti, defenders Mamunur Rahman Chayan, Hedayetullah Razib, strikers Russel Mahmud Jimmy, Shuvo and goalkeeper Zahid will not appear in their old outfit this season.

Abahani hockey committee joint secretary Shahidullah Dolan told reporters that they did not want to form a half-hearted team because of the absence of the national players, who were not allowed to play the domestic league for the preparation of the upcoming SA Games at home.

Though the executive committee of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation has decided in principle to allow the national players for the domestic league

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

Russel off the mark

SPORTS REPORTER



A brace from striker Mohammad Rony gave Sheikh Russel KC a winning start in the Bangladesh League with a 2-0 win over newcomers Shuktara Jubo Sangsad of Narayanjanj at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Narayanjanj outfit, however, gave a run for the money to their mighty opponents, who finished third in last season's professional football league. The newcomers, boasting of all local players, rattled the Sheikh Russel crosspiece before squandering a penalty that cost them heavy in their first match in the top-flight meet.

Shuktara Jubo Sangsad got off to an inspiring start when Mehdi Hasan Tapu and Rezaul Karim Liton together launched an attack in the very third minute. Liton struck the woodwork after Tapu was denied by Sheikh Russel goalkeeper Mazharul Islam Himel.

But against the run of play, Sheikh Russel went ahead in the 16th minute from a counter attack as Rony took advantage of a fumble by defender Abul Kashem to let loose a powerful volley inside the box and finding the back of the net after hitting the sidebar.

A few moments later, Shuktara nearly equalised when Tapu, despite staying at a good position inside the danger zone, headed a Liton freekick wide, much to the relief of goalkeeper Himel. With the inclusion of Brazilian medio Renato Lucas Leite and Moroccan striker Samir Omari, Sheikh Russel looked more organised and almost took advantage on the half-hour mark, but opponent goalkeeper Al Amin foiled efforts from Mobarrak Hossain and Rony.

Before the whistle for the break, Shuktara were awarded a penalty after keeper Himel brought Liton down inside the box, but Shuktara captain, Liton, missed the spot-kick to ruin the chance of coming back in the game.

After resumption, Omari dodged past Shuktara goalkeeper Al Amin to set Rony in front of the open net and the striker did not

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Bangladesh U-19s go 3-0 up

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19 cricketers beat their English counterparts by 87 runs at Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday to take a 3-0 lead in the 7-match one-day series.

Batting first, Bangladesh youth scored 251 in their allotted 50 overs, losing eight wickets. Tasamul Haque and Nurul Hasan laid the foundation of a big total with a 68-run third wicket partnership. Tasamul top-scored with 66 while Nurul scored 40. Mahmudul made 35 and was well supported by the tail-enders who provided some quick-fire knocks to throw a tall target for the touring side.

England innings started brightly with the first wicket partnership producing 46 in 12.3 overs before Shaker got Dent caught behind. The innings fell apart from there on, losing 4 more wickets in the space of 32 runs. Contributions towards the end provided some respectability to the total, but the target proved too much for them as the innings came to a halt in the 44th over with 164 runs on the board. Shabbir and Mahmudul got three wickets each, Mahmudul though proved a bit expensive.

'Irresponsible batting'

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan admitted that "irresponsible" batting by the top-order resulted in a five-wicket defeat against Zimbabwe in the first one-day international of the five-match series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

It was in no way an ideal start for the Tigers to the new season after memorable successes in West Indies and Zimbabwe few months back, but the world's number one one-day all-rounder promised that his team would come back in the series.

"We are a much better team, but made too many mistakes in the first game. The mindsets of our top-order batsmen including myself were wrong and we must rectify those mistakes in the next matches. We can still win the series 4-1," said a confident Shakib in the post-match briefing.

"We were not focussed on our batting and that's why lost too many early wickets. Right that they bowled a tight line and length, but we must have got ourselves out of that situation. We failed to ensure balance in our batting. At times we were

bogged down too much and sometimes went wild," he added reflecting on his team's precarious situation of 62 for six.

The Tigers skipper also said that his bowlers did well in defence of 186 runs but both Elton Chigumbura and Stuart Matsikenyeri played exceptionally well after left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak had rocked the tourists with triple strikes in one over.

"We can't blame anything except our poor batting. There was nothing for the bowlers on the scoreboard and our fielding was also not too bad. I must thank Elton and Stuart for their brilliant efforts because anything could have happened had we broken the partnership early on," explained Shakib.

Shakib was also not ready to blame playing T20 cricket just before the start of the series. "As a professional player one must adjust with different formats. I don't think it was the reason behind the defeat, rather, once again, it was our irresponsible batting."

Zimbabwe skipper Prosper Uteya however didn't turn up to express his delight in the briefing due to injury he picked while fielding and vice-captain Hamilton Masakadza appeared in the media room to declare that they were looking forward to winning the series.

"We missed a lot of chances

in the last series but today we grabbed the opportunity and it was a team effort. We are looking forward to keep up the momentum," said Masakadza.

On the other hand man-of-the-match Chigumbura said that he was always confident that he could do something for his side.

"I think I am improving day by day because of self-confidence. I always have belief in myself. I love to think myself as a batting all-rounder, and any good effort as a bowler is always considered as a bonus," said Chigumbura, who did the main damage by picking up three wickets which was followed by a match-winning unbeaten 60.

Hockey team win against Italy

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national hockey team handed a 4-2 defeat to Italy in a friendly match in Rome, said a press release yesterday.

Mamunur Rahman Chayan converted all four goals from penalty corners in the game played on Sunday, said a Bangladesh Hockey Federation statement.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Aussies' twin blows

Second ODI against India today

Cricket

AFP, Nagpur

Australia's cricket team suffered a major blow on Tuesday when injured pace spearheads Brett Lee and Mitchell Johnson were both ruled out of the second one-day international with India.

Cricket Australia official Andrew Hilditch said Lee and Johnson would both miss Wednesday's match in Nagpur after suffering elbow and ankle injuries respectively in Sunday's narrow four-run win.

"Our medical staff have now decided that while both Brett Lee (right elbow) and Mitchell Johnson's (left ankle) injuries have responded well to treatment, they will be severe enough to rule them out of contention for tomorrow's match in Nagpur," Hilditch said.

Australia also called up New South Wales' Moises Henriques as a standby for injured all-rounder James Hopes, who will miss at least the next two matches of the seven-game series.

"With James Hopes' right hamstring injury being more serious and likely to keep him out for at least the next two matches it is thought

adding a standby player to the squad is a necessity," Hilditch said.

"Given the most significant injury appears to be Hopes' hamstring, we have taken this opportunity to add Moises Henriques to the squad until the completion of game four in Mohali where we will again assess the situation before it is decided if he remains with the squad."

Lee and ICC cricketer of the year Johnson were both in the wickets as Australia survived a late Indian batting charge to take a 1-0 series lead in Vadodara.

Lee, 32, has been Australia's form bowler, regaining his pace and rhythm during the recent Champions Trophy in South Africa after being sidelined for the Ashes series in England.

The fast bowler also played a key role with both bat and ball in New South Wales' title victory in a Twenty20 competition in India last week.

Australia are already depleted by injuries to key middle-order batsman Michael Clarke, first-choice wicketkeeper Brad Haddin, pacer Nathan Bracken and batsman Callum Ferguson.

"While the injury situation is disappointing, it does provide an opportunity for Moises to

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



India cricketers (L-R) captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Suresh Raina and Sachin Tendulkar take part in fielding practice during a training session at the Vidarbha Stadium in Nagpur yesterday. They play the second one-day international against Australia today.

PHOTO: AFP