

MSC champs after stunning finale

SPORTS REPORTER



In a match that is set to go down in the annals of league history, Mohammmedan clinched a last ball thriller against arch-rivals and defending champions Abahani to confirm their first Premier Division Cricket League title in eight years.

In a humdinger of a match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, Mohammmedan captain Khaled Mashud edged a last ball boundary to send the Motiheen outfit into raucous celebrations and condemn Abahani to defeat after three championships on the trot.

But the 10,000 strong crowd was wowed most by the sensational hitting of Navedul Hasan whose 17-

ball 29 with four sixes, made sure of the three-wicket win. This was the perfect finish to a domestic season, which has produced some quality games and in the end the best team won the title.

Back to the match and everybody was on their toes when seasoned campaigner Mashud, who has won many battles in his long career, slowly walked to the middle with his side needing to score four runs, at least required three runs to tie the match for championship, from the last delivery off Mohammed Rafique to achieve the target of 274 runs.

And lady luck was in favour of the former national captain as the ball sneaked through the third man after kissing the edge of his bat. However, much of the blame should go to Shakib Al Hasan, who surprisingly set up a close-in fielding to create the chance for

his counterpart.

But the real hero was none other than Navedul Hasan because the Pakistani actually snatched the game from Abahani's grasp when everybody had counted out Mohammmedan from the game as they needed 34 runs from the last two overs.

Nabil Samad managed a single off the first ball of the penultimate over, but Shakib left Navedul red-faced with the next delivery. The Pakistani all-rounder then retook his guard to smash the Bangladeshi stand-in captain for two consecutive sixes and a four off the next three deliveries before sneaking a single of the last ball. With 18 off the penultimate over, Mohammmedan needed 16 from the final over.

Shakib had no other choice than bring on a slow

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PHOTO: STAR

THE CLASS OF 2009: Players of Mohammmedan Sporting Club celebrate their Premier League triumph after a long gap of eight years while their captain Khaled Mashud (R) takes a flight to the heavens after his one-stroke brilliance; a four of the last ball in the nail-biting virtual final against Abahani at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Lady luck plays her hand

SPORTS REPORTER



Time flies fast, but fortunes fly faster. Barely two months ago, Abahani's veteran all-rounder Mohammad Rafiq was the toast of the Abahani players after he played an astonishing knock to single-handedly win his side the season's first cricket event -- the Twenty20 Premier League. Memories of that match are still very much fresh in the mind of every cricket fan and journalist alike.

But yesterday he found himself on the receiving end as his last over was dispatched for sixteen runs that handed Mohammmedan the much-vaunted title. Rafiq had looked to have made amends after going for two consecutive sixes in the last over, by getting rid of the eventual man-of-the-match, Navedul Hasan, and then bowling a dot ball to turn the game into a last ball drama with Mohammmedan needing a boundary.

But that last ball was dispatched, albeit clumsily, to the



PHOTO: STAR

CAPTAINS IN PAIN: Injured Abahani and national captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (R) consoles his deputy Shakib Al Hasan after the last ball defeat against Mohammmedan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Biman 2nd

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishthan kept their hopes of playing the final alive when they played out a 2-2 draw in the Victory Day Hockey Tournament at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Both Army and BKSP are now level with four points each playing three outings, two points less than leaders Bangladesh Hockey Federation XI, who have six points from two matches.

After the barren first half, Army went ahead in the 48th minute with Jamal Khan converting a penalty corner and five minutes later Sirajul Islam doubled the margin through a field goal.

National team's wicketkeeper Mashfiqur Rahim and promising batsman Avishek Mitra laid the foundation putting on 85 runs for the first wicket in 15 overs. Mashfiqur played an aggressive knock as he collected 55 off just 47 deliveries while his partner got 31.

After the two departed, two more cheap dismissals followed to reduce Biman to 125 for 4 in 26 overs. But the next two batsmen, Elias Sunny and Sri Lankan recruit Hashanta Fernando

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League moved to Kamalapur

SPORTS REPORTER

After a one-day break, the Bangladesh League resumes today with all matches being shifted to the Bishreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mostafa Stadium in Kamalapur from Bangabandhu National Stadium following renovation work at the country's premium venue.

The league committee yesterday took the decision after the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) had requested football's governing body to vacate the BNS for the renovation works for the 11th South Asian Games.

The BNS will host the opening and closing ceremony along with football and athletics of the regional mega extravaganza, scheduled for January 29-February 9 and there will be no Bangladesh League matches until the

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Younus back to cricket

AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistan captain Younus Khan returned to first-class cricket on Monday after a month-long absence, raising hopes for a swift international comeback by the big-hitting batsman.

The 32-year-old was featuring in the five-day final of Pakistan's premier domestic tournament, the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, which began Monday.

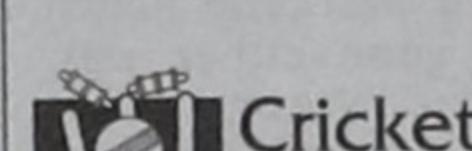
Younus pulled out of Pakistan's New Zealand tour in November citing poor form, and said he needed a break from international cricket.

He last took the field in the third and final one-dayer against New Zealand at Abu Dhabi on November 9. Younus, who hit a triple century against Sri Lanka in February, managed just 22 runs against the Kiwis and Pakistan lost 2-1.

Younus also stepped down as captain, arguing he had

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Jadeja jolts Lanka



AFP, Cuttack

Ravindra Jadeja led a disciplined spin attack with a career-best 4-32 as India dismissed Sri Lanka for 239 after a blazing start in the third one-day international here on Monday.

Sri Lanka were strongly placed at 165-1 in the 23rd over after electing to bat in the day-night match, but left-arm spinner Jadeja sparked the collapse which saw the visitors lose their remaining nine wickets for 74.

The spinner bowled opener Upul Tharanga (73) in his opening over before he accounted for Chamara Kapugedera (15), Nuwan Kulasekara (10) and Ajantha Mendis (six).

Off-spinner Harbhajan Singh was the other bowler to keep the batsmen silent, conceding 29 runs off nine

overs for one wicket. The five-match series is tied 1-1.

In-form opener Tillakaratne Dilshan, who smashed brisk centuries in the last two

LATEST

India were cruising at 168 for 2 at the end of 32 overs, needing a further 72 runs with Tendulkar batting on 63 and Yuvraj Singh on 23.

The hosts were given a rollicking start by stand-in captain Virender Sehwag who hit 44 off just 28 balls. Gautam Gambhir was another man to go after making 32.

matches, helped Sri Lanka get off to an explosive start with an 18-ball 41 as the visitors raced to 65 off just 6.2 overs.

Dilshan, who survived a

run-out chance on 36, was caught by wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik off a mistimed pull off seamer Ashish Nehra after hitting 10 fours in his impressive cameo.

There was no respite for India as Tharanga and skipper Kumar Sangakkara (46) put on 100 for the second wicket to put their team on course for a big total on an easy-paced track.

Tharanga cracked one six and four fours in his 81-ball knock.

But India fought back after the dismissal of Sangakkara, stumped by Karthik off part-time spinner Virender Sehwag. They then never allowed Sri Lanka to build a partnership, striking at regular intervals.

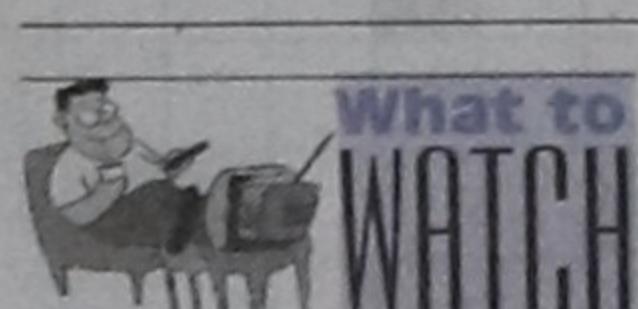
Pacer Ishant Sharma, who conceded 46 runs in his opening three overs, came back strongly to remove Thilina Kandamby for 22 and Suraj Randiv for duck off

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PHOTO: AFP

India's stand-in-captain Virender Sehwag (L) congratulates four-wicket hero Ravindra Jadeja during the third one-day international against Sri Lanka at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack yesterday.



V-Day hockey

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