

Small problems to work on

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Chittagong

Shakib Al Hasan, the Bangladesh captain, identified bowling in the Powerplay overs as one weak point that they needed to work on in order to win matches against bigger nations in one-day cricket.

Shakib's boys conceded 107 runs in the last ten overs, 55 of them coming in the batting Powerplay, during the third and final ODI of the Beximco Series at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium here yesterday. That leaking of runs proved too costly in the end as they lost the match by 45 runs to give the visitors a 3-0 wrap.

"Bowling in the Powerplay overs is a problem for us. We give away too many runs in that part which have cost us dear. It is very important to bowl well in Powerplay overs if you want to win," said the Bangladesh captain.

The Bangladesh captain had earlier said number three and four batting positions are a problem too which needs to be addressed.

However, Shakib was pretty satisfied

with the overall performance from the Tigers in the series.

"We played good cricket overall, came close in the second match. We are improving with every game which is very satisfying. We are not having big problems, rather small problems which we need to sort out," said Shakib.

Shakib scored thirty-eight runs from as many balls in yesterday's match and the whole team were banking on him to play a big knock and he felt it too.

"I thought if I could score 80 today, we would win. There was turn for the first thirty overs in the first innings, then it got easier for batting," said Shakib.

Shakib was adjudged leg-before wicket against part-time spinner Kevin Pietersen, but replays showed that the ball hit his leg outside the off-stump after pitching outside. After his dismissal, Bangladesh innings disintegrated fast. But Shakib was in no mood to blame the umpire in question -- Enamul Haque -- for losing the match.

"Umpiring is a tough job. Sometimes these things happen, not that they are done intentionally against the lesser nations. Overall umpiring was good today [Friday], apart from the one cru-

cial error," said Shakib.

Though Shakib believed that the umpire's job in one-day cricket could be made easier and more accurate with installation of the referral system, which is currently used in Tests only.

Shakib's counterpart Alastair Cook was very happy with wrapping up the series 3-0 on his first assignment. He specially praised opening batsman Craig Kieswetter and pacer Tim Bresnan for their performances in the last match. Kieswetter scored 107 runs off 123 balls to help England post a mammoth 284 on the board and Bresnan later took four wickets to thwart the run chase.

"Craig was fantastic today. He showed how one-day cricket should be played. Tim too was fantastic. He stood up to be counted," said Cook.

Kieswetter was elated at his effort and said he would cherish this innings for long.

"It's nice to have a hundred under your belt, and your first tour at that. This is something I'm gonna cherish for long," said Kieswetter.

The 22-year-old batsman now looks

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



VENI, VIDI, VICI: Opener Craig Kieswetter, who is on his first England tour, follows through on a cover drive on way to scoring the maiden century in the third and final ODI against Bangladesh at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE Ctg-Rajshahi final from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The five-day final of the 11th National Cricket League between Rajshahi and Chittagong will start at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur today.

The country's lone first-class competition whose format has been significantly changed this season will end with possibly the two best teams on show.

This is also for the first time a five-day match has been slated in the first-class competition.

The match starts at 9:30am with ATN Bangla beaming the live coverage of the match.

BANGLADESH LEAGUE

Beanibazar, Arambagh share points

SPORTS REPORTER

Ten-man Beanibazar SC held hosts Arambagh KS to a goalless draw in the Citycell Bangladesh League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

After a barren first half, Beanibazar were reduced to 10 men when Faisal Hossain was given marching order six minutes into the second half. But, hosts Arambagh failed to cash in on the one-man shortage of the visitors and had to be content with a draw.

It was the fourth draw for both Arambagh and Beanibazar, who now share the seventh position with seven points apiece after eight outings.

CHITS FROM CHITTAGONG

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR, Ctg

As per expectation of the organisers, the viewers had a real taste of competitive match between the host and touring England and every nook and corner of the 14,000-capacity Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium started filling before the first ball was bowled at 9:00am.

Long queues were seen at the makeshift ticket counter of Grameenphone at the entrance of the stadium before and even after one-and-a-half hours of the match to collect a ticket. Many of the ticket-seekers had to enjoy the game hearing screams from inside the stadium and return home failing to collect tickets.

Weekly holiday, reduction of price of tickets for club house, special enclosure and gallery and the breathtaking two ODIs in the capital inspired the viewers to gather at the venue at Sagorika BSCIC Industrial Area accepting pain of transport and food crisis.

But the Tigers got enough cheer from the crowd whether

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



ATN Bangla

National Cricket League
Chittagong v Rajshahi
Live from 9:30am

SuperSport2

New Zealand v Australia
Third ODI
Live from 5:00am

West Indies v Zimbabwe
Second ODI
Live from 7:30pm

ESPN

English Premier League
Man City v Tottenham
Live from 6:40pm

Arsenal v Burnley
Live from 8:55pm

Wolves v Man United
Live from 11:25pm

STAR Sports

English Premier League
Aston Villa v Sunderland
Live from 8:55pm

SuperSport3

Primera Liga
Almeria v Barcelona
Live from 1:30am (Sunday)

Real Madrid v Sevilla
Live from 2:45am (Sunday)



National Cricket League Final
(Five-Day Match, Day One)
Chittagong v Rajshahi
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur
Bangladesh League
Sheikh Russel v Abahani
Time: 5:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium
Ctg Mohammedan v Feni Soccer Club
Time: 3:30pm
Venue: MA Aziz Stadium, Chittagong

Umpiring rules the talk

ATIQUÉ ANAM

Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan was batting on 38 and Bangladesh were very much in the match at 162 for four in the thirty-fourth over when the dreaded finger of umpire Enamul Haque was raised to show Shakib his way to the pavilion.

And with that dreaded raising of the finger, Bangladesh's hopes of winning the match took a crucial blow. It was too baffling a decision to take for many as it was very visible from even the stands that Shakib took a big stride outside the off-stump when the ball struck him.

And the ball from Kevin Pietersen even pitched outside too to negate it for any chance to be given leg before wicket. Replays only confirmed the naked sight and a

huge sigh of disbelief was what followed.

But the man given out in that fashion showed very little reaction in getting out like that and he was very polite in his words when asked about it at the post-match briefing.

"You see, umpiring is a very tough job. I am sure they try to give their best in the field. They also did not commit too many mistakes in the match apart from that out which was a crucial one. I am happy with their performance."

But Shakib could be excused for his apparent apathy, after what he had seen throughout the series. Umpiring in this three-match series has drawn flak from all corners right from the start.

After the first match, BBC dubbed a leg before wicket decision from Nadir Shah against England captain Alastair Cook as 'rotten'.

But as it turned out, more of

those 'rotten' decisions in the series went against the hosts. In the second match, England batsman Eoin Morgan played a match-winning knock of 110 not out, but only after he survived a sharp lbw appeal on 13. Morgan shared a 90-run partnership with Matthew Prior in that match who also had survived two close calls.

Shakib criticised those decisions after the match which earned him verbal caution from match referee Jeff Crowe. So, Shakib decided to play it safe this time.

The talk on corners for the last few days have centred around the umpiring decisions as much as anything and the question that came to everyone's mind was: Why do minnows like Bangladesh are always left to experiments with debutant umpires?

Australian umpire Rodney Tucker made his umpiring

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

Uzbekistan's Sabina Sharipova serves to Ratnika Batra of India during their girls' singles semi-final engagement of the Grameenphone 24th ITF Junior Tennis Championships at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

Salahuddin back with Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Salahuddin is likely to join the national team again as fielding coach when the Tigers will start their preparation tomorrow for the two-match Test series against England.

The team management has been facing problems with a shortage of coaching staffs in the national team as Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) did not extend the

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

ITF JR TENNIS

Sharipova faces Xuanshuo in final today

SPORTS REPORTER

Uzbekistan's Sabina Sharipova will face Xuanshuo Ou in the girls' final of the Grameenphone 24th ITF Junior Tennis Championships today after both had easy rides against semifinal opponents at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

Sharipova beat Ratnika Batra 6-2, 6-4 while Xuanshuo Ou got a walkover from top seed Saisai Zheng.

Zheng, the world No 21 girls' player, suffered severe headache and was advised by the doctors to take 24 hours rest.

In the boys' semifinals, India's Mohit Jayaprakash crushed Boyen Ouyang of China 6-3, 6-3 while Xin Gao beat Sai Kartik Nakireddi 6-3,

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

BANGLADESH LEAGUE

First face third

SPORTS REPORTER

On the back of nine straight triumphs in the Bangladesh League, defending champions Abahani are going to face the real hurdle for the first time this season when they take on Sheikh Russel KC at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Nevertheless, the Sky Blues are looking forward to extending their winning streak taking inspiration from their 20 match unbeaten run of which 11 came in the second edition of the professional football league last year.

"We are hopeful of maintaining the winning habit in the league and every match is vital for us and we are worried about the opponents," said Abahani captain Biplab Bhattacharjee.

The Dhanmondi-based outfit, Abahani, top the points table with 27 points, two points clear of rivals Mohammedan SC and a four point cushion over third-placed Sheikh Russel KC, who held the Black and Whites to a goalless draw in their last match.

"They (Sheikh Russel) held Mohammedan in their previous match and certainly they will be looking forward to keeping their momentum

against us too in a bid to improve their position. So we are taking the game seriously," said the goalkeeper.

After a seven-week break following the national booters' involvement in the SA Games as well as AFC Challenge Cup finals, Abahani took to the field in a game against a depleted Brothers Union and struggled until substitute Motiur Munna struck a decider 10 minutes from time.

"Yes, we struggled to find our rhythm in the previous match because most of the players were out of action for a long time. But I am confident that we will not repeat the

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

PCL T20 AUCTION

Five hit ceiling price

Cricket

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR, Ctg

Five Bangladesh national team players - Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad and Naem Islam were sold at the highest Tk 4 lakh each in the players' auction of the "PCL T20 Bashundhara Sharjah 2010" held at the gymnasium of the Chittagong MA Aziz Stadium in a colourful ceremony on Thursday night.

Twenty four players were auctioned in three categories A, B and C. Base price for seven A-category players were fixed at Tk 50 thousand and highest Tk 4 lakh while 13 B-category players were at base price of Tk 30 thousand and highest Tk 2.5 lakh and four C-category players were at a base price of Tk 25 thousand and highest Tk 1.5 lakh.

Eight teams are participating in two groups at the tournament which is scheduled to begin from March 26 at Sharjah. Team grouping were also held through lottery in the

ceremony. Teams comprising group A are Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club, Chittagong Brothers Union Club, Chittagong Tigers and Top Sports of Noakhali and the B group teams are Dhaka Sports Club, Pirates of Chittagong, Bengal Tigers of India and Bangladesh Biman Club.

At first international tea auctioneer Rafay Nizam announced the name of Mohammad Ashraf with base price of Tk 50 thousand and he was bought at Tk 3 lakh

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

Boxing for a bright future

ANISUR RAHMAN

Boxing has a long way to go to gain popularity amongst the general people. While internationally the sport is quite high-profile, it is still very much at its infancy in Bangladesh and lags far behind cricket and football in the popularity rankings. However, a quick skim over the Rajshahi and Jessore regions in the country would speak of a different story as a large number of youngsters from those areas are taking up the sport.

Bangladesh have so far won four boxing gold's in the South Asian Games since the inception of the regional games in 1984 and of them three of the gold medalist boxers hail from Rajshahi and Jessore.

There might be a general thought among the people that the junior boxers are being inspired to box following the success of their predecessors in the regions, but the fact is that they are being encouraged to get into the sport with the dreams of getting a government job in the

future.

After having talked to a number of junior boxers and coaches on the opening day of the 21st Junior and 12th Intermediate Boxing Championship that got underway on Monday at the newly-built Mohammad Ali Boxing Stadium, it is clear that the parents of the boxers enrolled their children to the boxing clubs with a hope that their child will land a job, especially in defence.

"It is not that the boys are coming into boxing because of some deep love of the sports rather their parents enrol their children to make sure his son's good future because they know it well that if their son grows into a good boxer, he will get a job in defence," Jessore Boxing Club coach Robiul Hossain told The Daily Star.

Robiul informed that Jessore Boxing Club and Mominagar Preti Parisad now have over 1000 students and most of the students come from an under-privileged group.

The 59-year coach also informed that

some 11 players recently got admission to his club ahead of their admission test in the Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protisthan where 14 students out of 23 got the initial training from the Jessore Boxing Club.

Some 40 boxers from the Jessore Boxing Club took part in the championship under the name of different organisations because each team was allowed to field only 10 boxers in as many categories -- five for junior and five for intermediate boxers.

Swan, a student of Class IV, got admission into the Jessore Boxing Club one month earlier and came to Dhaka to play in the championship, but he burst into tears before the announcement of the result. Surprisingly he was declared the winner in the first round and the boy had a big smile on his face and hugged the loser.

"I never fought in the ring and thought I went down. That's why I had started to cry, but finally I won the game," said Swan, a son of a small trader.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Monirul Islam of Sipahibagh Jubo Kalyan Sangsad (R) lands a right-handed jab on Monbur Rahman of BKSP during the 21st National Junior Boxing Championship in Dhaka on Thursday. Many young boxers from Jessore and Rajshahi are taking up the sport with the hopes of landing a job in the defence sector to secure their future.

NAT'L BOXING

Ansar emerge champions

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Ansar emerged champions in both the Junior and Intermediate group of the Southeast Bank 21st National Junior and 12th National Intermediate Boxing Championship which concluded at the Mohammad Ali Boxing Stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh Ansar won three golds, one silver and one bronze in the intermediate group and bagged three gold, one silver in the junior group to put Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protisthan (BKSP) behind to emerge as champions.

BKSP, the country's lone educational institute, won two gold, two silver and one bronze in the junior group while their senior students

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2