

Ashraful fails form test

Bangladesh's team for England Tests named

SPORTS REPORTER

It was not experience rather form that was considered when the national selectors announced a 14-member squad for the two-match Test series against England without former national skipper Mohammad Ashraful.

The axe fell on Ashraful for the three-match one-day series against England due to a poor run of form. Subsequently the right-hander continued his poor run of form in the domestic competition as well as against England in the three-day match which sealed his fate.

But as expected middle-order batsman Rokibul Hasan retained his place in the Test team after his impressive 107* that was followed by a fifty in the second innings against England at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

"At the moment he (Ashraful) is totally out of form. We feel that it would be better for him to score some runs in the coming domestic matches to get back his confidence. There is no doubt about his class as a batsman and we are hopeful he will come back to the team very soon," chief selector Rafiqul Alam explained the reason behind the omission of the ace batsman.

Left-hander Zunaed Siddiqui has also been struggling but his fifty against India and 37 in the second innings of the three-day warm-up match was good enough to retain the place while Aftab Ahmed also looked in out of touch after his return from ICL but his 46 in the 3rd ODI gave the selectors an impression that the right-hander is all set to get back to his rhythm.

"Zunaed looked good in the second innings (of the practice match against England) and he had also looked good in New Zealand.

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 Shakib Al Hasan (captain) Left-handed batsman, left-arm spinner Age: 22, Tests: 17 Runs: 977, Wickets: 58	 Mushfiqur Rahim (vice-captain) Right-handed batsman, wicketkeeper Age: 21, Tests: 19 Runs: 893, Catches/Stumpings: 29/4	 Tamim Iqbal Left-handed batsman, right-arm off-spinner Age: 20, Tests: 15 Runs: 940, HS: 151	 Imrul Kayes Left-handed batsman, right-arm off-spinner Age: 23, Tests: 9 Runs: 247, HS: 33	 Zunaed Siddiqui Left-handed batsman, right-arm off-spinner Age: 22, Tests: 14 Runs: 617, HS: 78	 Aftab Ahmed Right-handed batsman, right-arm medium pacer Age: 24, Tests: 15 Runs: 555	 Mahmudullah Riyad Right-handed batsman, right-arm off-spinner Age: 24, Tests: 5 Runs: 387, Wickets: 16
 Rokibul Hasan Right-handed batsman, right-arm leg-spinner Age: 22, Tests: 7 Runs: 268	 Nayeem Islam Right-handed batsman, right-arm off-spinner Age: 23, Tests: 2 Runs: 44, Wickets: 1	 Rubel Hossain Right-handed batsman, right-arm fast bowler Age: 20, Tests: 5 Wickets: 9	 Shafiqul Islam Right-handed batsman, right-arm fast bowler Age: 20, Tests: 3 Wickets: 5	 Abdur Razzak Left-handed batsman, left-arm spinner Age: 27, Tests: 5 Wickets: 7	 Enamul Haque Left-handed batsman, left-arm spinner Age: 23, Tests: 14 Wickets: 41	 Shahadat Hossain Right-handed batsman, right-arm fast bowler Age: 23, Tests: 26 Wickets: 60

Bowling spark doesn't spare him

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR, Ctg

Mohammad Ashraful was bowling when the selectors announced the squad for the first Test against England on Friday. Hence, the ex-national skipper was not aware that he had been left out of the side until after both sides decided to call the game off with nine overs remaining.

Upon hearing the news, Ashraful was visibly upset and manage to leave the ground without speaking to the waiting reporters. However, it was learnt that he had spoken to Rokibul Hasan to get some tips on his batting before leaving the ground.

Ashraful however has only himself to blame for failing to make the cut. He failed to spark with the bat as he managed only 30 in the second innings and with his run of poor form not showing any signs of abating, his omission was almost a foregone conclusion.

He however did ruffle some feathers, only with the ball as his leg spin accounted for three of the four wickets to fall on the third and final day at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

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Atherton honoured

CRICINFO, undated

Michael Atherton, the former England captain, has won the UK's top honour for a sports writer, being named Sports Writer of the Year for 2009 by the Sports Journalists' Association.

Atherton, cricket correspondent of The Times, was acclaimed for his coverage of the 2009 Ashes, with one of the judges, a sports editor, describing him as "peerless in his own sport, entertaining, thought-provoking and challenging on any other subject," and another saying "his elegant style, thoughtful but incisive opinions were, in an Ashes-winning year, indispensable."

In a good evening for Atherton, he was also named Sports Columnist of the Year, highly commended in the Specialist Correspondent category, and took some credit for his commentary work as Sky Sports' Test cricket coverage won the TV Sports Programme award.

Atherton was in Chittagong covering England's tour of Bangladesh when the awards

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ATN Bangla
National Cricket League
Final, Day Five
Chittagong v Rajshahi
Live from 9:30am

SuperSport2
West Indies v Zimbabwe
Third ODI
Live from 7:30pm

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live from 8:30pm

SuperSport3
UEFA Champions League
Man United v AC Milan
Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

SuperSport7
UEFA Champions League
Real Madrid v Lyon
Live from 1:45am (Thursday)



DAY'S EVENT

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

NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE

Rajshahi on the brink of title

SPORTS REPORTER

All-rounder Sohrwardi Shuvo consolidated Rajshahi's position with both ball and bat at the end of fourth day's play of the five-day final of 11th National Cricket League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Shuvo took four wickets for 73 runs in Chittagong's first innings to restrict them for 301 that got Rajshahi a first innings lead of 71 runs. Then Shuvo scored 68 runs as Rajshahi reached 177 for 2 at the end of fourth day to have a lead of 248 with a day's play remaining. The defending champions Rajshahi will feel they already have a hand on the trophy since anything but a defeat would see them edge the port city side to the title having taken a lead in the first innings.

Chittagong resumed the day on 266 for six with Mominul Haque batting on 72 and Elias Sunny on 29. Mominul and Sunny added 24 more runs before Mominul was trapped in front of the wicket by Farhad Hossain for 82. That dismissal brought a mini collapse in the batting line-up as Chittagong lost their last four

wickets for 11 runs. Saqlain Sajib took two wickets in the morning while Shuvo took one.

With a 71-run lead, Rajshahi made a good start to their second innings reaching 45 runs in 10 overs before Sabbir Rahman became a victim of Kazi Kamrul for 20. Zahurul Islam joined the other opener Shuvo and the two of them notched up a century partnership before Shuvo feel to Faisal Hossain's left-arm spin. But before that he played a patient knock of 68 runs off 158 deliveries that featured nine boundaries. Zahurul though remained unbeaten on 67 with Farhad Hossain on 13 as Rajshahi reached 177 before stumps were drawn for the fourth day.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJSHAHI: First innings 372 all out (Zahurul 59, Shuvo 32, Sabbir 41, Masud 55, Anisur 52, Dhiman 66 not out; Kamrul 2-84, Babu 1-71, Mamun 3-44, Sunny 2-73).

CHITTAGONG: First innings 301 all out (Nazimuddin 80, Mominul 82, Sunny 46; Shuvo 4-73, Sajib 3-62).

RAJSHAHI: Second innings 177 for two (Shuvo 68, Sabbir 20, Zahurul 67 not out, Farhad 13 not out; Kamrul 1-48, Faisal 1-47)

MSC held again

Alfaz slams hat-trick

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet



Title contenders Mohammedan Sporting Club stumbled again in the Bangladesh League when the Dhaka giants were held to a 1-1 draw with hosts Beanibazar Sporting Club in an ugly encounter at the Sylhet Stadium here yesterday.

After being held to a goalless draw against Sheikh Russel KC in the previous match, the Black and Whites intent was to return to a winning run through a victory against hosts Beanibazar and they also went ahead in the stoppage time of the first half through a strike from Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola Olalekan.

With the visitors leading the match, the match rolled into injury time in the dying minutes and it seemed Mohammedan were going to confirm their ninth win but suddenly Beanibazar's Liberian player Benjamin Cooper broke the heart of the visitors as he levelled the score four minutes into injury time.

The Mohammedan players protested against the equaliser citing offside but referee Tayeb Hasan stuck to his decision before blowing the long whistle.

Later, the Mohammedan players blocked the way of the referee and they along with manager Aminul Islam Babu behaved maliciously with Tayeb and the officials of Sylhet District Sports Association (DSA) came to solve the problem and one of them was assaulted by Mohammedan medio Mamunul Islam that led the spectators to break the fence to enter the ground and chased the players on way to their dressing room.

Later, Mohammedan players expressed their sorrow and the spectators calmed down.

Mohammedan coach Maruful Haque told the Daily Star by phone that manager Babu and a few players got hurt in the scuffle as a dozen cops were deployed in the game.

Maruf also said that five Beanibazar players appeared in an offside position when Benjamin

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PHOTO: INTERNET

Indian cricket legend Kapil Dev (L) receives a commemorative cap from International Cricket Council president David Morgan after the former was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame in Dubai yesterday.

HOCKEY TRANSFERS 6 quit nat'l team

SPORTS REPORTER

As many as six hockey players tendered their resignation from the national team yesterday after failing to get a team on the concluding day of the two-day special transfers window for the national players at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

National skipper Moshir Rahman, Mosharaf Hossain, Zahid Bin Talib, Abdus Sajjad, Rimon Kumar Ghosh and Khandokar Hasan, who all were kept in the pool, are the players to quit.

Apart from them, BKSP student Golam Mostafa and Pushkor Khisa, who are in the Netherlands, also failed to get a team for the domestic competitions after the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) kept 19 players, who toured Germany last year as part of their preparation for the 11th South Asian Games, in the pool as 11 players were bought by Mohammedan SC, Usha Krira Chakra and Abahani in the two-day bourse.

"After failing to find any teams on the concluding day of the transfers, we have placed our resignations to the federation today [Tuesday] because we are suffering financially only because of representing the national

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Kapil in Hall of Fame

CRICINFO, undated

Former India captain Kapil Dev has been inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame. The 51-year-old played 131 Tests and 225 ODIs across a 16-year career, and is best remembered for leading India to victory in the 1983 World Cup.

Kapil made his international debut in a one-dayer against Pakistan in Quetta in October 1978. His Test debut followed two weeks later in Faisalabad against the same opponents.

One of the greatest fast bowlers that India has produced and its finest bowling all-rounder, he ended with a remarkable 434 Test wickets and 253 ODI wickets.

In 1994, he became the leading wicket-taker in Tests when he overtook Richard Hadlee, a record that was eventually broken by West Indies pacer Courtney Walsh. Also, in 1988 he leapfrogged another West Indies fast bowler, Joel Garner, to become the most successful bowler in ODIs, a record he held until 1994 when his tally of 253 wickets was passed by Wasim Akram.

Kapil's best bowling figures in a Test were 11 for 146 against Pakistan in Chennai in 1980, while in ODIs his best

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Drama as game ends in draw



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

The three-day practice match between Bangladesh A and the touring England ended in a draw but only after proceedings at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong had descended to almost a farce yesterday.

The two captains called off play nine overs before the scheduled time with England needing a further 99 for victory.

But the main talking point of the day was England captain Alastair Cook's decision to force a declaration from the Bangladesh A team by serving up a spell of buffet bowling by the captain himself and part-timer Michael Carberry.

Their 9 over spell went for an astonishing 189 runs, with Cook himself conceding 111, as

Shuvagoto Das scored 91 from 30 balls and Dollar Mahmud smashed an amazing 16 ball 66.

Both these would have been records, had the match not lost first class status after Bangladesh A replaced Mahbubul Alam with Syed Rasel in the second day due to an injury.

Bangladesh A scored 362 for six in their second innings to take an overall lead of 283 before giving in to England's overt suggestions and declaring.

The main focus was on the batting of Rokibul Hasan and Mohammad Ashraful, but both men perished early in the day. Rokibul just added one to his overnight 50 before falling prey to a super delivery from Steven Finn.

Ashraful for his part, looked composed and settled but was bowled by a shooter from Ajmal Shahzad for only 30, continuing his poor run of form, and all but ruling out a chance to force

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PHOTOS: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

HIS WOES GO ON AND ON! Bangladesh A batsman Mohammad Ashraful's castle is raided and taken over by Ajmal Shahzad of England on the third and final day of the practice match at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday. His poor run of form also bowled him out of the squad for the two-Test series against the tourists.

Game or fun?



NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR, Chittagong

There was plenty of drama at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday after the touring England side served up a spell of what can best be described as exhibition bowling to force a declaration from the Bangladesh A side on the final day of their three-day practice match.

There was an explosion of runs as captain Alastair Cook decided to bring himself and part-time spinner Michael Carberry on, much to the pleasure of the Bangladesh A batsmen.

Soon after England had managed to remove both Rokibul Hasan and Mohammad Ashraful, Cook gave the signal to his fielders to ease up and let the batsmen plunder as many runs as they could, in the hopes of forcing an early declaration and giving their batsmen a go.

His wish was realized as Bangladesh A did declare with an overall lead of 283 but only after Shuvagoto Das and Dollar Mahmud had helped themselves to extraordinary scores racking up 189 in their nine over spell.

Shuvagoto scored a 30-ball 91 while Dollar smashed an amazing 16-ball 66

Cook, who had to date bowled only one over in his career, bowled five overs conceding a mind-boggling 111 runs while Michael Carberry, who yet to make his debut in international cricket, bowled four overs conceding 78 runs.

Cook offered total 12 boundaries and 10 sixes while Carberry conceded 11 boundaries and five sixes in their nine over spell.

PARACHUTE CHESS

Mahfuz takes early lead

SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Master Syed Mahfuzur Rahman led the points table in the Parachute Advanced International Chess Tournament at the end of second round at the conference room of Uni Resort in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Mahfuz beat WFM Tanima Parveen to earn two points from two outings.

FM Abu Sufian Shakil, Shamima Akter Liza and Indian Kiran Manisha Mohanty shared the second position with 1.5 points each as Liza beat Russian Minina Veronika, Shakil defeated compatriot Saif Uddin and Kiran outdid FM Mohammad Abdul Malek in their respective games.

Besides, Peter Long of Malaysia beat Indian Dhyan Dave.