

German international Michael Ballack played his first match in four months on Thursday, coming on as a second-half substitute in a 2-1 friendly win over second division side Oberhausen.

The 34-year-old has been out of action since suffering a leg fracture on his Bayer Leverkusen debut on September 11 having missed the World Cup because of an ankle injury while at Chelsea.

Ballack will now hope to be fit when Leverkusen, who are second in the Bundesliga, resume their league campaign after the winter break on January 14 against leaders Borussia Dortmund.



SPORT

DHAKA SATURDAY JANUARY 8, 2011, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.com

SL pick 15 for World Cup

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka on Friday dropped veteran batsman Sanath Jayasuriya and bowler Chaminda Vaas from its 15-man squad for the World Cup that runs from February to April.

Jayasuriya, a parliamentarian, and Vaas were part of the team that won the country's sole World Cup in 1996, and had been included in the preliminary squad of 30 announced on December 13.

Vaas, 36, last played for Sri Lanka in August 2008 and Jayasuriya, 41, in December 2009.

Sri Lanka Cricket did not give reasons for dropping the two veterans and others including Suraj Randiv, Dinesh Chandimal and Rangana Herath, who had

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Kalabagan pacesman Shahadat Hossain on his follow-through during their Premier League match against Abahani at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. Shahadat's 5 for 43 helped Kalabagan to a surprise victory in the local derby.

School football

SPORTS REPORTER

The semifinal line-up of the Ashyan City Dhaka Metropolitan School Football Tournament was completed when BAF Shaheen College and Dolairpar High School moved into the semifinals beating their respective rivals at the Abahani ground in Dhanmondi yesterday.

BAF Shaheen College handed a comprehensive 5-0 defeat to Siddeswari

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SPORTS POLL

WEEKLY QUESTION

Does Chelsea have enough time to win the Premiership title?

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Race heats up

Tigers trim squad to 23

SPORTS REPORTER

The national selectors trimmed the preliminary World Cup squad down to 23 members yesterday, heightening speculation about a few crucial spots.

Among those who were released from the list are batsmen Shuvogoto Chowdhury, Nazimuddin and Shamsur Rahman, wicketkeepers Sahagir Hossain and Mithun Ali, all-rounder Nasir Hossain and left-arm spinner Enamul Haque.

The deadline to announce the 15-member World Cup squad is January 19 and as the Tigers' training camp commences at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium tomorrow, those under the spotlight will have just a week to prove themselves, be it in form or fitness.

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shahriar Nafees, Mohammad Ashraful and Jahurul Islam will be the most nervous in the camp, given their individual situations.

Mashrafe's knee injury has put him in doubt and if he doesn't recover in time, the selectors could be imaginative while picking the final fifteen, or otherwise go for a like-for-like substitution. Shafiqul Islam and Rubel Hossain are automatic choices and Nazmul Hossain has done the job in the only ODI he played against New Zealand, so it won't be too much of a headache if there is bad news regarding the Narail Express.

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the fates of Nafees and Ashraful.

The left-handed Nafees did a good enough job against New Zealand in October, but was ignored for the Zimbabwe series once Tamim Iqbal returned. But his red-hot form in the Premier League, particularly his consecutive 114 not outs against

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Shahadat stops Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



Shahadat Hossain claimed five wickets after Rokibul Hasan's fine half-century to help Kalabagan Krira Chakra snap Abahani's winning streak with a 29-run victory in the Premier Cricket League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

At the Fatullah Cricket Stadium, Mohammad Ashraful hit 92 and captured two wickets but defending champions Mohammedan Sporting Club managed a two-wicket victory over Cricket Coaching School (CCS) off the last ball, thanks to Pakistani great Mohammad Yousuf and local giant Faisal Hossain.

Elias Sunny and Mushfiqur Rahim surpassed Fazle Rabbi's hundred as Bangladesh Biman bounced back from two consecutive defeats to secure a three-wicket victory against Victoria Sporting Club at the BKSP.

KALABAGAN-ABAHANI

Abahani made the perfect start after deciding to put their opponents into bat as Kalabagan lost three wickets for 47 runs. Ijaz Ahmed then joined Rokibul to repair the damage, adding 67 runs for the fourth wicket.

But left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib made sure Abahani wrapped up their opponents for 217 runs with 5-49 from his ten-over spell.

Rokibul got back among the runs in the right time with World Cup selection knocking at the door. The right-hander scored a 119-ball 88 that featured two fours and as many sixes while Ijaz added 32 off 58 balls.

Pacesman Shahadat however gave Kalabagan a dream start, removing Rony Talukder and Indian opener Shikhar Dhawan in the very first over. But a 107-run third wicket stand between Imrul Kayes (59) and Anamul Haque (38) brought the Dhanmondi giants back into the game.

It was again Shahadat who cleaned up Imrul to break the partnership and after that, Abahani lost wickets at regular interval before being bundled out for 188 runs with three overs to spare.

MSC-CCS

Recovering from early damage CCS rode on Ashraful's 84-ball 92, that contained nine boundaries, to put up a decent total of 232-9 in 44 overs. The match was curtailed to 44-over-a-side due to a delayed start.

Shuvogoto Hom and Suleman Khan

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ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP TALK

'Morning shows the day'

Neyyamur Rashid Rahul, the medium-pace bowling all-rounder, now works at a bank as a relationship manager. He shares his 1999 World Cup experience with The Daily Star Sport.

Daily Star Sport (DSS): How did it feel when you heard that you would play the 1999 World Cup?

Neyyamur Rashid Rahul (NRR): Actually there is a story to it: We were all aware that the cricket board was about to announce the squad. On the last day of practice, [Aminul Islam] Bulbul bhai took me aside and gave me a good scare. He was like, 'Rahul, don't mind... but you'll be playing the World Cup'.

I felt so relieved that I had been selected, it was just an amazing feeling. I ran out to call my parents and my grandfather to give them the good news.

DSS: How excited were you to play in your country's first World Cup?

NRR: It is a milestone for any cricketer to play in the World Cup and it was Bangladesh's first, so suffice to say it was a great feeling. I was selected ahead of many senior players in those days and I did it on the back of a great season for Abahani.

I made my ODI debut against Zimbabwe, took Andy



NEYYAMUR RASHID

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Farashganj striker Sohel Rana embraces his colleagues after scoring a match-winning goal against powerful Abahani in their Bangladesh League clash at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

Sky Blues crash & burn

SPORTS REPORTER



Farashganj SC pulled off the season's biggest upset when the Old Dhaka outfit handed a single-goal defeat to champions Abahani in their Bangladesh League encounter at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Sohel Rana struck the decider in the ninth minute to give Farashganj their first ever victory over Abahani in the Bangladesh League. Until now their best result against the Sky Blues was a goalless draw in the return-leg of the second edition of the professional football league in 2008.

The victory was achieved through a resolute fighting spirit that Farashganj showcased against both Sheikh Russel KC and Mohammedan SC in their previous two matches and they defended their nine-minute lead well to secure full three points after losing their previous two games.

A youthful Farashganj playing with a 3-5-2 formation looked more aggressive once Kalu Johnson was included for the first time as the Nigerian striker and Sohel troubled the Abahani backline with their speed. Farashganj came close to a second-minute lead when defender Ibnul Siraji cleared a Amadi Moses header from the

goalline.

However, Farashganj had not waited long for the lead as they went ahead from a counter attack when Kalu played Sohel in on the right and the young striker, who was called into the Bangladesh Olympic squad, ran past left-back Arup Kumar to enter the box and coolly sent the ball over the head of onrushing goalkeeper Ziaur Rahman.

After going down, Abahani kept pressing but they could hardly break the Farashganj defense rather the Dhanmondi-based outfit almost conceded two more goals from counterattack, but Kalu and Sohel failed to cash in on those two opportunities.

However, Abahani got a real chance of equalizing the margin in the 36th minute when Ghanaian midfielder Yusuf Aminu headed a Choumrin Rakhine lob toward the target only to see his effort unbelievably cleared by a stretching goalkeeper Sujon Chowdhury.

After the resumption, Abahani yielded at least three good chances despite a packed backline but Ghanaian trio Aminu, Ntim Twum Frank and Awudu Ibrahim failed to convert those and Abahani suffered their first defeat in their third match after a goalless draw against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club and a 1-0 win over Chittagong Abahani.