

Star SPORT

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'Qualify first, drink later'

Russia coach Dick Advocaat will allow his players to go on a drinking binge next week if they qualify for the Euro 2012 finals. "(Next) Tuesday evening they can drink as much as they want," the Dutchman told reporters on Tuesday ahead of the decisive Group B qualifier in Slovakia on Friday. Russia (17 points), who lead second-placed Ireland by two points with Armenia and Slovakia a further point adrift, then host last-placed Andorra in their final match next



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A PICTURE WITH THE CAPTAIN, PLEASE! West Indies captain Darren Sammy poses next to a Mushfiqur Rahim poster upon arrival at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday. Sammy recognised the new Bangladesh captain instantly and insisted on being pictured with him.

Sammy & Co come to town

SPORTS REPORTER

The West Indies cricket team arrived in the capital last night to play a Twenty20 international, three ODIs and two Tests against the Tigers.

The 19-member team touched down at the Shahjalal International Airport at 8:00pm for a month-long tour.

Darren Sammy's men will however have none of the Trinidad & Tobago players as five members -- batsmen Adrian Barath, Daren Bravo and Lendl Simmons, pace-man Ravi Rampaul and wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin -- from that team are playing in the Champions League T20 in India at the moment.

Depending on Chennai Super Kings' last game, the T&T players could come to the capital today or after their participation in the CLT20 is over.

For the two Tests, openers Kraigg Brathwaite and Kirk

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BEACH GAMES

Football team named

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation announced a 13-member football squad for the South Asian Beach Games which will be held in Sri Lanka from October 8 to 13.

Abdul Kaium Sentu has been named trainer while Khurshid Alam Babul and Hasanuzzaman Khan Bablu have been appointed as team leader and manager respectively.

SQUAD

Biplob Bhattacharjee, Mohammad Nehal, Mohammad Robin, Mamun Mia, Ariful Islam, Wali Faisal, Enamul Haque, Abdul Baten Komol, Rezaul Karim and Towhidul Alam.

Hungry for more

Siddikur Rahman rose to stardom when he became the first Bangladeshi golfer to win an Asian Tour event (Brunei Open in August 2010). Since then, he has been there or thereabouts amongst the top Asians wherever he played, even though he hasn't managed to win another tour event. Hungry for more success, Siddikur now feels that the time is nigh that he wins another tournament which will also gain him the lead in the Asian Order of Merit, in which he is currently fourth. Amidst his busy tour schedule and the hassles of procuring visas, Siddikur took time off to speak to The Daily Star Sport's Atique Anam at the Kurmitola Golf Club. Here, he shares his current position, future plans and provides an insight into his life.

DS: What went wrong in Macau?

Siddikur: I flew in for that tournament that very morning. I probably wasn't fit as well. There was some trouble with my right shoulder which might have affected my performance as well. Hence I failed to make the cut.

DS: You performed very well in the previous event, the Omega Masters in Switzerland where you finished 18th.

Siddikur: Yes, Omega was a good experience for me. Last year when I played there the weather was pretty

tough (cold), but this time the weather was fine which is what I think helped me perform.

DS: How difficult is it to cope with different courses?

Siddikur: Courses are more or less similar everywhere. It makes it a little easier if you are accustomed to the course.

DS: What sort of lifestyle or regime do you maintain to keep good form? And what is needed to maintain good form for long periods. What about skills and mental strength?

Siddikur: Well, I maintain discipline, from food to exercise and everything. Physical fitness is the main thing here. If you can keep fitness you can play for up to 50/60 year age or more. Mental strength is something which we all professionals have at this level while skill is honed the more you play.

DS: For all your consistency, you've won just one Asian Tour event. Don't you think that is an understatement of your potential? What could be the reason?

Siddikur: I don't know the reason myself. I almost won in India this year, but in the end came second. Last year I lost another tour event in Taipei in the play-offs. Hopefully I will win another event pretty soon. I know if I can win another tour, my confidence will get a big boost and that will also get me in the winning habit, and will do a world of good in this year's Asian Order of Merit.

DS: You were ranked 199th in the world at the end of last year. Now you are 142nd (Oct 4 ranking). Where would you like to be by the end of the year?

Siddikur: If I can continue the way I have played this year,

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FACT BOX

Name: Siddikur Rahman
DOB: 20 November, 1984
Turned Pro: 2005
Career prize money: \$6,00,000 (approx)
Best result: Brunei Open 2010 (champion)
Lowest round: 7-under in Brunei, 2010
Current ranking: 142

Done up NCL from Oct 17

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Cricket League, which has undergone a facelift, will start from October 17.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board's tournament committee that met yesterday with the different divisional representatives took the decision not to delay any further and let the country's only first-class competition begin in the middle of the West Indies series, though it is now compulsory for the Tigers to appear in the NCL if they do not have international commitments.

To be played under the existing format, the eight teams will not have any home advantage as the four-day matches will be played at neutral venues.

Among the new alterations are the 32 icon players (to be named by the national selectors) who will be distributed equally among the teams though it is not clear whether regional affiliation will be favoured. The icon players will be picked from cricketers who have represented the national and the A teams.

The Akram Khan-led panel will also select the Dhaka and Dhaka Metropolis teams while the other divisional teams will be selected by the coaches.

Another addition to this year's competition is the permission to field one foreign player, each division being allowed registration of up to three (current first-class players).

According to the BCB, it has been done to raise the level of competitiveness, though the divisions will have to pay the foreigners from their own pockets.

Foreign players are returning to the country's first-class cricket for the first time since the second NCL (2000-01 season was the only other time).

If the divisions want to acquire sponsorship to pay these players, they not only have little time but also limited choices. First-class cricket is already underway in India and Zimbabwe while the domestic tournaments in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and West Indies are also about to begin this month.

The divisions have also been asked to form advisory committees for respective teams. Each committee would consist of a maximum of seven members and will be headed by the

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Tigers must play NCL whenever free

32 Icon players to be divided among 8 teams

Foreign players allowed



Mahmuda Sharifa Oditi (L) and Sui Nu Pru Marma of Mohammedan SC celebrate their goal fest against Farashganj SC at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Oditi scored six and Sui Nu scored 4 as MSC thrashed Farashganj by 12-0.

MSC maul Farashganj

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Mahmuda Sharifa Oditi slammed six goals to give Mohammedan SC a flying start in the Walton Women's Football League as the Black and Whites inflicted a massive 12-0 defeat on Farashganj SC in their first match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Apart from Oditi's half-a-dozen, national team striker Sui Nu Pru Marma struck four goals while Mainu and Eti netted one goal apiece to all but confirm Mohammedan's semifinal berth from the Group B which also include Brothers Union.

However, Farashganj brought allegations against Mohammedan for playing two players more than the quota of pool which allows to register maximum seven players and field as many in a game.

Oditi is one of the two alleged players, who basically made the difference in the game as she scored hat-trick in the first half to help Mohammedan lead the half 4-0.

"Mohammedan fielded eight pool players instead of seven and one was in the list of substitutes. We will lodge complaint with the league committee," said Farashganj women's football manager Shirin Khan after the match.

Ruling out the allegation of Farashganj, Mohammedan coach Poniruzzaman said, "As far as I know Oditi and Hena are not pool players. So there is no problem to field them in the game."

"It was actually our error as we mistakenly registered

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U-14 tennis from today

SPORTS REPORTER

ATF U-14 Series Tennis Tournament gets underway today at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna. Participants from nine countries including the United States of America are taking part in the tournament.

The competition, sanctioned by Asian Tennis Federation, feature four events boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles as some 32 boys and 25 girls are taking part in the first phase of the tournament which will be followed by the second in Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) from October 10.

In the boys' events, US citizen Moises Escobar (8) is the top seeded player followed by India's Mohammed Wali (30), Malaysia's Muhammad Azyraff Mohammad Safian (33) and Saudi Arabia's Mohammed Alseghayer

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