

Star SPORT

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Smith to sell medals

Former Liverpool captain Tommy Smith is to sell the medals he won during his highly successful career at Anfield. Tough-tackling defender Smith, renowned as one of the 'hardest' players of his era but a better footballer than sometimes given credit for, made 638 appearances for hometown club Liverpool from 1963-1978. He won four English league titles, two FA Cups, two UEFA Cups under legendary Liverpool manager Bill Shankly and the 1977 European Cup under Shankly's successor, Bob Paisley. Smith's collection is set to sell for an estimated £120,000.

- AFP



Gayle storm over Mirpur

Ten sixes revive BPL opener

SPORTS REPORTER



It was Chris Gayle's sixth Twenty20 century yesterday but for the Bangladesh Premier League, the Jamaican's aerial bombardment came as a godsend.

The Barisal Burners rode on an hour's hitting prowess in their 10-wicket win over Sylhet Royals in a poorly-attended opening game of the Twenty20 competition at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Most of the stands remained empty, a result of high-priced tickets as well as a flop opening ceremony the evening before. Apart from the turnout, it was reminiscent of Brendan McCullum's 158 in the first-ever Indian Premier League match in 2008.

In the evening game, Chittagong Kings beat Duronto Rajshahi by 53 runs in a high-scoring encounter that had a spate of dropped catches.

BARISAL-SYLHET

But the day belonged to Gayle, who left the small crowd baffled by his powerful hitting. Ten sixes and seven boundaries in a 44-ball pounding

Setting of for the 166-run chase, he smacked Rubel Hossain for two consecutive fours to warm up his jet-lagged shoulders.

In the sixth over, Scott Styris became roadkill, giving away 27 runs with Gayle hammering him for two consecutive,

straight sixes. After another six off the retired New Zealander, Gayle found the military pace of Peter Trego to his liking, hammering for three huge blows, all over long-on, one higher than the next.

Alok Kapali was given the same treatment, two sixes in his one and only over, before Noor Hossain Munna served up a long-hop that was duly, deposited into the mid-wicket stands; hitting the grandstand roof. "The bowler [Munna] was probably under a bit more pressure. I think that's what actually happened to get a long-hop," Gayle said after the game.

"It was good fun to get off to a good start. Came in yesterday, bit jet-lagged, and didn't get much sleep yesterday. I will sleep like a baby tonight. It's good to get the team off to a winning start," he added.

CHITTAGONG-RAJSHAH

Duronto Rajshahi let themselves down by dropping five chances after Chittagong Kings decided to bat first. Asif Ahmed, Marlon Samuels, Qaiser Abbas, Junaed Siddiqui and Sabbir Rahman dropped catches that ranged from the dolly to the semi-tough chance.

Nasir Jamshed latched on to two lives as he made a 46-ball 56 with the help of three sixes and five boundaries. Kings' late replacement Jason Roy and skipper Mahmudullah Riyad made 43 runs each as they raced to 206-4 in 20 overs.

Junaed apart (with his enterprising 42),

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Chris Gayle smacks one for the maximum during his 44-ball hundred for Barisal Burners in the opening match of BPL T20 against Sylhet Royals at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Abahani win big

SPORTS REPORTER



Abahani posted their second straight victory in the Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League with an emphatic 4-1 win over Arambagh KS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Ghanaian attacking midfielder Awudu Ibrahim, Nigerian hitman Lucky Paul, winger Zahid Hossain and Ghanaian striker Twum Frank struck one goal each for the three-time professional league champions while Arambagh's Nigerian striker Ujumefun Joel pulled one back for the losing side.

Fresh from a 3-0 win over Rahmatganj, Abahani started the game brilliantly with left-back Wali Faisal and right-back Nasirul Islam penetrating the Arambagh backline from both wings. In addition, speedy run of winger Zahid Hossain made the opponents helpless. Abahani's Iranian coach Ali Akbar started with only three foreigners instead of four

allowed and gave Nigerian Lucky Paul the start in place of Ghanaian Twum Frank. Frank though later came off the bench to score one of the goals.

The first goal came in the 19th minute, when Wali Faisal's cross was not cleared properly in the Arambagh danger zone and it fell to Ibrahim who tapped in from the goal-mouth-melee.

Arambagh though levelled the margin in the 28th minute, courtesy of Joel who had scored a brace in the previous match. Availing a long-ball from his compatriot Eleta Kingsley, Joel rounded off Abahani goal-keeper Shahidul Alam to pull things level.

But Arambagh failed to carry the tempo as Abahani came all guns blazing to strike two more goals inside six minutes to bury Arambagh's hope of producing another

surprise result in their second match.

Lucky Paul restored Abahani's lead in the 33rd

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Abahani winger Zahid Hossain leaps for joy after scoring against Arambagh during their 4-1 win in the Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Gallery prices slashed

SPORTS REPORTER

The poor turn out in the opening ceremony and the opening day's matches of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 compelled the organisers to drastically cut down ticket prices.

The revised price of the tickets will be effective from today. Apart from Dhaka Bank's twelve branches in Dhaka and three in Chittagong, tickets will be also available at Anjan Fashion Boutique Outlets (Sobhanbag, Dhanmondi, Mirpur, Banani 11 and Baily Road), Banglar Shova (Dhanmondi) and Mirpur Indoor Stadium.

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Mashrafe spills the beans

SPORTS REPORTER



Mashrafe Bin Mortaza yesterday disclosed the name of the former national cricketer who approached him with a spot-fixing offer in the lead-up to the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20.

The pace-spearhead appeared before two officials of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) yesterday and revealed the name of the ex-cricketer who had approached him with a spot fixing offer on the basis of what matches he would play and even what he would be wearing.

"Mashrafe spoke to the ACSU officials today where he disclosed the name but for further investigation it's not possible to make the name public," said BCB's media committee chairman

JalalYunus.

The name of Shariful Haque Plabon however has been reportedly suggested as the offender. The former off-spinner played only one one-day international against India in January 1998 at Dhaka. He spent his entire domestic career with Biman Bangladesh and now he is also an employee of Biman.

"I'm hundred percent honest and I am really upset that my name is coming. I have a long 22-year career in cricket and everybody knows me very well. I'm not afraid to face any kind of investigation because I know I'm innocent," responded the 36-year old former national cricketer Shariful Haque when asked about the allegation.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) however confirmed that they will take all necessary measures to unearth the truth and punish the culprit. The board also formed a four-member committee

headed by BCB's senior vice-president Mahbub Anam to inquire into the alleged spot-fixing approach. Gazi Ashraf Hossain, BPL governing council chairman, Sirajuddin Mohammed Alamgir, secretary of BPL governing council and chairman of BCB disciplinary committee, and acting CEO of BCB Nizam Uddin Chowdhury are the other members.

"There is need for further investigation and after that we will set our next course of action regarding the issue. We have a zero tolerance policy towards match-fixing which is why it is important for us to have a detailed inquiry into the matter. We are also working closely on this issue with the ACSU officials present in Dhaka," said Gazi Ashraf.

"We will take the help of security agencies if needed because we have to unearth the truth and make sure the culprit does not get away with it. We will

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Hearing delayed for Westfield



AFP, London

The sentencing of an English former county cricketer who has pleaded guilty to spot-fixing has been delayed by a week. Mervyn Westfield, 23, was due to be sentenced at London's Old Bailey on Friday but the hearing has been adjourned until Friday, February 17.

Westfield's lawyer, Mark Milliken-Smith QC, said a delay had arisen because of "administrative matters".

Former Essex bowler Westfield, 23, pleaded guilty on January 12 to accepting or obtaining a corrupt payment to bowl in a way that would allow the scoring of runs.

A separate charge of assisting another person to cheat at gambling was ordered to lie on file.

Westfield, who is currently on bail, received £6,000 (\$9,200) to bowl so that 12 runs would be scored in the first over of a 40-over match between Durham and Essex in September 2009, although in fact only 10 were scored.

Hours after Westfield pleaded guilty on January 12, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) launched a "reporting window" to encourage players and officials to come forward with information about corruption.

The amnesty allowed them to report past approaches without fear of punishment.

It is usually against ECB regulations not to report any alleged corruption within the sport.

An international cricketer was arrested alongside Westfield but later released without charge. His identity was not revealed by the court.

U-18 national cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The final match between Dhaka Division South and Barisal Division ended in a draw yesterday but Dhaka became champions of the Young Tigers U18 National Cricket Competition by virtue of a first innings lead.

After Al-Imran Khan and Monjurul Hasan's patient batting, Saddam Hossain survived 19 balls for naught and Hasan Abir successfully faced one delivery as Barisal deprived their opponents from outright victory ending on 212 for nine in the second innings before stumps were drawn for the final day at the Shamsul Huda Stadium in Jessore.

Al-Imran hit a 114-ball 71 that contained five fours and two sixes while Monjurul Hasan played 100 balls to make 39 with four boundaries.

Samiul Hossain inflicted the damage by taking five wickets for 69 runs while Mahade Hasan picked up

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LOCAL snippets

SPORTS REPORTER

Cox's City FC were held to a 1-1 draw by 10-man Uttar Baridhara Club in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Cox's City went ahead in the 10th minute when Absar headed a Khaled cross home while Mamun cancelled the lead five minutes from time despite playing a man short for the last half hour with skipper Saidul Islam Sohel sent off.

Women's Div-I handball

Azad Sporting Club and Madaripur Handball Training Centre ended their Cute 1st Division Women's Handball League campaign with wins at the Handball Stadium yesterday.

Azad SC defeated Arambagh KS 17-4 while Madaripur HTC thrashed Gafur Beluch Smriti Sangsad 10-0.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club, Mohammedan SC, Jatrabari KC and RN Sports Home qualified for the four-team Super League, which begins today at the same venue.

2nd Div Football

Shadhinata Krira Chakra recorded a single-goal win over Shadharan Bima KS in the Destiny Group 2nd Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

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