

Star SPORT

DHAKA FRIDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Sorensen set for century

Goalkeeper Thomas Sorensen looks set to win his 100th cap for Denmark after being included in Morten Olsen's squad to face Russia in a friendly in Copenhagen next Wednesday. "Every young boy dreams of these sort of moments, and it looks like it could be turned into reality for me next week," the 35-year-old Sorensen told the website of his Premier League club Stoke City (www.stokecityfc.com). One of international football's longest-serving coaches, Olsen told reporters the match would not be used to experiment after picking an experienced 20-man squad.

- REUTERS



PHOTO: PID

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER: Shamsul Alam Monju, one of the iconic footballers of the early 80s, receives his medallion from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during the National Sports Awards ceremony at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium yesterday. Monju received the award as a football organiser for the year 2009.

SPORTS AWARDS GIVEN PM calls upon pvt sector to stand by govt

UNB, Dhaka

The National Sports Awards for the years 2008 and 2009 were formally distributed among 19 players and organisers on Thursday. The awards were given in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the development of sports both at national and international levels.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handed over the awards at a function at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city. During the function, the prime minister called upon the private organisations and individuals to supplement government efforts for development of the country's games and sports.

Hasina said her government has undertaken various short- and long-term plans for the sports sector to improve the standard of the country's games and sports.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarkar and secretary for youth and sports Mahbub Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

Each recipient was presented with a gold medal, SEE PAGE 17 COL 2

All to play for in the BPL

SPORTS REPORTER



A day's break ensued as the teams travelled from Chittagong to Dhaka, the destination for the final leg of the BPL T20 which will get underway today at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, with the race for semifinal places heating up as five teams compete for the four spots.

All of the franchises except the hapless Sylhet Royals, who lost all of their seven matches so far, are in with a chance of progressing to the knockout stage. The last match at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong, with Barisal Burners winning against Khulna Royal Bengals, blew the tournament wide open.

Barisal's win puts them level with Chittagong Kings and Dhaka Gladiators on eight points, although both have played a match fewer than Barisal's eight. The completion of the first match today, between Chittagong and Dhaka, will make the picture a bit clearer as the winner will join Khulna and Duronto Rajshahi on ten points at the top of the table. As things stand, a team has to accrue at least twelve points, in other words six wins, to be sure of a semifinal spot.

This means that Chittagong and Dhaka have to win at least two of their last three round-robin games, Barisal need to win both their remaining encounters, Khulna need one win from two games while Rajshahi are best placed needing one victory in their three remaining matches to go through.

On current form, that win for Rajshahi may well come in today's evening match against Sylhet, who are hopelessly out of sorts, having already tried three captains in seven outings. But Sylhet coach Stuart Law will remind his charges that even though they are out of the running, they can still impact the tournament by raining on some parades.

If one had to guess based on the teams' performances so far, Khulna and Rajshahi should make it through with the final two spots being fought over by Dhaka, Chittagong and Barisal. SEE PAGE 17 COL 3

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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Wari Club secured a 2-1 victory against Cox City Football Club in the Bangladesh Champions League at the Bishreshtha Mostofa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

It was the second victory for Wari Club and the first defeat for Cox City. Cox City's Saifuddin gave them the lead in the 20th minute but a brace from Moklesur Kala from Wari thumped them down.

Elsewhere at the second division football league, the score stayed 0-0 between Purbachal Parishad and Euro Famous Club.

Blatter to open BSPA exhibition

FIFA president Sepp Blatter will inaugurate a photo exhibition titled "Bangladesh Football in Pictures", organised by the Bangladesh Sports Press Association (BSPA), during his visit to Dhaka on March 6. The exhibition is expected to give a kick-start to different programmes undertaken by the BSPA to mark its golden jubilee. The programme, which is open to all, will feature a maximum of three selected photos, not more than 12x18 inches of size, from each photographer. The association has requested amateur and professional photographers to send their photos by 11:00pm on February 27.

School football

Mymensingh and Gopalganj have their district champions set and ready to compete at the division level. Fulpuri Puari High School were the champions of Mymensingh as they beat Gafurgaon Islamia High School 3-0 in a penalty shootout. Gopalganj High School fought to district glory by beating Salinabaad high school 4-2 in penalty shootouts.

Elsewhere, Tejosree High School secured a 2-0 victory to become the upazila champions of Ghor. Alamdanga saw SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Bukola double spells trouble for MSC

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A brace from Nigerian Alamu Bukola Olaleken helped 10-man Sheikh Russel KC post an emphatic 3-0 win over Mohammedan in their Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League fixture at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Apart from Bukola's brace, Ghanaian Moro Mohammed struck the other to extend their unbeaten run as well as hand Mohammedan their first defeat.

After playing out a 1-1 draw against archrivals Abahani and then winning the second match against Brothers Union, a few hundreds spectators of Black and Whites turned up with an anticipation of watching another good match from their beloved team. But they were left disappointed having watched the dismal performance of the four well-built Nigerian recruits.

"I feel ashamed as the coach of Mohammedan. They did not come here to

win the game. They did not give their 30 percent effort of the match against Abahani. They can't pass the ball in five-yard distance and I have to go back to the basics from tomorrow," said a distressed Emeka Ezeugo, who, however, did not explain the reasons behind such a dismal performance.

Throughout the game, Mohammedan could not muster a single shot on target and even could not split the backline of Sheikh Russel KC despite the opponents being reduced to 10 men in the 42nd minute.

Moreover, the Motijheel-based outfit conceded two goals against a 10-man Sheikh Russel and conceded the third one after they were reduced to 10 men in the 88th minute.

There are a lot of questions about the standard of the four Nigerian recruits, who once again demonstrated their poor performance and became the center of discussion for Mohammedan's defeat and one of them needlessly charged an opponent player to be sent off two minutes from time.

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Sheikh Russel KC's Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola Olaleken attempts to weave through two converging Mohammedan defenders during their Bangladesh Premier League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Bukola scored a brace as Sheikh Russel took the match 3-0. PHOTO: AFP

Emeka as 'assistant coach'

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite not having the equivalent of an AFC B-license, Emeka Ezeugo has still continued to sit in the dugout for Mohammedan. A change, however, has come in the squad list where Abdul Kayum Sentu was mentioned as the coach of Mohammedan instead of Emeka though the former Mohammedan star was seen to guide his charges throughout the 90-minute game.

According to the bylaws, seven officials are allowed to stay with the respective team and Emeka accompanied the team as an assistant coach.

"I did not submit any documents to the BFF and it is not my business but one thing is that I have licenses of UEFA and CONCACAF which are approved by FIFA," said Emeka after his side lost to Sheikh Russel 3-0. SEE PAGE 17 COL 5



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