

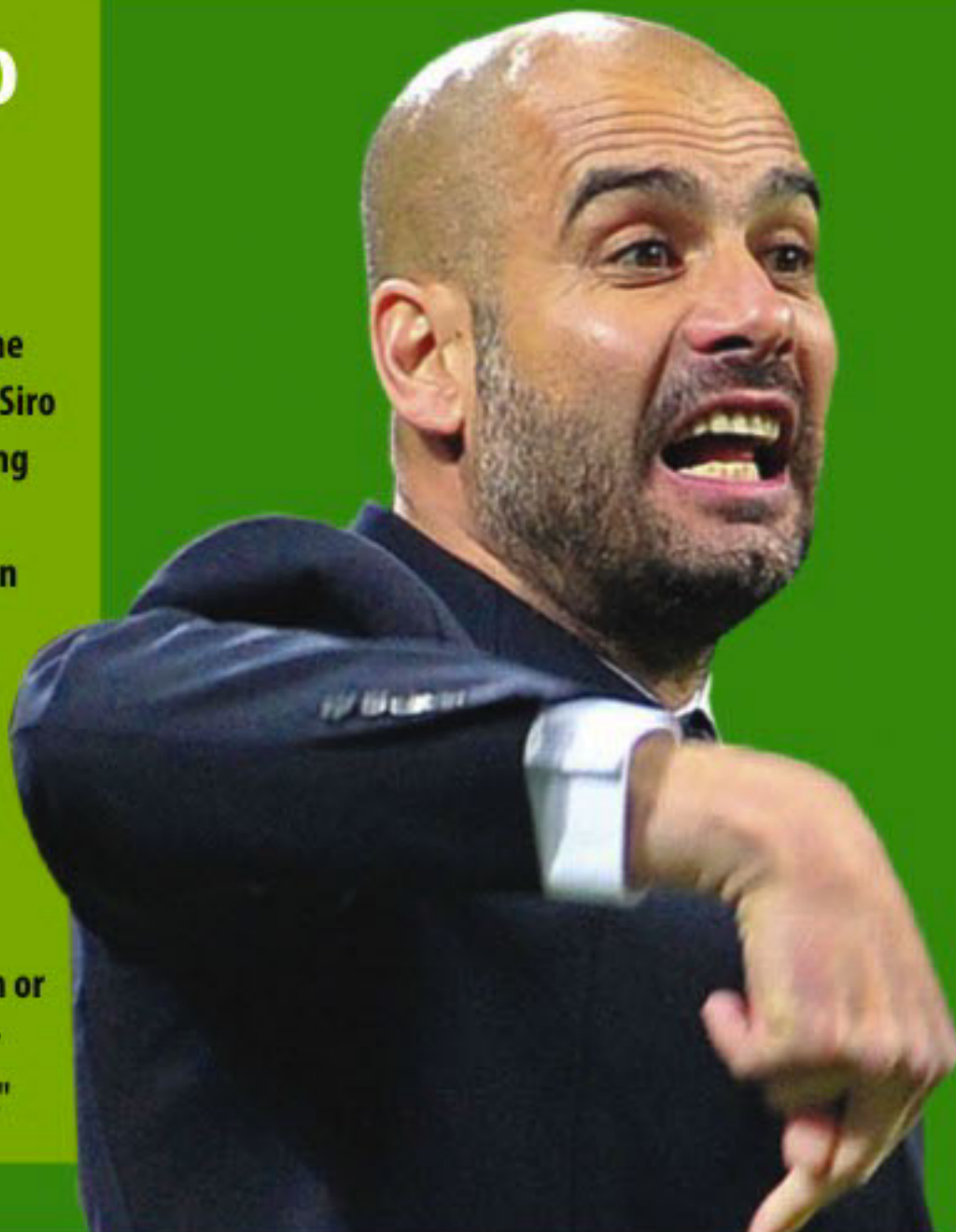
Star SPORT

DHAKA FRIDAY MARCH 30, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

'Great teams do not complain'

Great teams are above complaining, Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola said as he tried to avoid criticising a dreadful San Siro pitch and controversial refereeing during his team's 0-0 Champions League quarterfinal first leg draw with AC Milan on Wednesday.

"To win the Champions League, you have to overcome a lot of things, that's what makes some sportsmen better than others," Guardiola told reporters. "After a draw or defeat, we have never complained about a refereeing decision or the pitch, maybe we have done so after winning but not after a draw or defeat."



Siddikur's solid start

SPORTS REPORTER

Golf sensation Siddikur Rahman made a decent start in the Panasonic Open in India after scoring a one-under-par 71 in the first round at the Delhi Golf Club yesterday.

Siddikur is in the joint-third position along with five other players as Indian Anirban Lahiri dominated the leaderboard playing three-under-par 69 after a wind-swept opening round.

Eight players are in joint second place. Prom Meesawat of Thailand was among eight players tied for the clubhouse lead on two-under-par 70.

Prom could have taken the outright lead but missed his par putt from two feet on the last hole at the Delhi Golf Club to tie with Australians Adam Groom and Scott Barr, Asian Tour rookie James Byrne of Scotland and Indian duo Das Shankar and Ashok Kumar.

Tamim a Pune Warrior

Says recent struggles changed him



SPORTS REPORTER

Tamim Iqbal will be the second Bangladeshi after all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan to take part in the fifth season of the Indian Premier League (IPL) which begins on April 4 as the dashing Tigers opener has signed for the Pune Warriors franchise.

With the signing of Tamim, who replaces injured Australian all-rounder James Hopes, and earlier that of Australia captain Michael Clarke, Pune Warriors have filled all their overseas slots for the coming season.

The left-hander was unsold in the auction but his great run of form in the Asia Cup, where he hit a Bangladesh record four consecutive fifties, opened doors for him to sign up at a base price of 50,000 dollars.

The Chittagonian now becomes the fifth Bangladeshi player to take part in the lucrative Twenty20 competition after Abdur Razzak (Royal Challengers Bangalore), Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (Kolkata Knight Riders), Mohammad Ashraful (Mumbai Indians) and Shakib (Kolkata Knight Riders).

Tamim and the franchise management, led by their captain Sourav Ganguly, had been involved in talks for the past week and finally the formalities were completed on Wednesday.

"It feels great, to be honest. I have had four good matches and now the contract with the Pune Warriors, I'm honoured," he said when asked how it felt to finally have an IPL contract.

Tamim said that he wants to take the opportunity so that he can open the door for more Bangladeshi players.

"With the T20 World Cup coming up this year, it will be a big opportunity for me to perform in the format. It'll be an extra boost so it is very important that I do well. More importantly, just like Shakib opened the door for me, I would want that with my inclusion in the IPL, it will let other players from my country play in this competition," said an excited Tamim.

"I can gain a lot of experience by playing with greats like Sourav Ganguly and Michael Clarke. I like to talk a lot about cricket so I think I am lucky to be playing for them and look forward to learn new things," he added.

Despite his impressive run in the Asia Cup, Tamim believes that there are areas where he must improve, like

converting fifties into hundreds.

"The Asia Cup performance means a lot to me, especially given the circumstances [ahead of the tournament]. The runs I scored were important for the team as well as me personally. Despite what happened, I still contributed.

"I could have converted all of them into hundreds so that's an area where I want to improve myself. However, I can't practice converting 50s into 100s in the nets; I have to do it in the middle. I have shared this with senior cricketers like Akram [Khan] chacha, [Minhazul Abedin] Nannu bhai, [Habibul Bashar] Sumon bhai and [Mohammad] Ashraful bhai. I have been constantly talking to someone like Stuart Law, who has a lot of hundreds under his belt from his playing days. Then there is someone like Mohammad Yousuf, who kept on reminding me to go on and get a hundred. So all this will help me get to that mark," continued the impressive left-hander.

Tamim also said that he learned a lot from all the struggles before the Asia Cup.

"After what has happened, I can say that I have changed as a human being. And as a cricketer, I have learned that no

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COOL DOWN, YOUR TIME WILL COME: Tamim Iqbal cools off with a towel wrapped around his head during Wednesday's abandoned Premier Division Super League match. Later that day he went on to sign his first-ever IPL contract with Pune Warriors. PHOTO: STAR

British side to tour Pakistan

AFP, Karachi

A combined British Universities cricket team will play two one-day games in Pakistan next month, a tour welcomed by the hosts on Thursday as a chance to repair the country's image abroad.

"The British team's tour will help us create a soft image of Pakistan as all the players in the team are foreigners and will be well taken care of," said Intikhab Alam, the Pakistan Cricket Board's director of international cricket.

International cricket teams have refused to tour Pakistan since gunmen attacked the Sri Lankan team in Lahore in March 2009. The team was heading to the stadium where the university side will play.

The attack killed eight people and wounded seven Sri Lankan players and their

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Tribal hockey from tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

The second Tribal Hockey Tournament gets underway from tomorrow at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium after eight years with six teams taking part.

Six teams, split into two groups, will play the round-robin matches and the top two teams will play the final on April 4. On the opening day, two matches will be held with Dinajpur playing against Sylhet while Rangamati will face Panchagarh at the same venue. Apart from them, the remaining two participants are Bandarban and Khagrachari.

Bangladesh Hockey Federation general secretary Khaza Rahmatullah said that he believes the tribal tournament will be a genuine pipeline for the national team as three tribal national players, including Puskor Khisha Mimo, came through this tournament.

Rahmatullah informed that S Alam Group, Firs Security Islami Bank and PHP group came forward to sponsor the tournament together as they will provide an estimated budget of Tk 7 lakh.

The champions will be awarded Tk 25,000, runners-up Tk 15,000 and best player Tk 5,000.



Sri Lanka's left-arm spinner Rangana Herath (R) is overjoyed after claiming the wicket of England batsman Graeme Swann, his sixth in the innings, during the fourth day of the first Test at the Galle International Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

No consensus in BFF polls



SPORTS REPORTER

The hope of forming a consensus committee in the upcoming election of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) by keeping president Kazi Salahuddin unchanged has been shattered as the initiators failed to get both parties to agree on selection of the other office bearers.

However, Kazi Salahuddin is apparently the lone contestant as president in the BFF April 28th election till yesterday as his opponent group led by vice president Badal Roy has also no objection about Kazi Salahuddin, since they have not managed to find a fit candidate against the president.

It has however been learned that the opposition had tried to bring in both prominent organiser Anjan Chowdhury Pintu and Saber Hossain Chowdhury. Both however, declined the offer to join football.

Former BFF general secretary and current member Harunur Rashid had offered all to form a consensus committee at a BFF meeting and the initiative was appreciated. All the members and both groups sat in a number of meetings to finalise the panel but could not reach a consensus. They even sat again yesterday at the office of a BFF vice president and failed to reach the consensus following their rigid stance against the expulsion of their contestants.

"We actually want six to seven new faces, who will come from the sponsor groups but are interested in football, in the next committee after excluding a few members of the existing executive committee," said BFF senior vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy.

"Salahuddin bhai knows how to sell football and I can do

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Eng caught in Herath maze

Sri Lanka take lead with 75-run win



AFP, Galle

Left-arm spinner Rangana Herath claimed a match haul of 12 wickets as Sri Lanka condemned top-ranked England to their fourth consecutive Test defeat on Thursday in the series opener.

The 34-year-old grabbed six wickets in each innings as the tourists, attempting what would have been their highest successful fourth-innings chase of 340, were bowled out for 264 soon after tea on the fourth day.

Off-spinner Suraj Randiv lent admirable support with six wickets in the match as Sri Lanka went 1-0 ahead in the two-match series with an impressive 75-run win.

England captain Andrew Strauss was furious at another Test defeat -- despite a dogged century by Jonathan Trott -- after his team were white-washed 3-0 by Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates earlier this year.

away with them and this game we were not. We all fell a bit too softly."

Strauss, however, said there was still a lot to play for when the second and final Test starts at the P. Sara Oval in Colombo on April 3.

"All credit to Sri Lanka," he said. "They put us under pressure, outplayed us and deserved the victory. However, we've got one more game to show we can play better cricket in this part of the world."

Trott kept the tourists afloat with a defiant 112 before the last five wickets fell for just 12 runs in front of 8,000 bitterly disappointed English fans in the southern coastal town.

It was only the second win in 18 Tests for Sri Lanka since the retirement of world bowling record holder Muttiah Muralidaran in 2010. They lost six while the rest were drawn.

England's highest successful fourth-innings chase had come way back in 1928 when they made 332-7 to defeat Australia in Melbourne.

But the match turned decisively Sri Lanka's way when he was seventh out just before tea, flicking a Randiv delivery to backward short-leg where Tillakaratne Dilshan snapped up a diving catch.

Wicketkeeper Matt Prior had earlier helped Trott add 81 for the fifth wicket before he was dismissed by Herath for 41 as Lahiru Thirimanne clung on to a full-blooded sweep at forward short-leg.

Tailenders Graeme Swann, Jimmy Anderson and Monty Panesar fell in the space of five runs to hand Sri Lanka victory with a day to spare.

"Any Test win is important, but to do it against the best side in the world is a moment to cherish," said Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene.

"It's been a tough period for us to get things right but the boys worked really hard to improve as a team and today we showed a lot of character."

"The bowlers were much more relaxed defending 340. We all had to be patient and knew the wickets would come. Herath has been around a long time and is a class act."

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