

Draw suffices for Cox City's promotion

SPORTS REPORTER



Cox City FC emerged champions in the inaugural Bangladesh Championship League to qualify for the Bangladesh Premier League after playing out a 2-2 draw against Beanibazar SC in the last match at the Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

Absar put Cox City ahead in the very second minute before Milon cancelled the lead in the 25th minute while Saad again gave Cox City lead three minutes later but Liton Barman equalled the margin in the 45th minute.

Among the seven participating clubs, Cox City was the newest club to be formed ahead of the start of the second tier professional football league. Comprised mostly of players from Cox's Bazar, they stunned a few well-known clubs like Wari Club, Victoria SC and Agrani Bank to clinch the title with 20 points from 12 matches. Uttar Baridhara Club finished second with 17 points from 12 matches.

Cox City, who started the second-leg behind leaders Wari Club having eight points from six matches, did not lose any match on home soil as they won three matches and drew as many on way to the league title.

"We had formed the squad with a hope of

becoming champions and it has been possible because of the hard-work from the players, most of whom are from Cox's Bazar," said club official and former Sheikh Russel goalkeeper Khaled Azam Biplob yesterday.

"Initially we were a bit disorganised because none of us are organisers but we gradually overcame it when the league came to Cox's Bazar and it was an outcome of discipline," said Biplob who last season played for Chittagong Mohammedan in the professional football league.

Cox City stunned all to beat Dhaka Mohammedan in the Federation Cup this season after suffering a massive 10-0 defeat at the hands of star-studded Muktijodha Sangsad but since then they grew in confidence and displayed their performance on the pitch to become champions in their first appearance of the inaugural second tier professional league.

Biplob informed that they generated the idea to form a club from Cox's Bazar that would represent their home town in the professional football league after a Cox's Bazar XI held the national football team guided by Indian coach Syed Naeemuddin in 2007 and they was able to give the club some shape last year when Iqbal Mohammad Shamsul Huda Tidel was made its president.

39-year-old Sachin urged to carry on



AFP, New Delhi

Batting great Sachin Tendulkar turned 39 on Tuesday with an impassioned plea from his childhood coach to carry on playing cricket for India since he is "far from finished".

"All those murmurs about his retirement must stop, this is not the right time to go," said Ramakant Achrekar, 80, the man credited with the early training of the leading scorer in Test history.

"He must not retire now. He must go on playing and scoring runs for the country," the celebrated coach told the Hindustan Times.

Tendulkar made his international debut in 1989 and has played more Tests (188) and one-day internationals (463) than any other player.

He is the highest run-getter in both forms of the game and last month became the first batsman to complete 100 international centuries -- 51 in Tests and 49 in one-dayers.

But Tendulkar took more than a year to move from 99 to 100 hundreds -- against Bangladesh during the Asia Cup in Dhaka -- and many fans started to believe he needed to rethink his career, especially in one-dayers.

The Mumbai batsman has himself dismissed talk of retirement, saying it would be "selfish" for him to quit when he still had a lot to offer Indian cricket.

Achrekar predicted Tendulkar, currently playing in the Indian Premier League, would return to his best now that the 100th century was out of the way.

"I can see that his form is picking up and it is only a matter of time before we see him score those magnificent runs again," he said.

"Now that he has got his 100th century, he will play freely.

"My Sachin is going to play better than ever. He is far from finished... those who even bring up talk of his retirement are wrong."



SACHIN TENDULKAR

Achrekar said Tendulkar would help India bounce back from two humiliating 4-0 Test series whitewashes by England and Australia in the past year.

"The India team has been going through a rough patch lately and I believe it is Sachin who will help them sail out of it," the coach said. "He will score those crucial centuries to help the team do well once again."

Achrekar, whose other wards included former India internationals Vinod Kambli, Praveen Amre and Ajit Agarkar, said it would be hard to find another cricketer like Tendulkar.

"Sachin is the best batsman the world has seen," he said. "We may find another great, but I do not think we will ever get a player of his calibre.

"The day he retires, the loss will be irreplaceable. Not only will the country feel it, but the world of cricket will miss him."

Retirement not on Ponting's mind



AFP, Roseau

Australia veteran Ricky Ponting answered questions about his retirement in customary style as he became Test cricket's second-highest run-scorer in the third match against West Indies.

The 37-year-old, who has repeatedly faced down calls to quit, overtook Rahul Dravid's 13,288 by the narrowest of margins - a single run -- when he was out for 23 on Day One at Windsor Park, Roseau.

The former Australia captain, who compiled his 13,289 in 165 matches, now trails only India's Sachin Tendulkar in the all-time list. The "Little Master" is on 15,470.

"My love for the game and passion and desire to play and be successful hasn't changed," said Ponting on Sunday, the eve of the final Test, when asked if he was considering quitting.

"Even when things were really tough a few months ago, all I wanted to do was try to give myself the best chance to be able to play well again.

"I felt I got there through the summer and I feel like I'm batting really well at the moment. I've still got a few things I want to

KKR-DC game abandoned

CRICINFO, Kolkata

A heavy downpour drenched Eden Gardens, leaving ankle-deep water in parts of the outfield and forcing the game between Kolkata Knight Riders and Deccan Chargers to be abandoned without even the toss having taken place.

It took the first washout of this IPL season for Chargers to finally get a point after a run off five consecutive losses.

A drizzle, which had delayed the toss, soon turned torrential with strong winds accompanying the rain. Despite the rain stopping within an hour, though, there was too much water on the ground, and the game was called off around 10.30 pm local time.

Not only did the outfield have to suffer due to the rain, a makeshift wooden structure for security personnel also gave way, causing slight injuries to three people.

The washout put the home side Knight Riders second on the points table behind Delhi Daredevils.

SA refuse

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calendar. On consultation with the medical and administrative staff of the national team, including team manager Mohammad Moosaajee and coach Gary Kirsten, CSA felt the same way. "We agreed with SACA," Faul said. "We have a big year ahead and our players are scattered over the IPL and county cricket, so we cannot play this series."

South Africa are due to play Zimbabwe in five Twenty20 practice matches in Harare between June 20 and 24, before heading to England for a tour of over two months. They will then play the World T20 in Sri Lanka and also travel to Australia in October-November, before hosting New Zealand at the end of the year.

The Bangladesh board had approached CSA with the request last week, after their tour to Pakistan was postponed by a court order. Their August visit to Zimbabwe was also moved because of work being done to the pitches in Harare and Bulawayo. It left Bangladesh without any international cricket until the World Twenty20 in September.

With the IPL only ending on May 27, South Africa would have had to play without some of their key players if the Bangladesh series was to take place. CSA decided it would not fit in with their plans to consider the series, which would have had to be played in South Africa. The Bangladesh summer is deemed too hot for cricket while South Africa would have struggled to find a venue as well, with the Highveld (Johannesburg and Pretoria) and Cape Town unable to host matches in winter.

Bangladesh

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level the margin and then doubled it in the 16th minute from another penalty corner.

Krishna, an Army striker, made it 3-1 through a field goal in the 26th minute to go for a comfortable break.

After the resumption, Krishna struck his second to widen the margin to 4-1 and striker Prince took the game away from Oman by striking the team's fifth goal in the 48th minute.

Oman put up a late rally to reduce the margin to 5-2 in the 63rd minute through Hubais Al Sar before Krishna hit the board for the third time to take the margin to 6-2 in the 65th minute. Hubais Al Sar struck another in the 69th minute for Oman.

Bangladesh captain Raseel M a h m u d J i m m y was adjudged man of the match for excelling in his playmaker role in the final.

Aslam sinks

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not good enough to challenge their opponents.

Masum Khan claimed three wickets conceding 29 runs while Reazul Islam captured three for 22 runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

KHULNA: 255-6 in 50 overs (Imran 60, Jobayedur 26, Aslam 100, extras 15; Kazi Sunny 2-50)

MYMENSINGH: 170 all out in 45.5 overs (Biraj 52, Mussadek 74, extras 9; Masum 3-29, Reazul 3-22, Shafuil 2-32)

Result: Khulna won by 85 runs.

Delhi drub Pune

PTI, Pune



Skipper Virender Sehwag butchered a lacklustre Pune Warriors India attack as Delhi Daredevils romped home by eight wickets in an Indian Premier League encounter, here on Tuesday.

Sehwag scored 87 off a mere 48 balls as Delhi extracted a sweet revenge of their defeat at the hands of the same opposition three days back.

Delhi's domination was evident by the fact that they won the match with as many as four overs to spare.

And leading the charge was Sehwag whose innings was studded with 10 fours and three six.

Sehwag added 89 runs for the second wicket with Kevin Pietersen (27 off 21) in just 8.2 overs, and that paved the way for the convincing victory.

Earlier, despite a few drop catches, the Daredevils rode on a disciplined bowling effort to restrict the Warriors to a modest 146 for two.

When the visitors turn to bat came, Mahela Jayawardene initially went for his shots, while Sehwag was happy to play the second fiddle, but after the Sri Lankan was run out for a 14-ball 18, the latter started to free his arms.

After sending the ball twice to the fence in one of Ashish Nehra's overs, Sehwag hit Luke Wright, who replaced Angelo Mathews for this game, for a four and a six off consecutive balls.

Pietersen joined the party and the duo smashed the Pune bowlers at will to take the team past the 100-mark in



PHOTO: AFP

Delhi Daredevils captain Virender Sehwag (L) lofts one on the leg side during their IPL Twenty20 match against Pune Warriors India at the Sahara Stadium yesterday.

the 11th over.

Rahul Sharma gave the hosts a breakthrough by sending back Pietersen, but by then the damage had been done.

It was just a matter of time before Sehwag and Ross Taylor took the Daredevils home.

Earlier, Manish Pandey and Robin Uthappa scored half centuries to help Pune Warriors recover from a disastrous start.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PUNE WARRIORS: 146 for 2 (Pandey 80*, Uthappa 60*)

DELHI DAREDEVILS: 148 for 2 (Sehwag 87*, Jayawardene 18, Pietersen 27)

Result: Delhi Daredevils won by eight wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Virender Sehwag.

Yousuf eyes another shot at Pak career



AFP, Lahore

Veteran Pakistan batsman Mohammad Yousuf took part in a fitness test on Tuesday to try to revive his international career, insisting he could still compete at the highest level.

The 37-year-old played the last of his 90 Tests against England at Lord's in 2010 -- a match marred by the spot-fixing scandal involving three of his teammates.

He has not been considered for selection in the last two years because he has not played in domestic matches in Pakistan, but he took part in a workout led by new Pakistan coach Dav Whatmore on Tuesday.

"I have given a fitness test and now the result is in the hands of PCB," Yousuf told reporters outside the national academy here. "I am ready to play for my country and still have enough cricket left in me."

Yousuf rose from a poor background to become one of the most stylish batsmen Pakistan had ever produced, smashing 1,788 runs in 2006 -- a world record for the most

runs in a calendar year.

His career drifted after the PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) banned him for an indefinite period in March 2010 following the disastrous tour of Australia, which he captained.

The ban was overturned to allow Yousuf a comeback on the 2010 England tour, during which Salman Butt, Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer were charged and eventually jailed for arranging deliberate no-balls for money.

Yousuf, who has played 288 one-day and three Twenty20 internationals, said he has been playing regular cricket and wanted to feature in the English county championship, though a deal with Leicestershire fell through.

Whatmore said the fitness of all Pakistani players will be assessed before next month's tour to Sri Lanka.

"The fitness test was designed to give everyone an idea where they stand now and after a prescription of work to re-test and see the improvement," he said.

Pakistan play two Twenty20s, five one-day internationals and three Tests on their tour of Sri Lanka from late May to mid-July.

Wade takes Aus

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dengue fever and subsequently a shoulder injury, Rampaul's second delivery came back into Ed Cowan who didn't play a shot and the ball struck him on the pad trapping him lbw.

Warner and Watson prevented any more wickets falling before lunch but were hindered by an outfield which slowed the ball down - only sixteen boundaries were hit during the day.

They put together a partnership of 83 before Watson struck a pull shot off Darren Sammy in the air to backward square-leg where Narsingh Deonarine ran in and took the catch.

The West Indies were now making far more use of the short ball. Another one from Sammy caught Warner on the helmet behind his left ear as he missed another hook shot and he had to receive some treatment.

Shillingford, operating from the Billy Doctrove End, snapped up the prized wicket of the stubborn Warner for 50.

Shillingford's delivery seemed to surprise Warner and all he could do was

paddle it straight to cover where Kieran Powell took the catch.

Australia were in some trouble at 169 for seven but the recalled Mitchell Starc put on an unbeaten 43 for the eighth wicket with Matthew Wade to at least take the tourists past the 200 mark.

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA: First innings (overnight 212 for 7)

Cowan lbw b Rampaul	1
Warner c Powell b Shillingford	50
Watson c Deonarine b Sammy	41
Ponting c Sammy b Shillingford	23
Clarke c Barath b Shillingford	24
Hussey c Sammy b Shillingford	10
Wade c Bravo b Shillingford	106
Harris c Baugh b Roach	4
Starc run out	35
Harris c Baugh b Roach	4
Hiffenhaus b Shillingford	19
Lyon not out	0
Extras: (b-4, lb-6, w-3, nb-2)	15
Total: (All out in 114.5 overs)	328
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-84, 3-105, 4-142, 5-157, 6-164, 7-169, 8-226, 9-328	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Roach	23	5	72	1
Rampaul	24	6	65	1
Sammy	21	7	48	1
Shillingford	42.5	9	119	6
Deonarine	4	0	14	0

WEST INDIES: Sammy, Barath, Brathwaite, Powell, Bravo, Chanderpaul, Deonarine, Baugh, Shillingford, Roach, Rampaul.

Stosur sails

AFP, Stuttgart

US Open winner Samantha Stosur admitted she was happy with her start to Stuttgart's WTA clay-court tournament on Tuesday after seeing off China's Shuai Peng in straight sets.

The 28-year-old Australian, who is the fifth seed here, needed less than an hour to see off Peng 6-2, 6-2 and was rarely tested by her Chinese opponent in her first round tie.

Having helped Australia to a 3-2 Fed Cup win over Germany on Stuttgart's clay courts over the weekend, Stosur has been here for several days and after winning both her Fed Cup singles matches is happy with her form on clay.

Stosur will face Germany's Julia Goerges, the defending champion, or Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova in the second round here.

French qualifier Alize Cornet will face second-seed Maria Sharapova in the second round after her 6-3, 6-4 win over Russia's Anna Chakvetadze.

And compatriot Mario Bartoli, the seventh-seed here, is also in the second round after her 6-3, 6-2 win over qualifier Iveta Benesova of the Czech Republic.

FATAL ROAD ACCIDENT Mubarak released on bail

CRICINFO, Colombo

Sri Lanka player Jehan Mubarak was taken in custody by police and later released on bail after the car he was driving was involved in a fatal accident that killed one person and injured another at Maikkulan on the Chilaw-Colombo main road on Sunday.

Mubarak was driving back to Colombo at around 1.00 pm when his car hit two youths who were heading to Chilaw on a motorbike.

The victim, identified as a 31-year-old resident of Dumbaladeniya, was admitted to the Chilaw Base Hospital and transferred to the National Hospital in Colombo where he succumbed to his injuries. The injured person was receiving treatment at the Chilaw hospital, police said.

Mubarak, who was produced before the Chilaw district judge on Monday, was released on personal bail of two sureties of Sri Lankan rupees two million each after being remanded immediately after the accident.

The court also ordered Mubarak to pay 600,000 Sri Lankan rupees to the family members of the deceased and 400,000 rupees to the injured person. Of this amount 200,000 rupees and 100,000 rupees have already been paid to the victims' families, it was revealed in court.

Rajshahi

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making his debut in 2000-01.

Rahul Dewan, Sylhet's Indian recruit, batted well at the other end as he stroked an 81-ball 66 with five boundaries. After he fell in the 38th over, Rajshahi closed in on the win, bringing all the fielders in catching positions.

That gave Abul Hasan the licence to free his arms and he took full toll, hammering seven boundaries and four sixes in a 39-ball 61. But Farhad Hossain's innocuous off-breaks was enough to dismantle the Sylhet tail as he picked up five wickets for 33 runs, his first five-for in first-class cricket.

Rajshahi's Mizanur Rahman won the man-of-the-match award for his first innings century.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi manager Dollar was fined Tk 5,000 by the match referee for a breach of playing conditions.

KHULNA-DHAKA METRO

Imrul Kayes scored another 16 runs to take his total to 117, before being cleaned up by Elias Sunny.

The left-arm spinner went on to take his eleventh five-wicket haul in the longer format but it was only academic as Khulna had already booked a place in the final.

Nonetheless, Dhaka Metro were set an impossible 632 runs for victory. Shamsur Rahman and Mohammad Ashraful shared a 61-run third wicket stand but both reached landmarks. Shamsur struck an unbeaten century off 88 balls with the help of eleven boundaries and five sixes while Ashraful made 57.

Abdur Razzak took three wickets but the man-of-the-match award went to Anamul Haque for his 193 in the Khulna first innings.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJSHAHI: First innings 387-8 declared and second innings 219 all out in 77.5 overs (Sabbir 36, Mukhtar 32 not out; Zayed 3-43, Nabil 3-33)

SYLHET: First innings 277 all out and second innings 210 all out in 49.1 overs (Rahul 66, Hasan 61; Farhad 5-33)

Result: Rajshahi won by 119 runs.

KHULNA: First innings 618-8 declared and second innings 301 all out in 78.3 overs (Imrul 117, Soumya 57; Sunny 5-107)

DHAKA METRO: First innings 288 all out and second innings 275-4 in 50.5 overs (Shamsur 101, Ashraful 57; Razzak 3-92)

Result: Match drawn.

NOTICE

Due to unavoidable circumstances, we could not print the CROSSWORD today. We regret any inconvenience.

Sports Editor