

Star SPORT

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Cacau tears his knee ligaments

VfB Stuttgart's Germany striker Cacau is expected to be out for at least the next three months after tearing both his medial and cruciate knee ligaments in training. The 31-year-old Brazil-born forward injured his left knee while colliding with Stuttgart defender Antonio Ruediger on Wednesday and is wearing a special splint to prevent an operation would have kept him out for longer. "This is obviously very bitter for us and I'm really sorry for Cacau," said Stuttgart's director of sport Fredi Bobic. "We will support him with everything



PHOTOS: STAR

Sheikh Russel striker Zahid Hasan Emily silences the Mohammedan supporters after scoring the winning goal during their Federation Cup semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. (INSET) A Sheikh Russel official (C) kicks the assistant referee following the marching order of winger Zahid Hossain.



Emily breaks MSC hearts

SPORTS REPORTER



Ten-man Sheikh Russel KC scored a last-gasp winner to confirm their maiden final berth in the Federation Cup, eking out a narrow 2-1 win over Mohammedan SC in an excellent semifinal, marred by scenes of violence, at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

National striker Zahid Hasan Emily headed in the winner in the last of the nine minutes that were added to send the traditional powerhouses packing. Earlier, Moroccan striker Mohammad Aboukacem had cancelled out Osai Morison's seventh minute lead to keep the match finely poised. Sheikh Russel will now face today's winners between holders Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club and Muktiyoddha Sangsad on Monday.

A Friday crowd of 10,000 made the occasion a festive one and the participating teams hardly disappointed turning up a quality fast-paced clash. The game was marred by the assault against assistant referee Amanat Ali Halder by a Sheikh Russel KC official, following the sending off of winger Zahid Hossain. It led to the game being halted for ten minutes. There was pain also for Mohammedan coach Saiful Bari Titu who was manhandled by angry Mohammedan supporters, who

had scaled the fence after their team's last ditch defeat.

Those incidents marked what would otherwise have been a superlative encounter, where a brave Mohammedan came out to play with the vigour and intensity with which they have become known.

Banishing the memory of their 2-0 loss to the same opponents in the group phase, the Black and Whites took the lead in the seventh minute through Osai Morison. The Ghanaian striker combined with his compatriot Mostafa Ibrahim before darting into the box and finishing with aplomb.

Mohammedan had stunned Russel and dominated for the next half an hour, often coming close to snatching the lead. It did not materialise, and it was Russel who finished the half stronger with Haitian Sony Norde narrowly missing from a free-kick.

The late flurry inspired Sheikh Russel and they pressed harder in the second half. Mamunul Islam was unlucky to see his curling free-kick rebound of the crossbar but on the other end a Mohammedan counter-attack saw Morison squander a gilt-edged opportunity.

But Russel's pressure paid off and in the hour mark winger Zahid Hossain capitalised on a lapse in the Mohammedan defence to invade the danger territory and

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Pakistan for sure, says Papon

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Newly appointed Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hasan Papon, has said that he will 'surely' send the Bangladesh cricket team to a tour of Pakistan during his tenure.

Papon, who began his first day at the BCB headquarters with a five-hour long meeting with the directors of the board and former president, AHM Mustafa Kamal, addressed a number of pending issues of the board.

"There are a number of issues that I have to deal with. But come what may, I am surely going to try to

arrange a tour to Pakistan. I also hope that the International Cricket Council (ICC) provides us with enough support," said Papon. The on-again, off-again tour to Pakistan has been a consistent thorn in the

- BPL payment deadline today
- Pybus given ultimatum
- Investigating committee given 3 weeks time.

side of the BCB for the whole year. With regards to a tour to India, however, the new president was sceptical. Terming India as a 'challenging' tour, Papon hoped that

Kamal's high profile post at the ICC could help achieve the much sought after sub-continental tour.

"Almost every country wants to tour India. It's going to be difficult. But the fact that we have Mustafa Kamal in the ICC will definitely help us in this regard," added Papon.

The meeting also touched upon some of the crucial concerns of the board. The BCB stated that the governing council of the Bangladesh Premier League had earlier met all the franchises of the BPL and had given them a deadline till Saturday (today) to pay their players the outstanding wages.

"We have asked each and every franchise to complete all the

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Sk Jamal gun for final

SPORTS REPORTER

Holders Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club have set their sights firmly on the final of the Federation Cup for the third time in a row, when they take on three-time champions Muktiyoddha Sangsad in the second semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today at 5:00pm.

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club have put up consistent performances throughout the tournament and they are on a high after a morale boosting 2-1 win over Abahani in their last eight clash. But although Muktiyoddha Sangsad's appearance at this stage is slightly surprising, the freedom fighters team will be aiming to upset the apple cart to enter their first final in seven years.

Sheikh Jamal are extremely confident of qualifying for the final and they will take spirit from their 3-0 defeat of the same opponents in the group

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PHOTO: STAR

Former Bangladesh Cricket Board president AHM Mustafa Kamal (C) welcomes his successor Nazmul Hasan Papon at the BCB headquarters in Mirpur yesterday.

NCL starts today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

It must be a huge relief for the Bangladesh Cricket Board and its players to see the National Cricket League, the country's sole first-class competition, start today. The board, which had fallen into a complex web of sorts while attempting to organise this year's NCL in a franchise-based set-up, switched to the regular format in a last-minute decision.

The problems regarding the franchised-based system were many. From the ownership of the franchises to the politics of divisional representation, it seemed as though the intricate details were too much for the BCB to handle. By the time the board decided to shift gears and conduct the league in the regular format, an insurmountable amount of time had passed by, compelling the Tournament Committee to organise a single-round league.

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