

Star SPORT

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Freddie the boxer

Former England captain Andrew Flintoff will be granted a license to box, according to the British Boxing Board of Control General Secretary Robert Smith, who also said that Flintoff may make his professional debut on November 30 at the Men arena in Manchester. "We are just waiting for a full medical, which is being sent to us here in parts. We have already seen him in the gym. I can't see there being a problem," said Smith in the Daily Star. Flintoff has been through 10 tough weeks of training under boxing legend Barry McGuigan and his son Shane.



Mushfiqur Rahim (L) and Saqlain Sajib fall after colliding head-on during a National Cricket League match between Rajshahi and Dhaka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. The Bangladesh captain (C) and the spinner (R) were carried off the pitch and were taken to the hospital for a precautionary check-up.



PHOTOS: STAR

Tamim off to 'dream start'

SPORTS REPORTER

Dashing Bangladesh left-handed batsman Tamim Iqbal could not have asked for a better return to domestic first-class cricket -- a format he has been absent from for the last five years as the Chittagong skipper scored a stellar 176 not out against Dhaka Metro at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday.

The fiery innings on a flat track, his personal best in first-class cricket, witnessed 20 boundaries and helped Chittagong post a sizeable total on the first day.

"I have been waiting to play this kind of an innings for a long time. I haven't played such a satisfying innings since my century (103) in Lord's two years ago. Most of all, I'm happy that I could bat through the entire day and remain not out," said Tamim after the day's play.

Tamim, who was ably supported by youngster Mominul Haque's 120, further stated that he wanted to make the most of the NCL matches before the beginning of the series against the West Indies.

"The wicket was fantastic for batting, which helped me to play my natural game. I had a target before the tournament to fully utilise the two NCL rounds before the West Indies series, so this is a

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NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE

Batsmen sparkle on Day One



SPORTS REPORTER

The 14th National Cricket League (NCL) began on a bright note yesterday, with batsmen grabbing the spotlight at all venues except Mirpur. Two Chittagong batsmen scored centuries on the first day, national batsman Tamim Iqbal among them. His teammate and promising southpaw Mominul Haque delivered a timely reminder to the national selectors ahead of the West Indies tour with an unbeaten 120 in partnership with Tamim at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra. Tamim, who remained not out on 176, took the attack to the Dhaka Metro bowlers as he flayed the ball to all corners of the park.

At the Cricket Garden in Rangpur Soumya Sarkar's 96 off 94 balls helped Khulna reach a decent total against Barisal as the young batsman carried on the good form he showed in the recently concluded series against the West Indies High Performance Squad. Naeem Islam, who is fighting for a return to the national side, ended the day on 88 not out and guided Rangpur against the more experienced Sylhet Division at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna.

The only low-scoring game took place at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur between Dhaka Division and Rajshahi. The game saw Saqlain Sajib pick four wickets for Rajshahi, before a collision with Captain Mushfiqur Rahim forced both players to leave the ground near the end of

the Dhaka innings.

CHITTAGONG VS DHAKA METRO

The Chittagong batsmen made the most of their decision to bat first on a good wicket. A 266-run partnership between Tamim Iqbal and Mominul Haque dominated the proceedings as the team finished the day on 345 for 2. Both Tamim and Mominul remained not out after scoring their respective centuries. Earlier, Chittagong had lost Nafees Iqbal and Nazimuddin before lunch. The wickets were taken by Mohammad Ashraful and medium-pacer Taskin Ahmed.

RANGPUR VS SYLHET

Naeem Islam and Mahmudul Hasan shared a 121-run partnership to take Rangpur to a respectable 222 for 6 before stumps. Earlier, the

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Mushfiqur, Saqlain hurt in collision



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim collided with teammate Saqlain Sajib during the National Cricket League match between Rajshahi and Dhaka forcing them to leave the field towards the end of Dhaka's first innings at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

BCB physician Dr. Debashish Chowdhury later informed that Bangladesh and Rajshahi skipper Mushfiqur Rahim would be able to bat today while Saqlain Sajib was admitted to the Apollo Hospital, although there was nothing alarming in the CT scan he underwent.

"It was a head-to-head collision and both players hurt their heads. Fortunately their injuries were not serious but both have been kept under observation. Saqlain's CT

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Titu retained as coach



SPORTS REPORTER

Saiful Bari Titu has once more been given the responsibility of coaching the national team for an exhibition match against Thailand in November and the national U-23s for a six-nation invitational tournament in Sri Lanka in December.

The Bangladesh national team are scheduled to play an exhibition match against Thailand on November 18 while the national U-23 team are supposed to travel to Sri Lanka to take part in an invitational tournament scheduled for December 1-10.

Satyajit Das Rupu, a member of the National Teams Committee, informed yesterday that some 35 to 40 players would be called up for a five-day camp which will start from November 1 and end on November 5, five days before the start of the sixth edition of the professional football league.

The national team will fly on November 15 while the U-23 team are expected to leave here for Sri Lanka on

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One-year suspended ban for Joy

SPORTS REPORTER

Arif Khan Joy, Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) vice-president and director of Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation, has been handed a one-year suspended ban and a Tk 50,000 fine by the BFF disciplinary committee yesterday.

On October 16, Joy entered the field during the clash between his club Team BJMC and Mohammedan with a firearm to threaten the referees even though the BFF executive committee members are not allowed to enter the field during

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PHOTO: STAR

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club's Nigerian striker Mike Otorjeri (L) celebrates after scoring the first goal in his side's 2-0 win against Muktiyoddha at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Jamal v Russel final

SPORTS REPORTER



Football aficionados are set for a proverbial final battle between brothers come next Monday after holders Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club disposed of Muktiyoddha Sangsad with a 2-0 win in the second semifinal of the Federation Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nigerian Mike Otorjeri gave the Dhanmondi Club, named after the second son of the country's first president Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a 40-minute lead before substitute right-back Arup Kumar Baddya confirmed a date with Sheikh Russel (the youngest son of Bangabandhu) Krira Chakra in the final of the season's curtain-raiser at the same venue tomorrow.

It will also be the fourth time, second in a row, that a Federation Cup final will be played without any

of the two popular giants Mohammedan and Abahani, since its introduction in 1980.

Last season Sheikh Jamal and newcomers Team BJMC played the final. This time however it will be Sheikh Russel's chance to win major domestic silverware after their dramatic last-gasp winner in Friday's first semifinal against Mohammedan.

There was however nothing dramatic yesterday and the one-sided match ended without any incident on and off the turf with a good number of policemen being deployed after Friday's pitch invasion by unruly Mohammedan supporters, who assaulted their coach Saiful Bari Titu after the defeat.

The match, watched by a couple of thousand spectators, failed to provide the much-needed contest and flair with Sheikh Jamal, who won their last three games, failing to put up their usual show and struggling against a team whom they beat 3-0

the group stages.

Sheikh Jamal generally build up their game through their wingers keeping Nigerian duo Sunday Chizoba and Mike Otorjeri up front, but Muktiyoddha coach Shafiqul Islam Manik blocked both wings and the striking duo successfully leaving Sheikh Jamal to struggle hard to find the opener.

Muktiyoddha Sangsad even created two scoring chances before conceding the lead. Brazilian Thiago Silva was denied by Sheikh Jamal goalkeeper Mustakur Rahman in the sixth minute while Mohammad Biplob, who just needed a tap-in to find the Sheikh Jamal net, failed to connect a Prodig Kumar free-kick inside the box in the ninth minute.

Sheikh Jamal's four-goal scorer Otorjeri was anonymous until his fifth strike in the 40th minute but credit went to his compatriot Sunday, who brilliantly flicked a pass to pave the way for midfielder

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This is not an office of a political party but the home of Bangladesh cricket in Mirpur. These giant festoons and posters were draped at the facility a couple of days ago by some political enthusiasts to welcome Bangladesh Cricket Board's new president Nazmul Hassan Papon. Cricket enthusiasts also welcomed Papon deep from their hearts but not many felt proud of these misplaced posters.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED