

Ronaldo drops 17 kilos

Football great Ronaldo has lost 17 kilograms (38 pounds) in three months as part of a television reality show. The portly ex-striker, now a member of Brazil's 2014 World Cup organizing committee, went through a series of gruelling physical exercises and dietary re-education, all aired every Sunday on the Medida Certa (Ideal Measurements) show. Sunday night in front of a live television audience, Ronaldo tipped the scales at 101 kilos (222 pounds) and his waistline was down from 107 centimetres (42 inches) to 93 centimetres (37 inches).



BPL player list released

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

A stark difference prevailed between the base prices of the international and local players in the preliminary list of players for the auction of the second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 released yesterday.

The players have been divided into four categories. The highest rated group entitled 'Golden' has a base price of 75,000 dollars for the foreign players and 40,000 dollars for the local players. The majority of the 134 foreign players available for auction are from Pakistan (51), West Indies (25) and England (25).

Four local players -- Shakib Al Hasan, Mahmudullah Riyad, Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim -- and 16 international players have categorised in the Golden group. Of the 16 there are six names from the West Indies, one from South Africa and three each from England, Pakistan and Australia.

Sunil Narine of West Indies and Australian Shaun Tait are some of the new entrants to the top-most group. Dashing opener, Chris Gayle, who is reportedly suffering from a shin injury, hasn't been included in any of the lists.

Categories A, B and C have a base price of 50,000, 30,000 and 15,000 dollars respectively for the foreign players. The corresponding base prices of the local players are 30,000, 20,000 and 10,000 dollars respectively. Youngsters Shohag Gazi and Anamul Haque have been included in Group A alongside Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Mohammad Ashraful.

The player auction will take place on Thursday at the Radisson Blu Water Garden Hotel.

BANGLADESH PLAYERS

Golden Category (base price: 40,000 dollars): Tamim Iqbal, Mahmudullah Riyad, Shakib Al Hasan and Mushfiqur Rahim.

Category A (base price: 30,000 dollars): Mohammad Ashraful, Anamul Haque, Nasir Hossain, Shohag Gazi,

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'CONSTITUTION

changes unethical'

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Former Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Saber Hossain Chowdhury said that the recent amendment of the BCB constitution was done in an undemocratic way and a couple of clauses drafted in it were immoral. He also said that it will create disharmony among different stakeholders of the country's most affluent sport federation.

"We are doing fantastic on the field. Our boys have recently won the one-day series against a full strength West Indies side. They have become the picture of national unity. But off the field we are painfully watching a clear division among the organisers. We are also witness to a lack of transparency in the manner in which amendments have been made to the BCB constitution," said Saber at a press meet, his first in eight years, at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

The man who put Bangladesh cricket on a strong footing by winning Test status in 2000 broke his long silence at a time when the BCB constitution was taken to the treatment tables on a number of occasions to suit vested interests instead of the greater interest of cricket.

The latest one was in November when the National Sports Council (NSC), the regulatory body of the country's sport, vetted the BCB constitution with some highly objectionable clauses drafted into it.

Saber's words come after the High Court on December 13 stayed the BCB constitution asking the NSC why the amended constitution of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) should not be considered illegal.

According to the latest amendment, the top six Premier Cricket League teams have been granted two votes (councillorship) in the elections which is supposed to take place by February next year. The NSC also bent its rule of becoming a BCB councillor from districts or divisions, allowing councillorship to anyone from other districts or divisions. It has also given the authority to nominate a district or divisional councillor to that district or divisional commissioner. The NSC has unilaterally increased its representation of directors in the BCB board from one to three. Besides, the latest constitution dictates that the BCB president will be elected by the 27 (elected and selected) directors instead of by the councillors.

While explaining his position about all these amendments in the BCB constitution and defending his claim of undemocratic practice, Saber like many others raised the simple question about whether

the present BCB incumbent Nazmul Hasan Papon made any recommendations from the board to the NSC regarding these amendments.

"A lot of people are talking about these amendments. Some are appreciating and some others are critical of it. But like many others I have not heard anything from the present board. And to the best of my knowledge the present ad-hoc committee did not sit and discuss about those amendments," said Saber adding that he was keen to have a reaction from the BCB.

"I want to give the benefit of doubt to the present ad-hoc board. But at the same time we who believe in democracy believe that an interim body should not have the authority to make any fundamental changes. Any change in the BCB constitution should be done through general council. And in that spirit we can say it was done undemocratically," said the articulate lawmaker of the ruling Awami League.

He said awarding two votes each to the top six Premier League teams is unethical.

"I have read in a newspaper where someone argued that some clubs spend a lot of money and deserve more votes. If that is the case then Manchester United, being the richest club of England, should have all the votes in the FA. I'm not against the clubs and their contribution to our cricket is enormous. But this is not acceptable and you will not find such a case anywhere in the world."

Regarding the district and divisional councillorship Saber said that the NSC has flaunted its own law.

"According to the NSC Act a district councillor should be a member of that district association and is supposed to hold any position of that association for three years. And he will be nominated by the general secretary of that district or divisional sports association. But now anyone from other districts can be a BCB councillor and more importantly to be selected by the district or divisional commissioner. It is not only against democratic practice but also against the spirit of the International Cricket Council (ICC) which has clearly stated that its representative boards should be free from political interference and elections should be free and fair," said Saber.

He feared that by doing this a door has been opened to manipulate BCB elections.

"Suppose someone from this ad-hoc committee desires to contest the next BCB elections and he has got the access to choose the councillors from some areas. In that event it will be a case of judge, jury and executioner. And obviously it is not democracy and will put us under the scanner both home and abroad," observed Saber.

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PHOTO: STAR

Former president of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Saber Hossain Chowdhury speaks at a press conference at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

NTC to be reorganised

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Following poor performance of the national football teams in the recent past, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has recently dissolved the National Teams Committee (NTC) and gave authority to its chairman Kazi Nabil Ahmed to reorganise it.

The Bangladesh national team played three FIFA International Friendlies recently where they drew against Nepal, Malaysia and lost against Thailand while the National U-23 team played four matches where they lost against a Nepalese club, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and won against Maldives.

"The performances of the national teams were not up to mark in recent past and the chairman of the committee wanted to reorganise it anyway. Those were the reasons behind dissolving the current committee. I am eager to get results from the national teams because it will be tough to approach sponsors in future if they fail to

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Pioneer League final today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Dhaka City Corporation (North & South) U-16 Pioneer Football League comes to an end today when Khilgaon Football Academy take on Matuail Udayan Sangsad in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The league started in October with the participation of 81 teams at ten different venues and later 20 teams -- two from each of 10 venues -- qualified for the Super League where they played round-robin league after being split into four groups.

Khilgaon Football

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'If safe, why not full tour?'

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Former president of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Saber Hossain Chowdhury raised concerns regarding Bangladesh's proposed tour of Pakistan in a press conference organised at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel yesterday. Saber stated that while the progress of cricket in South Asia is important, nothing should 'take place at the risk of the safety of the players'.

"I don't think we have to be guinea pigs. South Asian cricket is very important for us obviously. But the main thing is the cricketers' safety. Nothing should come above this," said Chowdhury.

"If we think that Pakistan is safe to tour then we should go all the way for a full series. But one can't be in the middle," he added.

The BCB is currently in talks with its Pakistani counterparts regarding a possible tour of Pakistan after the beginning of the second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 in January next year.

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SL melt in Siddle & Starc heat

Cricket

AFP, HOBART

Pacemen Peter Siddle and Mitchell Starc bowled Australia to victory over Sri Lanka in the first Hobart Test on Tuesday, claiming six wickets in the final session for a thrilling win.

The Sri Lankans had looked to be holding on for a draw until Siddle and Starc struck to secure Australia's first win of the home season, after losing to South Africa 1-0 in the recent three-Test series.

Starc claimed the last four wickets to end with five for 63, while Siddle was named man of the match after his four for 50 gave him nine wickets for the match.

Australia found it hard going to gouge out the batsmen on a fifth-day pitch until the wickets tumbled in the final two hours.

"We knew we had to be patient," said captain Michael Clarke. "No doubt I was confident that if we could bowl the balls in the right area for a long period of time that we would have success."

"It was going to be a day's work to get so many good batsmen out, but take nothing away from the bowlers."

"They had to execute their plans and their skills. Reverse swing was always going to be vital in this game and we've got three of the best reverse swing bowlers in the world in Sids (Siddle), Shane (Watson) and Starc (Starc)."

Australia got the wicket of captain Mahela Jayawardene before lunch, Kumar Sangakkara in the middle session and the remaining six wickets in the final session after the tourists had appeared headed for a morale-boosting draw.

"Disappointed that we lost the game. It

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PHOTO: AFP

Australia pacer Peter Siddle (R) celebrates dismissing Sri Lanka batsman Thilan Samaraweera on the final day of the first Test in Hobart on yesterday.

V-Day tennis underway

SPORTS REPORTER

Runner Victory Day Open Tennis Tournament got underway yesterday at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna where ten players moved to the second round in the men's singles.

Amol Roy, Jamil Bhuiyan, Arif Hossain, Mofazzal Hossain, Sajib Pashi, Munir Hossain, Ranjan Ram, Asmot Ullah, Dipu Lal won their respective matches in the opening round. Earlier, state minister for youth and sports Ahad Ali Sarker inaugurated the meet which comprises six events -- men's singles, doubles, women's singles, doubles, mixed doubles and seniors 50+.