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Star SPORTS

BFF goes DUTCH

SPORTS REPORTER



Lodewijk De Kruif has become the 16th foreign coach of the Bangladesh national football team when he finally put pen to paper at the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) headquarters in Motijheel yesterday.

The 43-year-old Dutch signed a two-year contract, ending the BFF's one-and-a-half-year search for a high-profile coach after the departure of Macedonian Nikola Ilievski in December 2011 following Bangladesh's failure in the SAFF Championship in India.

Kruif will also have his compatriot Rene Koster as deputy during his assignment with a footballing nation long starved of success even at the regional level.

It was learnt that the Dutchman will get a monthly salary of 12,000 Euros (16,000 US dollars), exclusive of other facilities like accommodation, transportation and health insurance.

Kruif, who has already enjoyed a brief stint with the national team during the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers in Nepal in March, however arrived here with a mission to inject the Dutch style of football.

"There is nothing to change. The question is whether we can bring the Dutch style in Bangladesh and educate the players on what we do in Holland. From this point of view, we want to install the Dutch way of football and that is the starting point. Our process will go on and we are very serious about it," said Kruif while talking to reporters at the BFF House yesterday.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin, personally a passionate fan of Holland, considered the appointment of Kruif as the first step towards fulfilling his "Vision 2022".

"What I can say is that we have started that journey from today (Thursday) through the appointment of the Dutch coaches and we will do everything in our power to fulfil that dream, which is a place in the 2022 Qatar World Cup finals," said an ambitious Salahuddin.

Kruif said that nine years down the road is a long time and it is a dream that can be fulfilled. But he was more focused on immediate pressing issues.

"We will have to start from somewhere. I think I have already installed a bit of Dutch style. We saw the players in Nepal. They were adopting the style very well and they are willing to learn and want to change something. That is a very good attitude," said the Dutch coach.



It was Dutch delight for BFF president Kazi Salahuddin (R) yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

'Warner row could unite Australia'

AFP, Birmingham

Shane Warne said the fallout from David Warner's controversial attack on England batsman Joe Root could yet "bring Australia together" as they bid to regain the Ashes.

Opening batsman Warner was suspended by Cricket Australia on Thursday until the first Ashes Test.

"In a funny sort of way this could bring Australia together. I think it is a chance for them to gel together," Warne wrote in his column in Britain's Daily Telegraph on Thursday.

"They really have to take this opportunity to sit down and have a chat about what they want to achieve."

"After this incident England could be thinking to themselves Australia are there for the taking," the leg-spin legend, himself no stranger to off-field controversy during a colourful career, added.

"But if Australia regroup then they might get a surprise."

"I was one of a group of young guys... rubbing shoulders with David Boon, Allan Border and Ian Healy. If you were not on time for the bus or out too late they absolutely nailed you verbally. You felt embarrassed and as if you had let the team down."

"We had a saying: 'Before midnight is your time. After midnight is cricket time'. If you can't do what you want before midnight it's not worth doing," explained the 43-year-old.

Hi-tech regime for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER

After a month of diversions, cricket was finally back on the agenda at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday as the Tigers started a fitness camp. The fitness levels of Bangladesh's preliminary squad for New Zealand were put into test at the Mirpur Indoor Stadium on the first day of the camp with the newly bought training device -- the Speed Light Gate (SLG), proving the centre of attraction.

The device, bought last month for 20,000 Australian dollars (appx Tk 16 lakh), is primarily used for fielding tests and measures power and fatigue and numerous other fitness-related attributes.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) physical performance manager Stuart Karppinen, who was crunching

down the numbers on his laptop while the players were completing a range of tests, stated that the newly-bought device would help 'figure out a player's baseline on different fitness measures.'

"What we are trying to do is profile them based on fitness levels," said Karppinen. "The players have got different strengths and weaknesses. We are assessing them to give us an idea of the areas we actually need to work on," said Karppinen.

The tests involved different sessions. In the first, the players were required to run in between the light-gates, which measured a player's acceleration and speed. Secondly, they performed vertical jumps and finally they repeated that exercise on an electrical mat. Each activity was to measure a different attribute of the player's fitness.

"95 per cent of the time fielders run less than 30 meters on the field at a go.

We want to work on a player's speed in short distances and that's how the light-gates were placed," said Karppinen. The jumps on the other hand measured a player's propensity for fatigue and the amount of power they produced on landing.

"The important thing is to measure performance. If a player comes in and we suspect that he is down on performance, we will have baseline measurements and a consistent point of reference, to be able to say that these are the types of fitness and conditioning that you need to work on and these are the reasons why," said Karppinen. Getting to that point of reference however, would take at least three months, the Australian claimed.

According to head coach Shane Jurgensen, Mushfiqur Rahim and Nasir Hossain were the best performers on day one.



Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim goes through a high-tech fitness test at the indoor facilities of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Siddikur on track

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace Bangladeshi golfer Siddikur Rahman lived up to his promise as he got off to a spectacular start in the Queen's Cup, finishing the first round just one shot behind the joint leaders at the Santiburi Samui Country Club in Thailand yesterday.

Siddikur had finished the previous edition of the Queen's Cup in 2012 in second position, and on the eve of the event vowed to go one better in this year's competition. He is fourth on the leader board with a flawless five-under-par 66, but effectively in second position after Japan's Daisuke Kataoka continued his fine form by firing a flawless six-under-par 65 to grab a share of the first round lead with Finland's Jaakko Makitalo and Malaysia's Danny Chia.

Starting on the back-nine 10th, Siddikur birdied holes 14, 16 and 18 to turn in 32. He continued his birdie blitz with another on the second hole before adding another red number on the par-five sixth.

"I'm happy as this is a good start. I was so close to winning last year and hopefully I'll not repeat my mistakes again," Siddikur told the Asian Tour website after the first round of the 312,000 dollar event.

CTG Abahani end on high

SPORTS REPORTER

Champions Chittagong Abahani finished their Bangladesh Championship League campaign on a winning note after beating Dhaka United SC 4-0 at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

Palash slotted a hattrick after Sohel put Chittagong Abahani ahead.

Chittagong Abahani, who were crowned champions with a match in hand, raised their points tally to 30 from 14 matches while Dhaka United finished at the bottom with 11 points.

ENG-SL SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND	O	M	R	W
Cook lbw b Herath	59			
Bell c Perera b Eranga	20			
Trott lbw b Herath	76			
Root c Jayawardene b Malinga	68			
Morgan lbw b Malinga	13			
Butler c Sangakkara b Kulasekara	0			
Bopara not out	33			
Bresnan b Eranga	4			
Broad not out	7			
Extras: (lb-10, w-3)	13			
Total: (For seven wkt in 50 overs) 293				
Fall of wickets: 1-48, 2-131, 3-218, 4-249, 5-249, 6-249, 7-254				
Did not bat: Swann, Anderson				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Kulasekara	10	0	42	1
Malinga	10	2	58	2
Eranga	10	0	80	2
Mathews	6	0	28	0
Herath	10	0	46	2
Dilshan	4	0	29	0

SRI LANKA

Perera c Bopara b Anderson	6
Dilshan c Root b Swann	44
Sangakkara not out	134
Jayawardene c sub b Anderson	42
Kulasekara not out	58
Extras: (lb-6, w-7)	13
Total (For 7 wkt in 47.1 overs) 297	
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-102, 3-187	
Did not bat: Chandimal, Mathews, Thirimanne, Herath, Eranga and Malinga	

Bowler

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	10	0	51	2
Broad	8.1	0	67	0
Bresnan	10	0	63	0
Root	3	0	27	0
Swann	10	0	50	1
Bopara	6	0	33	0

SRI LANKA

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Broad	8.1	0	67	0
Bresnan	10	0	63	0
Root	3	0	27	0
Swann	10	0	50	1
Bopara	6	0	33	0

SL stun England

AFP, London

Kumar Sangakkara smashed an unbeaten 134 off 135 balls as Sri Lanka stunned England by seven wickets in a high-scoring thriller on Thursday to stay afloat in the Champions Trophy.

The Islanders, chasing England's seemingly impregnable 293-7, launched a spirited chase in the day-night game at the Oval to surpass the target in 47.1 overs and throw open the semi-final race from group A.

Sri Lanka, who would have been knocked out of the tournament had they lost, are now level with England on two points each, one behind group leaders New Zealand.

Australia, the fourth team in the group have one point.

The two semi-final spots will be determined after the last round of matches when England take on New Zealand in Cardiff on Sunday and Sri Lanka clash with Australia at the Oval on Monday.

Bopara boosted the total with three sixes, two boundaries and a two in the 50th over sent down by seamer Shaminda Eranga to return unbeaten on 33 off 13 balls.