



## MASHRAFE on track for October return

SPORTS REPORTER

The first round of the national cricketers' camp, which began with a special focus on the players' fitness levels last month and has gradually moved on to skill development, came to an end yesterday amidst a number of developments.

A crucial one was that of pacer Mashrafe Bin Mortaza overcoming his heel injury and returning to bowl at the nets for the first time since February. The Narail Express, who injured himself during the second edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), began bowling from Friday off a shorter run-up.

"I bowled a few overs day before yesterday and today (Sunday) as well. My heel does not hurt any more and I am trying to lose as much weight as possible. I need one more month to get into stride and rhythm," Mashrafe told reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

At 88 kilograms, Mashrafe's immediate aim is to lose more weight. "I want to lose four kg in the next four weeks. I have changed my diet plans to support my revival. I want to be ready by October for the limited overs series against New Zealand. I am still not sure about the Tests," he said.

Having undergone a series of operations in his career, the rigours of returning from an injury is nothing new for Mashrafe. However, this time the bowler stated that he wanted to be 'a hundred per cent sure' before returning to the game. "I really want to be sure this time before playing, because well, another injury might just compel me to leave the game, you never know," he said.

"But so far things have been good. The trainers have made us work extremely hard at the camp this time. It was difficult, especially with the heat. But it felt good to complete those exercises without any pain," he added.

Re-iterating Mashrafe's statement, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) sports physician Vibhav Singh said that the bowler was on track for an international return. "This camp was always going to be difficult and one of our main concerns was whether Mashrafe would pass the tests. The good thing is that he never once complained about anything," Vibhav told The Daily Star.

While a majority of the national players will join the second round of the camp from July 14 onwards, Mashrafe will have to attend an extra training programme which begins from Tuesday. "Since he has been away from the game for a while, we decided to lighten his load a bit and arrange a reduced programme for him," said Vibhav. The programme will also be attended by pacers Nazmul Hossain and Rubel Hossain.

Describing the camp as a success, Vibhav stated that the postponement of the Dhaka Premier League turned out to be a blessing in disguise as it gave the team management more time with the players.

The last day of the camp also saw the sports physician set out diet regulations for Mashrafe and his teammates. With Ramadan due to begin in a few days his main advice to the players was to avoid deep-fried food as much as possible.



British fans savour their finest moment with their newly crowned hero Andy Murray, who punches the air after defeating Serbian Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final at the centre court of the All England Cup in southwest London yesterday.

## On 07/07 after 77 years

AGENCIES, London



Seventy-seven years of pain were wiped away in just over three hours on Sunday as Andy Murray became the first British man to win the Wimbledon title since 1936 with a stunning 6-4, 7-5, 6-4 victory over world No 1, Novak Djokovic.

It was also a day the British will relish for a long time alongside the anguish of a dreadful bomb attack in London subway in 2005 on this very day.

As Djokovic's final backhand hit the net and fell back on his own side, Murray dropped his racket in disbelief before celebrating in front of his support box.

The 26-year-old Scot dominated the first set, recovered from 4-1 down in the second and 4-2 down in the third to win his second grand slam title, having beaten the Serb at the US Open last September but lost to him in the final of the Australian Open in January.

On a sultry day with temperatures

approaching 30C, Murray played smart, courageous and seemingly nerveless tennis to go one better than 12 months ago, when he was beaten by Roger Federer.

Djokovic went into the final as the slight favourite but Murray had won their only previous meeting on grass, in the semi-finals of the Olympics last summer. When the first rally of the match lasted 20 shots, it seemed as if the match would be another epic battle but in the first set Djokovic made a number of uncharacteristic errors on his groundstrokes to allow Murray to settle.

The crowd inside Centre Court were roaring everything the world No 2 did and, though he dropped serve immediately after breaking in the third game, Murray lifted his game to break for 4-3. The next game was crucial as Murray saved three break points to consolidate the break and, after Djokovic held, Murray served out for the set with ease.

Djokovic was trying to wind himself up at the start of the second set and his greater aggression was rewarded with

the break in the fourth game as he raced to a 4-1 lead. With the sun glaring down, Murray put on a hat and suddenly hit back, taking advantage of a Djokovic double fault to break and then saved two break points to level at 4-4. At 5-5 Murray ramped up the pressure and broke before serving out for a two-sets lead.

When he broke in the opening game of the third and led 2-0, 0-30 on the Djokovic serve, he seemed moments away from victory. But, as he has done so many times, the Serb rallied in adversity, winning four straight games to lead 4-2, helped by some brilliant drop shots.

But Murray was not done and after breaking back for 4-3 he repeated the feat two games later, thanks to two brilliant running-forehand passes.

Serving for the title, he led 40-0 but Djokovic saved them all. The Serb forced two break points but Murray saved them and then on his fourth Championship point the Scot clinched victory when Djokovic netted a backhand.

ANDY MURRAY	NOVAK DJOKOVIC	2013: Andy Murray (GBR)
9	4	2012: Roger Federer (SUI)
2	4	2011: Novak Djokovic (SRB)
67	65	2010: Rafael Nadal (ESP)
7/17	4/13	2009: Roger Federer (SUI)
36	31	2008: Rafael Nadal (ESP)
21	40	2007: Roger Federer (SUI)
114	96	2005: Roger Federer (SUI)

## MURRAY'S moment

THE GUARDIAN

So Murray, this is your moment. His heart must be jumping out of his chest right now. His legs must feel like lead. His racket must weigh about 200 kilos. Not that you'd know it. He takes the first point, 15-0 (in the deciding third set). One down, three to go. He takes the second when he gobbles up Djokovic's attempted drop shot, 30-0. Two to go. A brutal serve down the T, Djokovic isn't getting that back into court. 40-0, three championship points. One to go. The crowd roar "MURRAY, MURRAY, MURRAY, MURRAY." Murray makes his first serve, deep to Djokovic's backhand, but the Serb gets a racket to it and then tries his luck at the net. The gamble pays off for Djokovic. 40-15. Djokovic then thunders away a winner. 40-30. Murray takes his time, bouncing the ball a little longer than he would normally, the crowd think he's hit an ace down the middle but it's more wishful thinking than anything, it was well long. From the second serve, the pair go down the middle of the court, and Murray carves his backhand slice long. And from three championship points it's deuce. The next point is on Murray's racket, he steps in to punish the short ball, but nervously nets. And it's now break point. Murray drills his first serve down the middle, Djokovic prods long. Deuce. Advantage Djokovic, as his half volley clips the net and trickles over. What cruel luck. He recovers to deuce, but then it's Djokovic's advantage again. The crowd can't take much more of this. But Murray can, he gets himself back to deuce. And now it's a fourth championship point after a quite ridiculous exchange that Murray had absolutely no right to win. And this time Djokovic nets a backhand! GREAT SCOT. HE'S ONLY GONE AND DONE IT. ANDY MURRAY IS THE WIMBLEDON CHAMPION!



PHOTO: STAR

Recovering national fast bowler Mashrafe Bin Mortaza runs laps around the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium during the national team's practice camp yesterday.

## Rain pushes WI-SL match to today

AFP, Port of Spain

Torrential showers have forced the abandonment of play in the fifth match of the Tri-Nation Series between the West Indies and Sri Lanka at the Queen's Park Oval on Sunday.

The match will resume, weather permitting, today with the Sri Lankans at 60 for three off 19 overs after being put in to bat. Kumar Sangakkara was batting on 11 and with him was Lahiru Thirimanne on 13 when rain stopped play. West Indies pacer Kumar Roach took two wickets for 19 runs in seven overs.

## Umpires' hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Abdul Malek Chunnu Smriti Team emerged champions in the Walton Umpires' five-a-side hockey tournament after defeating Ataul Haque Mallik Smriti Team by 8-7 goals in the final at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Selim Lucky of Chunnu Smriti was adjudged the player of the tournament while Mamun Mortaza of the same team finished as the top scorer.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid distributed prizes as the chief guest after witnessing the final.

## 'Academy will be ready in 45 days'

SPORTS REPORTER



The State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker has allayed fears about the football academy in Sylhet by promising that the renovation work and setting up of equipment would be completed within the next one and a half months.

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin on Thursday lambasted Sarker and the National Sports Council (NSC) for delay in the progress of work. The minister however admitted that the delay occurred only because of a faulty tender process.

"The work at the academy will be

completed very soon. Within the next one and a half months the academy will be handed over to the BFF. The delay was due to the faulty tender procedure," said the country's sports administrator at the NSC yesterday.

It may be mentioned that the finance ministry had approved the BFF academy project in March, but the NSC floated the tender three months later which was cancelled due to a technical fault before retendering in June.

The minister also termed the reaction of the BFF chief as an emotional outburst, adding that there was no shortage of sincerity on their part. "The BFF president expressed his grievance at the delay, but I know it is an outburst of his emotions. We are very sincere about it and we will hand over the academy to them within the next one and a half months," said the minister.

## Ad-hoc body coming?

Minister assures of a solution soon

SPORTS REPORTER



A solution to the players' transfers for the Premier Division Hockey League looked likely after State Minister for Youth and Sports

Ahad Ali Sarker assured the players that the transfers will be held soon. The minister's assurance came following a meeting with the players at the National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday.

"I have talked with the players and I will sit with them again in a few days. I am trying to understand the whole thing. But I can assure you that steps will be taken to resolve the crisis at the soonest," said the minister of the meeting.

The players' transfers, which were scheduled for July 2-4, became uncer-

tain after it was postponed by the interim committee of Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) which declared that a fresh date for the transfers would be announced by the elected committee after they take office. But the elected committee has not yet taken over as the NSC has not issued a circular about it owing to a court ruling on a councillorship issue in the voters' list. There are also the six clubs, led by Mohammedan SC and Mariner Youngs Club, who have declared not to take part in any activities under the elected committee.

Under these circumstances, the minister said he would sit with all the parties--the players, the clubs and the federation--to resolve the crisis. National team's goalkeeper-cum-captain Zahid Hossain said that they were looking up to the minister for a solution.

"The minister is our guardian. We

have explained the whole situation to him and he has assured us that he would resolve the crisis within a few days. Our source of income is the players' transfers and we hope that a permanent solution will be reached within the next one week."

However, the solution might be a difficult one to reach as the players, and especially the warring clubs, are not willing to work under the elected committee, with general secretary-elect Khwaza Rahmatullah in the chair.

According to BHF insiders a solution might be reached with the appointment of an ad-hoc committee, dissolving the elected committee. There have been rumours from different corners about finding a suitable person for the general secretary's position, who would be beyond controversy and accepted by all.

And under the circumstances, this looks the likeliest solution to break the ice.

## Shakib's Foxes lose 3rd game

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan scored 12 runs off 16 balls and took 1 wicket for 23 in his four overs as his team Leicestershire Foxes lost to Lancashire by four runs in an evenly contested game in the Friends Life T20 at Manchester yesterday.

Batting first, Lancashire finished on 155 for four. In reply, Leicestershire were restricted to 151 for 7. Greg Smith of Leicestershire top scored in the game with a 56-ball 84. The loss now put the Foxes in fourth position in the North Division. So far they have scored two points in four matches.