

SPORT

Tamim off to Caribbean

SPORTS REPORTER

With an aim to excel in the first edition of the Caribbean Premier League, which begins on July 20, dashing opener Tamim Iqbal left the country yesterday along with his newly married wife Ayesha Siddiqua. He will be playing for Saint Lucia.

"I want to play well there and spread a good name about Bangladesh's cricketers. The good part is that my wife is going with me and she can watch some of those games, so I am really excited," Tamim told reporters at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday.

"I have been busy planning my wedding recently and this tour will be a relief of sorts for me. I have to go there and attend a weeklong camp before the start of the tournament. I am sure it will be a good tournament," he added.

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who is slated to play for Barbados, will be the other Bangladeshi featuring in the tournament.

3-0 win doesn't please de Kruif

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh national football team breezed to a 3-0 win over Team BJMC in their third practice match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, but coach Lodewijk de Kruif was still not fully satisfied with the overall performance of the players.

The Dutch coach believes there are areas for improvement, especially in defence, before the final assignment of the SAFF Championship in September.

After a barren first half, de Kruif made some changes to key positions which helped them take a 3-0 lead inside the first 15 minutes, thanks to a brace from promising striker Wahed Ahmed and one from Zahid Hasan Emily.

"The first 45 minutes was a bit disappointing. They [opponents] played much matured game, making it very tough for us. I didn't find the build-up play from behind that I wanted to see," said de Kruif after the match.

The scenario basically changed after winger Mobarak Hossain was sent in place of Toklish Ahmed as the diminutive winger provided both crosses for Wahed, who drove home from inside the box while Emily converted a spot-kick after Wahed, set up by Mobarak, was brought down from behind.

"He [Mobarak] was very eager to prove himself. Maybe he was disappointed because he had to sit on the bench which made him more eager. I am impressed by him as he plays with his heart."

After going 3-0 up, the national team's performance however tapered off and there were some crucial mistakes at the back, which irked the Dutchman. The team gave away a penalty, which Team BJMC failed to convert. There were a few silly mistakes at the back as well.

Mash unsure of A team comeback

SPORTS REPORTER

Pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza seemed hesitant to make his comeback to competitive cricket with the Bangladesh A team tour of England next month.

The Narail Express was out of action since he suffered the ankle injury during the BPL final, which is why the Akram Khan-led selection panel was eager to include him in the second string side. On the other hand BCB's medical team was also in favour of the tour though they left the matter to the bowler himself.

"I talked with everybody including Akram Bhai. It's not wise to talk about the matter now, although the tour is not too far away. I'm yet to start bowling with a full run-up. And you know I also have to think about my knee. I must go if Akram Bhai tells me to and everyone thinks it wise. It would definitely be good for me if I can go but once again I must also think about my knee," said Mashrafe yesterday.

"I want to play, but it is a crucial time of my career because if I suffer another injury it will be difficult for me to return, so I hope all that is taken into consideration," he added.

There have been doubts over whether the leading pacer can play longer-version cricket anymore but yesterday he expressed his optimism about the matter.

"I always want to play Tests but there are a lot of things that need to be considered," said Mashrafe.

Faridpur ride on Monjur hatricket

SPORTS REPORTER



Monjur Ahmed claimed a hatricket as Faridpur posted a 38-run victory against Jessore in the 33rd National Cricket Championship at the Dinajpur Stadium yesterday.

Monjur dismissed Hasanuzzaman off the last ball of the second over and then picked up the wickets of Mahfuzur Rahman and Shajid Hasan off the first two deliveries of the fourth over to complete his hatricket as Jessore were bundled out for 97 runs in 33.2 overs in reply

to a revised target of 136 runs in 35 overs.

Rain stopped play with Jessore making 43 for 4 in reply to Faridpur's 157 all out in 47.2 overs.

Left-arm pacer Syed Rasel claimed four wickets for 45 runs to restrict Faridpur to 157 runs.

In the day's other match at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, Narayanganj won a rain-curtailed match by eight wickets against Barisal. The match was reduced to a 20-over affair. Barisal were all out for 102 runs in 19.2 overs and Narayanganj reached the target with 103 for two in 14.2 overs.



Young Liton Kumar Das hit 110 as the Mushfiqur Rahim-led BCB XI suffered a three-wicket defeat to Singapore-bound Bangladesh Under-23 side. Liton's superb knock cancelled out the national skipper's well-composed half-century in the limited-over practice game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Abahani fined 50k

SPORTS REPORTER

The Disciplinary Committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) slapped Abahani Ltd with a fine of Tk 50,000 for the chaotic and unruly act of their supporters during a Grameenphone Super Cup match last month.

Following a decision by the referee during the match against Sheikh Russel KC on June 18, the Sky Blues supporters hurled bricks and stones towards the field as well as the press box that left one journalist injured.

However, the disciplinary committee felt they could not identify whether all the supporters that took part in the rampage were Abahani supporters, and hence came up with a soft punishment.

Victoria club Orient

SPORTS REPORTER

Victoria Sporting Club defeated Orient Sporting Club by 43 runs at the City Club Ground yesterday in the women's club cricket tournament. Batting first Victoria were bowled out for 144 in 38.4 overs.

Victoria's Naznin Nahar top-scored with 28, whereas Orient's Nasrin Nahar finished with figures of 4 for 19. In reply, Orient were bowled out for 101. Orient's Tomalika Sumona scored a fighting 34. Victoria's Naznin was the pick of the bowlers with 3 for 22. She was also adjudged the player of the match.

Bravos put WI level

AFP, Providence



Pakistan returned to their self-destructive ways as West Indies completed a 37-run victory in the second one-day international at the Guyana National Stadium on Tuesday.

Solid contributions by the Bravo brothers, Darren and Dwayne, boosted the West Indies batting effort after they had gotten off to the worst possible start when giant left-arm fast bowler Mohammed Irfan had Chris Gayle caught at the wicket in the first over of the day.

Two days after demolishing the hosts by 126 runs, the visitors folded for 195 off 47.5 overs in reply to the Caribbean side's total of 232 for eight after they were put in on a pitch expected to offer considerable assistance to the bowlers following the previous day's torrential rain.

Pakistan appeared to be cruising along at 103 for two with skipper Misbahul Haq well entrenched and opener Nasir Jamshed (54) riding his considerable luck towards a half-century. But Misbah played a shot totally out of character to be bowled by Darren Sammy, a fitting reward for the all-rounder playing his 100th ODI.

That dismissal was followed by a succession of poor shots and with spinner Sunil Narine returning to wicket-taking form in snaring four to 26 to claim the player-of-the-match award, a rearguard 50 by wicketkeeper-batsman Umar Akmal proved to be too little, too late for Pakistan.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES: 232 for 8 in 50 overs (Charles 31, Darren Bravo 54, Samuels 21, Dwayne Bravo 43 not out, Pollard 30; Ajmal 2-45, Afridi 2-29)
PAKISTAN: 195 all out in 47.5 overs (Jamshed 54, Shehzad 19, Hafeez 20, Misbah 17, Akmal 50; Narine 4-26, Bravo 2-9)
Result: West Indies won by 37 runs.
Player-of-the-match: Sunil Narine.

Trying times for Jubairs

No Premier Cricket League leaves players struggling

NAIMUL KARIM

The name Jubair Ahmed may not be very familiar to people outside the country's cricketing fraternity. And why should it be? Jubair has never donned the national cap and companies don't run behind him for contracts; in fact the allrounder was removed from champions Victoria last year in the Dhaka Premier League, to make room for national players.

While he doesn't make headlines often, the 26-year-old is one of the many cricketers who depend solely on the game for their livelihood. The constant delay in this year's Dhaka Premier League has led to financial inconsistencies for many cricketers and Jubair is one such sufferer.

Hailing from Rajshahi, Jubair has a family of eight, all of whom are dependent on him. "My father passed away when I was eleven. I couldn't finish my studies because I joined cricket and today my entire

family depends on me. I pay for my sister's studies and even for my brother's family because he is not that well-off," he said.

Jubair, who had almost sealed a contract worth Tk 8 lakh with a club this year wanted to use the money to treat his niece, who is suffering from a congenital heart defect. But that contract of course meant nothing once the clubs decided to postpone the league.

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"My niece has two holes in her heart. I was hoping to use the money from the player transfer and borrow some more to send her to India for treatment," said Jubair. "But once the transfer date got postponed from June to July and it still remains uncertain, I really lost it."

In a bid to treat his niece, Jubair asked his good friend and captain of the national team Mushfiqur Rahim to help him raise some money recently. "He told me that he'll ask the players in the camp to contribute and do as much as he can. I sound desperate,

but there's nothing much I can do except pray because she seems to be losing weight everyday," said Jubair.

The player's only constant source of income as of now is the TK 15,000 per month that he receives from the board under his Grade C first-class contract.

Despite the woes, Jubair continues practice with hopes of playing the Premier League in September. "I practice in the mornings and the evenings at the Rajshahi College under our divisional coach. Ideally the Clemon's cricket academy would have been better, but it costs more to travel there, so I prefer practicing here," he says.

The 26-year-old, who played for the Barisal Burners in this year's Bangladesh Premier League, is yet to receive any money from the BPL. "At the end of the BPL, when everybody got 25 per cent of their payment, Al Amin Hossain, Iftekhar Nayeem and me were left out. The management said that it was a mistake and that we would get the money once we came to Dhaka. I still haven't received anything. I called them, left messages, but there's no reply," he says.

There are many more cricketers who are suffering like Jubair. In fact, some of them have become so fed-up at the Dhaka League's controversies that they refuse to even think about it. Jubair's BPL colleague and a promising pacer Al Amin Hossain is one such example. "Honestly speaking I don't want to think about the Premier League right now. If it happens it will. As of now I just want to get selected for the A team for the tour of England," he told The Daily Star.

A senior player, who preferred to remain anonymous, also said that he is tense about Eid as opposed to celebrating the festival. "The Premier League is what makes most of my payments. I have a family of six excluding myself and I really have to cut down a lot of expenses for Eid this year," he said.

Jubair's training partner Forhad Hossain is also in a quandary. His father, who runs a barber shop in Rajshahi, does not earn enough to support the family of 12. As a result, the family is dependent on the cricketer's earnings. "I would have received Tk 10 lakhs as per the grading system in the league. Earnings from here constitute 80 per cent of my year's income. Living in a joint family I keep a significant amount for my family in Eid, something which will have to be cut down significantly this time," said Forhad.

Lord's Test from today

Sacking distraction for Aussies?

AFP, London



After just a three-day break since England's thrilling 14-run win over Australia in the first Test at Trent Bridge, the Ashes rivals will meet for the second of a five-match series at Lord's on Thursday.

But the manner in which Australia competed in Nottingham suggests Ashes-holders England will not have things all their own way.

Just when Australia thought they'd put the departure of sacked former coach Mickey Arthur behind them however, the row over the South African's controversial exit has been reignited in spectacular fashion.

Wicketkeeper Brad Haddin, whose second innings 71 so nearly led Australia to victory in Nottingham, insisted on Tuesday that all was well with the side.

"The Australian dressing room is fine. I don't know how many times we need to answer this [Arthur issue]," Haddin said.

Key among the things that cost Australia victory at Nottingham was their top-order batting.

Whether new coach Darren Lehmann can do much to improve it is doubtful,

although struggling No. 3 Ed Cowan could yet find himself dropped and replaced by Usman Khawaja.

Australia's tenth-wicket pair was responsible for 228 runs at Trent Bridge, including a world record stand of 163 in the first innings that featured teenage debutant Ashton Agar's 98 -- the highest score by a Test No. 11.

"Our tail has done really well over a period of time now but it's time for the batters to make sure they're making the runs," said Lehmann.

England's 115-run win in the last Ashes Test at Lord's four years ago was their first Test success at the 'home of cricket' in 75 years against Australia.

The steep slope that runs across the ground can prove challenging for bowlers and batsmen alike unfamiliar with Lord's but Australia opener Chris Rogers has had the advantage of playing there for Middlesex.

So too does England fast bowler Steven Finn and, despite finding a slow pitch at Trent Bridge not to his liking, Finn's local knowledge is likely to see him retain his place.

By contrast, Australia may be tempted to give pacer Jackson Bird a run at Lord's in place of the wayward Mitchell Starc.

311 runs in 40 overs!

REUTERS, London

A self-employed builder from Cornwall in south-west England hit 311 runs from 40 overs to help his club to a regional record scoreline on Tuesday.

The BBC reported that Andrew Brenton lashed 53 boundaries, with 11 sixes, after coming in at number three for Luckett against Tideford and recording the highest score in Cornish cricket history.

His tally helped Luckett reach 513 for five off 48 overs, another Cornish record, to win the Division Two East match by 313 runs after Tideford made 210 for six in reply.

Arthur to sue CA

AFP, Sydney

Australia's first foreign-born coach Mickey Arthur Wednesday confirmed he was suing Cricket Australia for racial discrimination after being dumped from the job, while blasting the leaking of explosive case details to the media.

The South African was axed just 16 days before the first Test against Ashes-holders England at Trent Bridge this month and replaced by former Australia batsman Darren Lehmann.

His Australian-based lawyers said proceedings were filed with the Fair Work Commission (FWC) last week "on a number of grounds for being sacked and scapegoated".

"The grounds include racial discrimination," Harmers Workplace Lawyers and Arthur said in a statement.

Reports said Arthur, fired two years before his contract was due to expire, was seeking up to 4 million Australian dollars in compensation, claiming he was discriminated against because he was South African and "didn't understand the Australian way".

SLPL could be scrapped

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's cricket authorities were to decide later Wednesday whether to scrap their Twenty20 league after all franchise holders defaulted on payments for the tournament, officials said.

A meeting of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) officials was underway in Colombo over the future of the tournament, which is scheduled to start next month.

Officials said all seven franchises for the Sri Lankan Premier League (SLPL) were held by Indian companies. But they had failed to meet several deadlines to pay nearly three million dollars.

SLC officials will decide "if they should cancel the SLPL altogether or cancel this year's tournament and continue from 2014", its spokesman Rajith Fernando told AFP.

Lara better than Tendulkar, Punter

INTERNET, London



Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting rates Brian Lara ahead of Sachin Tendulkar because the West Indies batting great helped his team win more matches than the Indian.

"Sachin and Lara were the two stand-out batsmen for me. Lara won more games for his team than Sachin probably has," Ponting told Evening Standard.

Ponting also said as a captain he was more wary of Lara than Tendulkar adding for him "it is about winning games and series".

"I'd lose more sleep as captain knowing Lara was coming in to bat next day than I would with Sachin. You always found a way to restrict Sachin if you needed to. Lara could turn it on in half an hour and take a game away from you. For me, it has never been about making hundreds, it is about winning games and series."

Ponting also said England batsman Kevin Pietersen is not a better batsman than his successor Michael Clarke, adding England captain Alastair Cook has scored more hundreds in fewer Test matches.

"He [Pietersen] is not head and shoulders over Clarke, no way. His record wouldn't suggest he is better than Clarke. And Cook's record is a lot better than Pietersen's. He has more hundreds in fewer Tests than Pietersen and as an opener."