

## SPORT

CELEBRATING 2014

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YEAR  
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SPORT

LIONS IN TIGERS' DEN

U-19s win  
warm up  
again

SPORTS REPORTER

Mosaddek Hossain slammed an unbeaten 75 as Bangladesh Under-19 cricketers warmed up well with a four-wicket victory against their England counterparts in the practice match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

Bangladesh, who have been pitted in Group B along with Australia, Afghanistan and Namibia for the ICC Under-19 World Cup, go into their first match, against Afghanistan on February 15, with hundred per cent success record in the warm-up games as they earlier beat Papua New Guinea by 156 runs.

Mosaddek scored 75 off 78 balls with nine boundaries as Bangladesh overtook their opponents' total of 218 runs with nine balls to spare.

Opener Sadman Hossain was the other notable scorer with 38 runs.

Earlier, Mehedy Hasan and Abu Haider took two wickets each to restrict the English at 218 for 7.

IPL 2014 AUCTIONS  
Kolkata keep  
Shakib for  
Rs. 2.8 crAGENCIES, *Bangalore*

A total of 216 players went under the hammer on Day One of the 2014 IPL auction but only 70 were sold with Yuvraj Singh ending up as the top-earner, bought by Royal Challengers Bangalore for a whopping 14 crore rupees.

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who had a base price of 1 crore rupees, was bought by Kolkata Knight Riders, the franchise he helped to the title in 2012, for 2.8 crore rupees. Meanwhile three other Bangladeshi cricketers -- Tamim Iqbal, Shohag Gazi and Mahmudullah Riyad -- remained unsold after the day.

Delhi Daredevils, who are building their team from scratch, bought the most number of players (13), followed by Sunrisers Hyderabad (11), Kings XI Punjab (10), Chennai Super Kings and Kolkata Knight Riders (8 each), Royal Challengers Bangalore (9), Rajasthan Royals (6) and Mumbai Indians (5).

Franchises didn't hold back, largely in the opening session, going on a spending spree that saw Bangalore fighting out for Yuvraj and Delhi spending as many as 12.5 crore rupees to bring wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik back in their camp.

Yuvraj played for now-defunct Pune Warriors India after making his IPL debut as the captain of Kings XI Punjab in 2008. But owing to some differences with the team management, the stylish left-hander parted ways with the Punjab franchise.

But after RCB captain Virat Kohli made his desire for Yuvraj apparent to his employers, Vijay Mallya went all out for the south-paw. Yuvraj and Karthik were part of the 16 marquee players who were first put up for auction at a base price of 2 crore rupees each.

Kevin Pietersen was the other top grosser, when a bidding war saw him being lapped up by Sunrisers Hyderabad before Delhi decided to use their 'Right to Match' to keep him for 9 crore rupees.

Tigers fall at  
last hurdle

BISHWAJIT ROY



Anamul Haque fought hard and played some eye-catching shots to take Bangladesh to a winning position but failed to give the finishing touch as Sri Lanka won a last-ball

thriller to take a 1-0 lead in the two-T20 series at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday.

Needing three runs from the last delivery to chase down the visitors' total of 168, the right-hander skied a cross-batted shot to a high full toss to be caught by bowler Thisara Perera and thus his brilliant 58 went in vain. With that shot the Tigers lost the opportunity to record their first T20 win over higher ranked opposition since beating West Indies twice.

There was a break in play before Perera delivered his crucial last ball as there was a protracted conference at the bowler's end but he could only produce a full toss that the batsman could have hit anywhere but only miscued it straight up in the air.

The drama however did not end with the shot as umpires referred it upstairs to make sure that the delivery was not illegal.

There was still room for debate as the call could have gone either way and finally it fell in favour of the Lankans.

Before the last ball's drama the win looked distant for the Tigers as they needed 17 runs off the last over but two consecutive lofted boundaries through the cover and extra-cover areas from Anamul swung the match almost in favour of the home team after a lucky, edged four off the first ball.

The Mashrafe Bin Mortaza-led Bangladesh might not have ended winners but they fought brilliantly, showing how close the gap between the No.1 and No.10 ranked sides are. The performance also provided evidence that they have started to learn the craft of the newest version of the game and confirmed their competence in all formats of the game at home.

Back to the match, the dashing Sri Lanka left-hander and man of the match Kaushal Perera smashed a 44-ball 64 and Nuwan Kulasekara hit a late cameo of 31 to give their side a fighting total. Other notable highlights from the match was that Shakib Al Hasan shone with both bat and well, before he was dismissed at the wrong time playing an ill-judged swipe; Tamim Iqbal got back among the runs and spinner Arafat Sunny had a quite brilliant debut, bowling economically and taking two wickets.

Usually a batsman or bowler takes the kudos after a match, as Kaushal Perera did yesterday but many will remember the match for some outstanding catches from the Bangladeshi fielders, who created an opportunity for their batsmen to win their first T20 game against the Lankans after choosing to field first.

Shakib got the wicket of Sri Lanka skipper Dinesh Chandimal and Kumar Sangakkara in quick succession but it was Forhad Reza and Nasir Hossain who made it possible by taking stunning catches. Forhad at long on leaped and took it just inside the ropes to send back dargerman Chandimal while Nasir sprinted full tilt to his right about six metres in from the midwicket fence, then threw himself to intercept the ball mid air.

And then Anamul's catch to send back Perera was reminiscent of a champion gymnast's balancing act after he jumped high and intercepted the ball above his head and teetered forward and backwards at the edge of the rope, before regaining his poise and sealing the wicket.

After all that however, it was the last ball that will matter to the series score.

Sunny's moment  
in the sun

NAIMUL KARIM from Chittagong



Lanka T20 series.

On February 6 this year, Arafat Sunny completed 12 years of first-class cricket and it was only a day before that he came to know of his inclusion in the team for the Sri Lanka T20 series.

Despite the opportunity Sunny kept his emotions in check at the time and cautiously chose his words while speaking to the media. It was only natural for a person who has been in the domestic circuit for so long.

"The cycle of my career goes like this, I get noticed once in every four years and then I just get back to playing domestic cricket. I actually had made up my mind just to be a good domestic player," Sunny told reporters before the series.

However, all those emotions -- reined in for the last twelve years -- seemed to have gushed out at one go when Nasir Hossain grasped on to a brilliant catch at deep backward square leg to dismiss Seekkuge Prasanna and give Sunny his maiden wicket in his first international over.

His celebration -- he bent down on one knee and punched the air -- said it all.

With a bowling average hovering around the 22-mark in all the three formats of the

game, Sunny has been a perennial performer in domestic cricket.

However, the one major factor that worked against Sunny was that he was just another slow-left armer in a long list of such bowlers. In order to make the national team that has the likes of Abdur Razzak, Shakib Al Hasan -- and even Elias Sunny in the recent past -- Sunny needed a bit of fortune, apart from doing something magnificent in domestic cricket.

The fortune came in the form of Razzak's hamstring injury during the second Test, which brought Sunny in the spotlight. As for his performance, the statistics say it all.

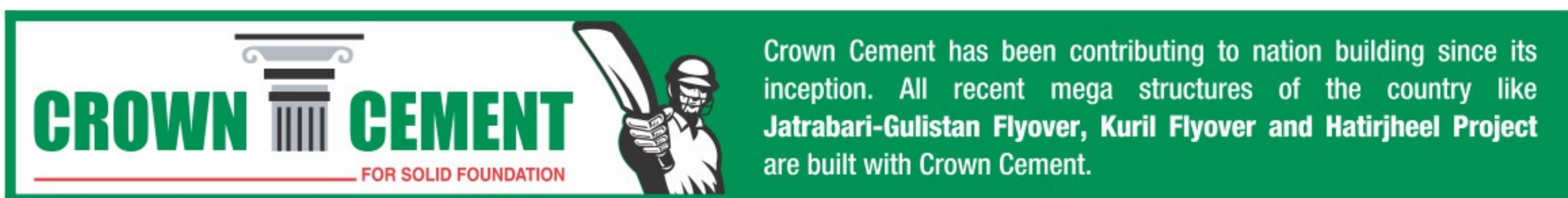
He was a dominant figure in first class cricket in the last two seasons. The year 2011 saw him take 50 wickets at an average of 20.36 and in the following season he picked 21 at an average of 21. His performance in the Dhaka Premier League last year was what seemed to have clinched it -- he took the league-highest 29 wickets at an average of 19.13.

With figures of two for 17 in three overs yesterday, sunny proved to be more than a handful for the hosts. While there is still a long way to go before he can be a permanent feature in the side, he has at least had the start that he has been longing for, and sometimes that is all that one needs in cricket.



Bangladesh all-rounder Nasir Hossain pulls off a blinder at the midwicket boundary as he goes airborne at full-stretch to latch on to the catch which Sri Lanka batsman Kumar Sangakkara offered off the bowling of Shakib Al Hasan during the first T20I at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



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## 'One ball the difference'

NAIMUL KARIM from Chittagong

It was a kind of day on the field that saw just one ball separate the two teams and at the end of the day it was the team that best handled their nerves that won the game. At the end of such a close game it was only natural for captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza to feel gutted.

"Everyone is upset and everyone feels bad that we went so close against the number one team and lost by just two runs. I think we were equal throughout the game but lost because of just a ball," said Mashrafe at the post-match press conference.

Bangladesh lost three wickets for 27 runs between overs 14 to 18 and that was one of the turning points of the game according to the stand-in captain.

"We lost wickets at a time when we were accelerating. That's where we went behind a bit. While we did recover in the end, the ending was unfortunate. We even scored 10 to 12 runs against Malinga which is really

difficult to do," said Mashrafe.

Nasir Hossain, who has generally managed to finish harder games for Bangladesh, was held down the ground in what was another crucial moment in the game.

"Nasir has played this sort of a match before and won it for us. But actually anything can happen. The shot he played could have gone for a six. Sometimes it doesn't go your way," said Mashrafe.

With 17 runs required in the over Anamul Haque unleashed some of the best shots in his armoury and brought the game down to three required of one before losing his wicket to a full toss -- an anti-climax to what was a heroic start to the over.

"Our platform was ready. The set batsman was at the crease and the bowler was under pressure because of the boundaries. It was unfortunate the way he got out to a full toss, despite having hit better balls outside the park. I don't have a word to explain this but this is what happens, there is a bit of luck involved.

"There's no doubt that we played well today. Our fielding was excellent and in this format fielding has a big effect. Arafat Sunny came in and bowled well for his first match and so did Bijoy after getting dropped in the Tests," he said.

In contrast, Kusal Perera, whose hard-hitting half-century won the game for the visitors, was all charged-up.

"This was not an easy bowling attack. The Bangladeshis like to play T20 cricket. My strategy was to take some calculated risks in the first few overs and then try to bat on till the end," said Kusal.

Despite defending the target Perera thought that they were 10-15 runs short of a very good total and expects to do better in the next game.

The batsman who has a batting style very much similar to Sanath Jayasuriya, however did not want get into any sort of comparison.

"I am Kusal and he is Sanath, a legend. I can't always copy him and neither do I compare myself to him," he said.

Walton-NCL  
partnership  
extended

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Cricket League (NCL) finally found a title sponsor after two rounds of matches as Walton signed an extension deal with the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday.

However the officials present at a press conference yesterday only disclosed the prize money and were not ready to disclose the amount of the deal.

The champions will get Tk 20 lakh, runners-up Tk 10 lakh, the player-of-the-tournament Tk 1 lakh, the highest run-getter and wicket-taker Tk 75,000 each and the player-of-the-match Tk 15,000.

The third round matches kick off today at different venues.



## SCOREBOARD

	R	B	4s	6s
<b>SRI LANKA</b>				
Perera c Anamul b Sunny	64	44	7	1
Dilshan b Mashrafe	0	3	0	0
Chandimal c Reza b Shakib	18	15	2	1
Sangakkara c Nasir b Shakib	11	6	1	0
Prasanna c Nasir b Sunny	4	4	0	0
Mathews run out	11	11	0	0
Perera not out	19	16	0	0
Kulasekara c Shamsur b Mashrafe	31	21	1	2
Senanayake not out	0	0	0	0
Extras: (lb-7, w-3)	10			
Total: (For 7 wickets in 20 overs)	168			
Did not bat: Mendis, Malinga.				
Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-61, 3-77, 4-87, 5-116, 6-134, 6-158, 7-166.				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Mashrafe	4	0	43	2
Shohag	3	0	29	0
Rubel	4	0	27	0
Shakib	4	0	27	2
Sunny	3	0	17	2
Reza	2	0	18	0
<b>BANGLADESH</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>4s</b>	<b>6s</b>
Tamim c Mathews b T Perera	30	25	6	0
Shamsur c b T Mendis	22	15	4	0
Anamul c b T Perera	58	45	7	0
Shakib b Kulasekara	26	17	2	1
Nasir c T Perera b Malinga	16	13	0	1
Mithun c Mathews				
b Kulasekara	0	1	0	0
Reza run out	7	5	1	0
Shohag not out	0	0	0	0
Extras: (lb-1, lb-4, w-1, nb-1)	7			
Total: (For 7 wickets in 20 overs)	166			
Did not bat: Sunny, Mashrafe, Rubel.				
Fall of wickets: 1-52, 2-64, 3-107, 4-132, 5-134, 6-158, 7-166.				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Malinga	4	0	34	1
Kulasekara	4	0	29	2
Senanayake	3	0	21	0
Mendis	4	0	29	1
T Perera	4	0	42	2
Prasanna	1	0	6	0
<b>Result:</b> Sri Lanka won by two runs.				
<b>Player-of-the-match:</b> Kusal Perera.				



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