



Sheikh Jamal die a sudden death

SPORTS REPORTER

The ghosts of 1995 returned to haunt Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club as they fell agonisingly short of becoming the first Bangladeshi side to win the prestigious IFA Shield for the first time. Sheikh Jamal were looking to eclipse Dhaka Mohammedan's feat, who were beaten in tie-breakers by East Bengal in controversial circumstances, 19 years ago.

The same script was enacted again at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata last night as Sheikh Jamal were beaten by Kolkata Mohammedan Sporting Club 4-3 (1-1) in sudden death tiebreakers, after their inspirational Haitian forward Sony Norde was controversially sent off by the referee Santosh Kumar in the 82nd minute of the match.

Sony had given the Dhanmondi giants a 27th minute lead with a wonderful free-kick from five yards outside the box which brushed the inside of the bar and beat the Mohammedan keeper Luis Barreto at his near post.

But that lead was cancelled in the second minute stoppage time of the first half when Mohammedan defender Mehjazuddin found himself unmarked inside the Sheikh Jamal box, on a tee-up from Josimiar and the veteran defender slotted the ball at the back of the net past Sheikh Jamal's keeper Mazharul Islam Hime.

Sheikh Jamal's two attacking midfielders -- Sohel Rana and Mamunul Haque -- fed numerous balls to Sony and Wedson Anselme at either side, but frontman Emeka Darlington failed to be in-synch with his fellow forwards, wasting a number of half-chances.

Mohammedan, on the other hand, had a compact defence compared and tried to create counter attacks through the middle, which gave them the equaliser.

But Sheikh Jamal's fortunes were dealt a heavy blow when referee showed Sony a straight red card for allegedly slapping Mohammedan defender Luciano Sabrosa. Sony was tackled from behind and the frustrated Haitian tried to brush off the Brazilian, but his hands hardly touched Luciano's face. Luciano started grimacing and the referee gave the marching orders to Sony while showing a second yellow to Luciano for playacting.

Despite losing their talismanic forward, Sheikh Jamal fought gainfully for the rest of the regulation time and came close a number of times to winning it outright, but some wayward finishing and valiant keeping from Barreto kept the score at 1-1. Mohammedan's Nigerian forward Penn Orji had the easiest chance though in the extra time, but his weak effort was cleared by Didarul Islam.

Both coaches substituted their 'keepers for the tie-breakers and with Joseph Afusi bringing on first-choice keeper Ziaur Rahman and Sanjay Sen bringing on Naseem Akhtar in place of Barreto.

And Nseem would become the eventual hero as he foiled the fifth shot from Linkon to keep his side in the tie before foiling Diadrul's effort to clinch the title for the Black Panthers. Ali Amusu Abdullahi was the other player for Jamal to have missed his spot-kick.

Amol, Sharmin win titles

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Amol Roy and Sharmin Alam Sharda became champions in 17th MA Jaber Memorial Tennis Tournament which concluded at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday. Amol defeated Arif Hossain in 6-1, 6-0 sets to win the men's title while Sharda beat Ishita Afroz in 4-6, 7-5, 6-4 sets to clinch the women's title.

Amol Roy and Ranjan Ram became champions in the men's doubles beating Anwar Hossain and Dipu Lal pair in 6-3, 6-1 sets in the final.

A total of 392 players participated in the tournament which had a prize-money of Tk 139,000.

Ajinkya thanks Rahul, Sachin

CRICINFO, Wellington

Ajinkya Rahane thanked his "role model" Rahul Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar after scoring a maiden Test hundred in Wellington. Rahane, playing his fifth Test, came in at No. 7 when India were still trailing New Zealand.

His century helped India finish with a first-innings lead of 246.

"I have been following him [Dravid] from my childhood," Rahane said. "He is my role model. Also Sachin paaji, because during his last two Test matches he told me about my batting."

Tigers need finishing skills

SPORTS REPORTER

That Bangladesh made an attempt to finalise their ICC World Twenty20 squad during the two-match T20 series against Sri Lanka was quite evident. Experimentation was the name of the game in the series and it saw Bangladesh give opportunities to some of the uncapped players in the side.

With the world cup squad due to be submitted today, the main question will be whether any of these inexperienced players will make the final cut.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed's statement on the series does not provide much insight. "The series has shown that there's plenty to think about. As a unit they played well. In my opinion this series was a good confident-booster ahead of the world cup."

Mithun Ali, Arafat Sunny, Sabbir Rahman and Forhad Reza were some of the lesser-known players who were drafted in for the series and of all of them it seems as though slow-left armer Sunny is the likeliest of the lot to make it through.

Sabbir did play a mature innings in the second T20I, but whether his style of play suited that of a T20 specialist will be a question for the selectors.

On the whole, both matches of the series could have gone either way. It was after all one ball that separated the teams on both occasions. However, the one thing that the series has proven is that the hosts are yet to learn how to control their aggression in this format of the game; an aspect which is necessary for them to be able to finish games.

The foremost weakness was that none of the batsmen, except for Anamul Haque, managed to carry their innings in either of the matches. There were plenty of sixes and fours, but their inability to stay at the wicket was something that hurt them badly.

Had any of Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal or Shamsur Rahman stayed with Anamul in the first T20I, the match could probably have been over with a couple of overs remaining.

The problem resurfaced in the second match. After losing two early wickets, Shakib and Anamul smacked 32 runs off the next ten balls and put pressure on the visitors. However, instead of staying there and building on the advantage, the batsmen continued on all-out attack, a tactic that very rarely yields anything positive.

In the end, the series result pointed towards a problem that Bangladesh's T20 captains -- both Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Mushfiqur Rahim -- have spoken of in the past: the inability to finish matches when given the opportunity.

Bangladesh do not have much time to learn that lesson as they play just two T20 warm-up games ahead of the World Cup, against UAE and Ireland.



A TV grab shows Ali Amisu Abdullahi hiding his face in despair after missing a penalty that started the end for Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club in the 118th IFA Shield final against Kolkata Mohammedan Sporting Club at the Salt Lake Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Mushfiqur back at the helm

Arafat Sunny earns call-up

SPORTS REPORTER



Mushfiqur Rahim recovered from his finger injury

to lead the team in the three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka as the national selectors included him in the 15-member squad announced yesterday, which also included uncapped left-arm spinner Arafat Sunny. The matches will take place at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on February 17, 20 and 22.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed however informed that Mushfiqur was still unsure about whether he can perform the additional duty of keeping wickets. "As per the latest update there is a little problem with regards to his keeping and therefore

there is uncertainty about him keeping, but he is fit to bat," said Faruque on the latest injury update of Mushfiqur, who had missed the two T20I matches due to a finger injury suffered during the second Test at Chittagong.

Left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal was retained as vice-captain for the series even though he resigned from the post after the board appointed Mashrafe Bin Mortaza as captain for the T20I series in Mushfiqur's absence.

Faruque was not in a position to comment on this issue but when contacted, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon told the Daily Star that: "While he did resign, his resignation has not been accepted. As of this series Tamim Iqbal will remain as vice-captain. However, whether he will remain vice captain for the

World Cup or not has not been confirmed as yet. We have various plans for the World Cup."

Meanwhile, the only major change in the squad was the inclusion of Arafat Sunny, who came as replacement for another left-arm spinner and leading Bangladesh ODI wicket-taker Abdur Razzak, who is yet to recover from the left hamstring injury he suffered during the first innings of the second Test in Chittagong two weeks ago.

A proven performer in domestic cricket, Sunny made an impressive debut in the T20I series against Sri Lanka which helped him earn the call-up.

Anamul Haque batted well in the T20I series to retain his place and he may stand behind the stumps while Naeem Islam, who was not part of the Test and T20 series, was also kept in the team as the right-hander had

made two half-centuries in the last ODI series against New Zealand at home and has some runs under his belt in the domestic competitions.

Shafiqul Islam has also returned to the team after recovering from a ligament tear in his ankle which suffered ahead of the first ODI against New Zealand in October. He has replaced Ziaur Rahman and Faruque said that the comeback of Shafiq also left them no scope for a place for all-rounder Forhad Reza, who had hardly impressed in his comeback series in Chittagong.

SQUAD

Mushfiqur Rahim (captain), Tamim Iqbal (vice captain), Anamul Haque, Shamsur Rahman, Mominul Haque, Shakib Al Hasan, Nasir Hossain, Mahmudullah Riyad, Shohag Gazi, Arafat Sunny, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Rubel Hossain, Al-Amin Hossain, Naeem Islam and Shafiqul Islam.

Sylhet crush Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

A brittle batting performance from Dhaka led them to a crushing nine-wicket defeat to Sylhet on the third day of the National Cricket League's third-round matches at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday. After scoring 100 in the first innings, Dhaka were bowled out for 269 yesterday. Sylhet, following their 356 in the first innings, required just 14 runs to win and reached their target with ease yesterday.

Fazle Rabbi's 121 helped Sylhet to post 249 from their over night score of a 109 for 2 against Dhaka Metro at Fatullah. In reply, Metro reached stumps at 106 for 4 and with a lead of 257 runs. The third day's play between Khulna and Chittagong at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra and Rajshahi and Rangpur at the Cricket Garden in Rangpur were abandoned due to unplayable conditions at the venues, caused mainly due to overnight rainfall.

SCORES IN brief

DHAKA DIVISION: 100 and 269 all out in 85 overs (Rokibul 54; Jayed 4-82, Nasim 4-60)

SYLHET: 356 and 14 for 1 (Rumman 6; Nurul 1-3)

Result: Sylhet won by nine wickets.

DHAKA METRO: 400-9 dec and 106 for 4 (Elias Sunny 31; Islamul Ahsan 3-22)

BARISAL: 249 for 9 (Fazle 121, Iftekhar 70; Bakher 5-25)

KHULNA: 265

CHITTAGONG: 309-4 dec and 98-5

RAJSHAHI: 273 and 98-5

RANGPUR: 101-9