

## Taijul draws first blood

SPORTS REPORTER



A wicket-hungry Taijul Islam saved his best bowling performance for last as his versatile slow left-armers earned the North Zone spinner a career-best eight for 86 in the first innings of the final of the Bangladesh Cricket League against South Zone at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

With Taijul drawing first blood, it remains to be seen whether his effort will be enough to counter Abdur Razzak in a match that has been dubbed as a battle between the slow-left armers.

His unflagging effort to constantly land the ball along the nagging corridor -- just like he did in the lead up to the finals -- paid majestic rewards on a wicket that barely offered any assistance for the bowlers, as Taijul himself said at the end of the day. "It was a good batting wicket, but I feel that the batsmen tried to do a little too much and that is why most of them fell," said Taijul.

After being asked to bat in sultry conditions, with temperatures hovering around the 40-degree mark, South Zone opens Imrul Kayes and Anamul Haque comfortably negotiated the pacers and put on 44 runs in the first 14 overs.

Taijul's introduction in the 14th over however changed the scenario of the game as he sent both Imrul and Anamul back to the pavilion in his first four overs. North Zone captain Nasir Hossain stuck to his trump card for another ten overs and it paid off as Taijul then got Mithun Ali caught in the 28th over.

An 89-run stand between Soumya Sarker and Shuvagata Hom Chowdhury brought the Southerners back into the game as the pair took the side from 91 for 3 to 180. After Soumya retired hurt in the 47th over, Taijul was brought back to put pressure on the new batsman. He first got the set Shuvagata caught at mid-wicket in the 58th over and then dispatched Taiabur Parvez, who attempted a sweep and was caught at silly mid-on.

The wickets column saw a new name in the next over as another slow-left armer, Sanjamul Islam, bowled Shohag Gazi who attempted an off-drive.

Taijul, who was bowling non-stop from the 50th over, got rid of Abdur Razzak, Soumya -- who returned later in the day -- and Al-Amin by the 82nd over to complete his eight-wicket haul.

A seemingly calm player on the field, there were not much celebrations. With a string of slow-left armers in Bangladesh's domestic cricket Taijul knew that he has a long way to go before achieving his dream of playing for the national team. Speaking to reporters after the game, Taijul emphasised on the importance of concentration.

"I don't know if I am any different to the other slow left armers but I do know that I work very hard and concentrate a lot. I have not tried to do anything different in the last few matches but just keep my focus," said Taijul.

The national selectors were impressed by the slow left-armer.

"He is a lot more conventional and different from the others. Most of our slow left-armers tend to bowl fast, but he has a loop and can vary his deliveries. Let's see what happens in the future," said national selector Habibur Bashar.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

PRIME BANK SOUTH ZONE: 271 all out in 83 overs



THE STAR OF THE DAY: North Zone's Taijul Islam (C) raises his arms in celebration after scalping a career-best 8 for 86 in the first innings of the Bangladesh Cricket League final against South Zone at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Nadal storms into last four

Sharapova sails, Serena withdraws

AFP, Madrid



World number one Rafael Nadal stormed into the semifinals of the Madrid Masters on Friday with his 17th consecutive win over Tomas Berdych, 6-4, 6-2.

Maria Sharapova also booked her place in the last four of the Madrid Open with a three-set win over Li Na, but top seed and reigning champion Serena Williams was forced to pull out of the tournament due to a thigh injury.

Despite coming into the tournament with doubts following surprise defeats to David Ferrer and Nicolas Pietrangeli in recent weeks, Nadal has looked in fine form in the Spanish capital as he has cruised into the last four without the loss of a set.

The 13-time Grand Slam champion will meet compatriot Roberto Bautista Agut or Colombia's Santiago Giraldo

on Saturday for a place in the final.

Williams was due to face Petra Kvitova in the quarter-finals but pulled out due to a thigh injury she had been carrying since sweeping aside Swiss teenager Belinda Bencic in the first round on Sunday.

"I have a left thigh injury and, unfortunately, have to withdraw from this year's Madrid Open," said Williams.

"It happened during my first round match. It started to get better, but most importantly right now, I just need some time to rest and recover.

"It's beyond words. It's so frustrating."

However, the American insisted that she will try to defend her title at the Italian Open in Rome next week.

"I am planning to play in Rome. Fortunately, I have a bye next week so will have an extra day of rest.

"For now, I will take it one day at a time and take advantage of some

extra rest."

Sharapova has been beaten by Williams in Madrid in the last two years, including in the 2013 final, and the Russian is now the favourite to clinch her first title in the Spanish capital as she edged a thrilling match against second seed Li 2-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3.

"I will say the match was very close. I think it really could have gone her way today," admitted Sharapova.

"It was just a matter of a few points in the second set and in the third, although I was up a break throughout the third set, you know she's not going to let go. I didn't win the match until the last point was played."

Li looked on course for the semifinals when she broke to lead 4-3 in the second set.

However, Sharapova broke back immediately and, despite needing four set points, finally forced the match into a deciding set when Li netted at 5-6 down in the tie-break.

## Punjab outclass Bangalore

STAR SPORT DESK



Kings XI Punjab continued their winning ways by inflicting a 32-run defeat on Royal Challengers Bangalore in their IPL encounter at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

Chasing Punjab's formidable 198, only AB de Villiers with a 26-ball 53 seemed up for the challenge. The match was effectively over when de Villiers, who hit five sixes and one four, was seventh out at 125 in the 16th over.

Earlier, Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli chose to field but the Punjab batsmen stayed true to their explosive ways -- while David Miller smashed 66 the likes of Virender Sehwag, Mandeep Singh and Glenn Maxwell all chipped in with swashbuckling cameos. After the latter trio took the score to 93 for three in just 8.5 overs, Miller stole the show by hitting eight fours and three sixes in his 29-ball innings. After his departure, Wriddhiman Saha and Mitchell Johnson carried the score to an imposing 198 for eight.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

PUNJAB: 198 for 8 (Miller 66, Sehwag 30, Maxwell 25; Chahal 2-23). BANGALORE: 166 for 9 (de Villiers 53, Starc 29; Sandeep 3-25, Shivam 2-23). Result: Punjab won by 32 runs.



Disha Sultana (L) and Ashrafuzzaman of BKSP celebrate after becoming the fastest girl and boy in the Walton 30th National Junior Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

### NAT'L JR ATHLETICS

## BKSP rule the roost

SPORTS REPORTER

Ashrafuzzaman and Disha Sultana from Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) became the fastest boy and girl respectively in the Walton 30th National Junior Athletics Championships which got underway at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Ashrafuzzaman clocked 10.70 seconds to put behind his teammate Irfan (10.30 seconds) to win the gold medal in boys' 100m sprint while Disha took 13.20 seconds to beat her teammate Tanjira Akter (13.52 seconds) to win the gold medal in girls' 100m sprint under the floodlight at the big bowl.

In the 200m sprint for youth (female), BKSP's Tamanna Akter won the gold medal after timing 26.80 seconds while her nearest rival Sabiha Al Sohra from Khulna DSA clocked 28.68 seconds to win silver

medal.

BKSP dominated the first day of two-day meet by bagging five gold with Tahmina Akter and Smriti Khantun winning gold in girls' shot-put and high jump while Khulna were in second position with two gold medals.

However, Nawshad from Narayanganj stole the show on the first day by winning gold in the long-jump after clearing 7.01 metres in his first appearance in the national meet as he came in to take part meet with a three-day practice.

"If I am provided better training facilities, I believe I can take my performance to international level," said Nawshad adding that he himself prepared his practice zone before coming here in Dhaka.

The class XII student though slammed the federation for arranging the national meet amid scorching heat in summer. He believes he could have rewritten the junior record in long jump had the meet been

## ICC defends ACSU work

AFP, Aberdeen

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has defended the work of its anti-corruption and security unit, despite announcing a review into how the sport cracks down on fixing.

A report in Britain's Daily Telegraph on Tuesday said the ACSU, which does not have the powers of a law-enforcement agency, would be the first "victim" of the restructuring of the ICC following a shake-up of the global governing body led by the 'big three' nations of India, Australia and England.

During its 14 years in existence, the ACSU -- reported to cost \$5.5 million dollars (£3.25 million) per year to run -- has not been directly responsible for uncovering a major case of corruption at a time when cricket has been trying to combat the threat to its integrity posed by match and spot-fixing.

Now there are suggestions the unit, which is headed by former senior British police officer Ronnie Flanagan and employs seven regional around the world, as well as staff in the United Arab Emirates, will be replaced by investigation boards in individual countries as these are better able to liaise with national police forces.

## BRAZIL 1950

### Heartbreak for hosts

The first truly peacetime World Cup in twenty years had its parallels with the previous one. Held in South America, only thirteen teams taking part, a league system and a strong host team. There was no provision for an actual final -- but one materialised all the same, and perhaps the most eviscerating of all.

The qualifying competition turned into something of a travesty with teams qualifying then withdrawing. India withdrew because FIFA would not let them play in bare feet. Uruguay were back in the fold but having a mixed year and Argentina pulled out yet again. France too turned down an invitation, as did Turkey while Germans were still banned by FIFA. So only 13 teams participated in the final tournament.

England, who arrived as one of the favourites, were stunned 1-0 by the United States and never recovered, losing again to Spain and exiting the tournament in miserable fashion.

Another first round surprise was the failure of holders Italy to progress, although they had been crippled by the loss of 18 players from the great Torino team killed when their plane, travelling from Lisbon, ploughed into the Superga church near Turin.

The hosts satisfied their eager supporters and finished top of a challenging group that featured Yugoslavia, Mexico and Switzerland, while Spain, Sweden and Uruguay (whose only first round opponent was Bolivia) also advanced to the final group phase.

Brazil hit 13 goals in their next two matches, many of them scored by Ademir and Chico. The winner of the title would be decided in the final match between Brazil and Uruguay.

Brazil, in front of the biggest crowd ever at the iconic Maracana Stadium to watch a football match, were overwhelming favourites needing only a draw to clinch the title but there were signs and omens. The 1930 champions were made of stern stuff however and held firm in the face of relentless early Brazil pressure.

The first goal did not arrive until after half time. With the Uruguayan defence drawn to the left, Ademir's reverse pass sent Friaca clear on the right and he scored with a bobbling cross shot that Maspoli might have stopped. It was pandemonium as the whole stadium



PHOTO: DAILY STAR ARCHIVE

Brazil goalkeeper Barbosa is beaten on his near post by Uruguay striker Ghiggia as the hosts are beaten 2-1 and Uruguay take the Jules Rimet trophy home.

erupted.

Stunned into action, Juan Alberto Schiaffino of Uruguay then silenced the crowd with a blistering shot that gave Barbosa no chance and levelled the scores with 24 minutes left. The moment was described by Brazil coach Flavio Costa as-- "Silence in the Marcana" as the whole stadium was shocked into quiet.

The visitors could now sense victory and surged forward in search of the winner, which arrived in the 81st minute. Ghiggia worked a one-two with Perez down the right side and when he finished his run with a powerful shot to beat Brazil goalkeeper Barbosa, who was out-of-position and expecting cross instead. The whole of Brazil went into mourning.

Uruguay though, went into wild celebrations and were world champions twenty years after their initial triumph.

### FACTS & FIGURES

Winners: Uruguay  
Runners-up: Brazil  
Leading Scorer: Marques Ademir (BRA)--7  
Teams: 13  
Matches: 22  
Goals: 88  
Attendance: 1,043,500