

BFF sells BNS for concert

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) backtracked from its stance against holding any concert at the Bangabandhu National Stadium by awarding the Zero Entertainment, an event management company, the rights to hold a concert at country's premium venue in June, a time when the third phase of the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League will be going on in full-swing.

The football's governing body always raised their voice against holding any cultural and musical shows at the BNS and they even protested against holding the Celebration Concert at the BNS ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup organised by the Bangladesh Cricket Board.

Asked whether the decision to allow holding concerts was against the principle of the game's governing body, BFF senior vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy said, "It is not a matter of principle. We are going to hold it for our necessity to raise fund for the development of football."

The rights to hold the concert was sold to the Zero Entertainment for Tk 2.5 crore and the event management company will have to stage the programme within June.

"Holding the concert in June will not affect the league as most of the matches at that time will be played outside of Dhaka in the three venues – Feni, Gopalganj and Chittagong," claimed BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag.



Muktiyoddha Sangsad and Brothers Union players jostle for possession during their match of the Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The match ended in a 1-1 draw.

PHOTO: STAR

Ten-man Sk Jamal hold Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



Ten-man Sheikh Jamal DC played out a goalless draw against Abahani at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday to keep their six-point lead at the top of the Nitol Tata Bangladesh Premier League.

Sheikh Jamal showed their fighting attitude despite being reduced to 10 men in the 60th minute and they seemed satisfied with the stalemate, which kept them six points clear of their nearest rivals Abahani, having 38 points from 16 outings.

The tie was important for four-time champions Abahani to close the gap with the league leaders but the Sky Blues never looked to have the killer punch, and on the

contrary, survived from conceding on three occasions.

Despite missing the league's highest-scorer Emeke Darlington, Sheikh Jamal launched some good attacks but it was Abahani goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel who kept Abahani in the game by thwarting two close range efforts and was lucky not to have conceded when he was beaten by Sony Norde.

Wedson Anselme came close to giving Sheikh Jamal the lead in the 15th minute when he availed a fumble from Abahani defender Mofazzal Hossain Saikat to step into the danger zone but his low drive at the near post was nicely parried away by Sohel, who later tipped over a close-range header from Nigerian Wasio Afis four minutes into the second half.

In the 56th minute, Sony ran in to a

through-pass from Wedson and curled the ball at the far post but it narrowly missed the target with goalkeeper Sohel beaten.

Four minutes later, Sheikh Jamal were reduced to ten men when right-back Linkon unnecessarily charged Atiqur Rahman Meshu.

Nigerian coach Joseph Afusi strengthened the defence sending on Yeasin in place of Sohel Rana and his fortified defence held on comfortably for a draw.

Meanwhile, Brothers Union's winning steak came to an end when they surrendered an early lead to play out a 1-1 draw against Muktiyoddha Sangsad in the day's first match.

Brothers, who came into the match with four successive wins, went ahead in the sixth minute through a strike from Haitian forward Augustine Walson

before Muktiyoddha's Nigerian striker Sunday Chizoba levelled the margin from a spot-kick on the half-hour mark after he was brought downy Yusuf Issah inside the box.

However, like the previous match, Brothers showed their unprofessional attitude regarding the penalty decision and forced the match to a halt for a few minutes before coming back to the game. After resumption, Muktiyoddha created better chances than Brothers but the failure of their forwards and sending-off of Gerald Ledoux in the 81st minute left Muktiyoddha with their third draw in 15 matches.

With fifth draw in 16 matches, Brothers joined third-placed Mohammedan with 26 points even though the Black and Whites played a match less than the All Oranges.

Papon may not name coach's name today

SPORTS REPORTER



As promised by Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon three days ago, the name of the new head coach for the Tigers is supposed to be disclosed today. But he may take a little longer before naming the name -- in all probability it will be former Sri Lanka Test batsman Chandika Hathurusingha -- as the board has yet to complete the necessary paper works in this regard.

It's now all but confirmed that the BCB has reached successful negotiations with the 45-year-old coach, who is now working in Australia as an assistant coach of New South Wales, and is currently going into details of the final terms and conditions.

When asked if there was any chance to reveal the names of the new head coach and the other supporting staff of the national cricket team, almost every one of the board high-ups said that chances were slim to make the name public today. The weekend was one of the reasons behind the delay, said an official.

Since the sudden departure of Shane Jurgensen, the most talked about issue in the cricketing arena has been who is going to take over the helm of the Tigers. The board has been desperately searching for a new coach as the Tigers' next international assignment is against India at home next month and, what is more important is that the next World Cup is only a few months away.

Siddikur finishes second

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's golfing icon Siddikur Rahman stormed into second-place finish in the ICTSI Philippine Open after returning a card of three-under (69) in the fourth and final round yesterday. The two-time Asian Tour winner, who started the day on joint eighth position, brought himself into contention for a third title when he birdied holes two, three and seven, but blew up his chances returned with 11 straight pars at the challenging Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

However, it was a good performance from the 29-year-old who failed to make the cut in his previous two events.

"I'm very happy with my round because it was bogey-free. I'm not happy with my putting but I still managed to escape from making errors. I was confident I could win this event but I didn't putt too well on the second and third day. This is all part of golf and we learn from it," said Siddikur, who aggregated four-under (184), two shots behind eventual winner Marcus Both of Australia.

Siddikur shared the second position with Nathan Holman of Australia, Armond Vongvanij of Thailand and Philippines' Antonio Lascuna and Jay Bayron.

The other Bangladeshi participant, Jamal Hossain Mollah, finished on 62nd position with a 16-under (304).

ENGLAND 1966

Eusebio: The Black Panther

Long before Luis Figo and Cristiano Ronaldo, Portugal had a true World Cup hero. Eusebio da Silva Ferreira, who scored nine goals in the 1966 World Cup and took his side almost single-handedly to the semifinals and to a third-place finish. An extraordinary athlete, from Portuguese colony Mozambique, he was perhaps the first African to truly star at a World Cup.

Eusebio began his playing career with his local club, Sporting Club Lourenco Marques, but by the age of 18, word of his prodigious talent had reached the big clubs in Portugal, provoking a fierce bidding war between Lisbon rivals Benfica and Sporting for his signature. So fierce, in fact, that as the wrangling went on, he was forced to flee Lisbon for a tiny Algarve village. When the dust settled, Eusebio was a Benfica player.

A powerful striker blessed with exceptional acceleration and ball-striking abilities, Eusebio was known for his slippery 'cat-like' dribbles, perfected in the street games of his childhood. In only his second outing for the Benfica senior side, he struck a hatrick against a Santos side featuring another exalted youngster by the name of Pele.

They were the first in a long line of goals for the Eagles -- in all he would score a phenomenal 320 in 313 Portuguese league matches. Such was Eusebio's impact that in 1962, at the age of 20, he proved the chief inspiration behind Benfica's European Cup triumph over Alfredo Di Stefano's imperious Real Madrid, scoring twice as the Portuguese champions prevailed 5-3.

Although he was a well-known figure in European football, it was his 1966 World Cup exploits that turned him into a global icon. He scored twice in a 3-1 victory over Brazil, which knocked the reigning world champions out of the tournament.

Portugal's reliance on Eusebio was



PHOTO: DAILY STAR ARCHIVE

Eusebio was an absolute legend for both Benfica and his adopted country Portugal.

revealed by his contribution to their quarterfinal with North Korea at Goodison Park. The Koreans, who had already stunned the world in their 1-0 defeat of Italy, stormed to a 3-0 lead. It took Eusebio at his finest to haul Portugal back. He scored four goals in an eventual 5-3 victory; it is remembered as his finest performance for the national team.

Perhaps worn out by previous efforts, Portugal lost 2-1 at Wembley to England in the semifinal, with Eusebio grabbing only a consolation penalty. Nevertheless, he departed the tournament remembered not just for his goals, but a unique brand of sportsmanship.

An enduring icon and symbol of loyalty and pride in his adopted country, Eusebio served Benfica for a decade and a half, winning eleven league titles with the Eagles, before taking up the offer of a golden swansong in the USA. The Portuguese legend scored 41 goals in 64 appearances for his adopted country and twice won the European player-of-the-year award.

Portugal will never forget the favourite son, whose death in January this year led to its government declaring three days of mourning.

Kolkata, Bangalore stay in race

SPORTS DESK



Kolkata Knight Riders were firmly on course of a top-four finish in the Indian Premier League when they pulled off a 7-wicket win against hosts Sunrisers Hyderabad at Rajib Gandhi International Stadium yesterday.

Chasing a competitive Hyderabad total of 142-8, Kolkata were in need of ten runs in the final over which Ryan ten Doeschete clobbered in style, hitting the second ball for a six over extra-cover and then smashing the fourth ball past the bowler for four.

The victory improved Kolkata's tally to 12 points, two adrift of third placed Rajasthan Royals, with three games still to be played before the four-team playoffs. Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan took two important wickets for Kolkata but it was paceman Umesh Yadav, who grabbed the player-of-the-match award for claiming three wick-

ets for 24 runs in his four overs.

Earlier, Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) made a stunning late flourish after initial struggle with AB de Villiers playing a cameo of 14-ball 28 to pull off a five-wicket victory over Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in a thrilling IPL match in Ranchi.

Chasing 139 for a win, Bangalore found the going tough with the Chennai slow bowlers seemingly tying them into knots in the first half of their innings before exploding towards the end to overhaul the target with one ball to spare in a low-scoring match that went down the wire.

Chennai captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni used his four slow bowlers - R Ashwin (2/16), Suresh Raina (0/20), Ravindra Jadeja (0/31) and Samuel Badree (0/15) — for long spells and, as they were getting the turn on JSCA International Stadium, Bangalore struggled to reach 45 for one at the halfway mark.

Opener Chris Gayle, who top-

scored for Bangalore with an uncharacteristic 50-ball 46, played and missed several times but to his credit he stayed at the crease. Bangalore, however, had wickets in their hands so that they can go all out in the last five overs.

With Sunday's win, Bangalore jumped to fifth place with 10 points from 11 matches.

SCORES IN BRIEF

CHENNAI: 138-4 in 20 overs (Raina 62 not out, D Hussey 25; Aaron 2-29).

BANGALORE: 142-5 in 19.5 overs (Gayle 46, Kohli 27, De Villiers 28; Ashwin 2-16, D Hussey 2-38).

Result: Bangalore won by 5 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: AB de Villiers.

HYDERABAD: 142-8 in 20 overs (Warner 32, Irfan 23 not out, Ojha 22; Umesh 3-26, Shakib 2-22)

KOLKATA: 146-3 in 19.4 overs (Uthappa 40, Yusuf 39 not out, Ten Doeschate 25 not out)

Result: Kolkata won by 7 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Umesh Yadav

Serena's 2nd in a row

AFP, Rome



World number one Serena Williams warmed up for the French Open by cruising to her second straight Rome Masters title on Sunday with a 6-3, 6-0 win over Sara Errani of Italy.

Errani had been looking to become the first Italian winner of the women's event in 29 years.

But with six previous defeats to her American rival, her bid was always going to be difficult and was hampered after she picked up a thigh injury at the end of the first set.

Despite plenty of support from a partisan crowd on Central Court, Errani was overwhelmed by the power of the 32-year-old Florida resident.

Williams broke Errani in the second game of the first set and although the 10th seed came back to break in the seventh game, she failed to hold serve in the next, allowing the American to serve out for the set.

Errani appeared to have injured her leg when she failed to go for a Williams return which allowed the defending French Open champion to break for a 5-3 lead.



PHOTO: AFP

An elated Serena Williams of the US poses with the winner's trophy after beating Sara Errani of Italy in the Rome Masters final yesterday. Serena won 6-3, 6-0.