

Mohammedan on track for 3rd place

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan SC tasted their first triumph in five matches of the Nitol Tata Bangladesh Premier League when the visitors handed a 2-0 defeat to hosts Chittagong Abahani at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Towhidul Alam Sabuz put the Black and Whites ahead in the sixth minute before Wahed Ahmed doubled the lead on the half-hour mark and ensured Mohammedan's first win in five matches following their 2-1 defeat to Sheikh Russel KC, and draws against Sheikh Jamal, Abahani and Team BJMC.

The emphatic win helped Mohammedan topple Muktijoddha Sangsad to take the third position in the 10-team table with 41 points from 25 matches while Chittagong Abahani, who suffered their second successive defeat after their three straight wins, remained at eighth place with 22 points from 25 matches.



England's Moeen Ali (L) celebrates taking the wicket of Stuart Binny of India with teammate Joe Root on the fifth day of the first Test at Trent Bridge on Sunday.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

First Test ends in a draw

AFP, Nottingham

India debutant Stuart Binny's maiden fifty made sure of a draw with England in the first Test at Trent Bridge on Sunday.

On a docile pitch, a draw had always seemed the most likely outcome and so it proved as the first of this five-match series ended in stalemate ahead of Thursday's second Test at Lord's.

A draw had all but been assured after England's Joe Root (154 not out) and James Anderson (81) shared a Test record tenth-wicket stand of 198, eclipsing the 111 put on earlier in the match by India's last-wicket pair of Kumar and Mohammed Shami (51 not out).

This result extended England's winless run to nine Tests -- their worst sequence since they went 10 without victory from 1992 to 1993 -- and meant India had now gone 15 Tests without an away win.

The match was an all-round triumph for 24-year-old India seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar who posted three

Test-best performances in making 58 and 63 not out separated by a return of five for 82.

"It was a good Test match for us, we managed to put pressure on them and then we held up well when we were under pressure," said India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

"We haven't had a seaming all-rounder but Stuart Binny can be someone who can really contribute for us in the future."

Reflecting on England's extraordinary last-wicket stand, Dhoni added: "We tried a few things but the ball got soft and the bowlers got tired and I don't think there was much else we could have done."

England captain Alastair Cook said he hoped for pitches with more in them for the pace bowlers during the remainder of the series.

"We know we can put India under some pressure when we bat and we know we can put their top order under pressure. We just need a pitch with a bit of life in it."

After India resumed on 167 for three in overcast conditions on Sunday, they

lost three wickets for 16 runs to give England a glimmer of hope.

Stuart Broad, on his Nottinghamshire home ground, sparked the slump by taking two for no runs in five balls.

Broad, who had been severely critical of the sluggish wicket, had Virat Kohli, aiming across the line, plumb lbw for his overnight eight.

The fast-medium bowler then induced Ajinkya Rahane (24) to edge straight to wicketkeeper Matt Prior.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 457 (Vijay 146, Dhoni 82, Kumar 58, Shami 51 not out; Anderson 3-123)

ENGLAND: First innings 496 (Robson 59, Ballance 71, Bell 25, Root 154 not out, Broad 47, Anderson 81; Kumar 5-82, Shami 2-128, Sharma 3-150)

INDIA: Second innings 391 for 9 decl (Vijay 52, Dhawan 29, Pujara 55, Rahane 24, Jadeja 31, Binny 78, Kumar 63 not out; Broad 2-50, Plunkett 2-85, Moeen 3-105)

Result: Match drawn.

Player-of-the-match: James Anderson.

The A-Z of the Cup

REUTERS, Brasilia



A - Abysmal Asia

The continent's four teams failed to grab a win in Brazil, the first time Asia has gone without a victory at a World Cup since 1990 when United Arab Emirates and South Korea each lost all three group games. Australia, Korea, Japan and Iran managed only three draws between them and all finished bottom of their respective groups.

B - Bite

Uruguay forward Luis Suarez was slapped with a World Cup record four month ban from football and suspended for nine international matches after sinking his teeth into the shoulder of Italy's Giorgio Chiellini. Suarez initially denied the bite, before backtracking and apologising after FIFA's punishment.

The fallout made it one of the most talked about incidents in Brazil, with everyone from pundits to presidents offering their opinion.

C - Cash

Ghana's players wanted their appearance fees for playing in the World Cup right away so President John Mahama flew millions of dollars to Brasilia in order to appease the squad hours before their make-or-break clash with Portugal. Pictured kissing the stacks of cash upon its arrival, Ghana's players lost to the Portuguese and exited at the group stage.

D - Dilma

The on-field action in Brazil was amongst the best ever but the problems surrounding the organisation of the tournament were not forgotten. Brazil President Dilma Rousseff, along with FIFA boss Sepp Blatter, were routinely booed when shown in the crowd at matches, with many Brazilians angered by their government's extravagant World Cup spending of more than 11 billion dollars at a time when the country's economy is sagging and public services are in dire need of investment.

E - Embarrassment

A World Cup record defeat, a first loss in a competitive home match in 39 years, it was not meant to end like this for pre-tournament favourites Brazil. The 7-1 semifinal mauling suffered in Belo Horizonte at the hands of Germany plunged a nation into mourning and quickly led to calls for an overhaul of the domestic game.

F - Fans

The empty stadiums of the South African World Cup four years ago were never going to be repeated with fans flocking from all over the world to watch the action in Brazil.

The majority seemed to come from Argentina, Chile and Colombia. Brazilians also turned out en masse to grab a glimpse of any of the 32 competitors making the 2014 tournament the second most popular in history based on average attendances.

G - Goals, goals and goals

The group stages were full of them. The knockout stages less so but still the attacking mindset of the 32 teams resulted in 167 goals prior to the final two matches. Four short of the record 171 scored in France in 1998.

H - Hands of Howard

United States goalkeeper Tim Howard made a World Cup record 16 saves in their last-16 clash with Belgium. It was not enough, though, as Belgium prevailed 2-1 in extra time.

I - Invasions

Fans managed to escape security and run on to the pitch in the group match between Germany and Ghana and the last-16 clash involving the United

States and Belgium, while an estimated 200 Chilean fans burst into the media centre at the Maracana Stadium before their win over Spain.

J - James Rodriguez

The baby-faced Colombian attacker made himself a household name all over the world after his brilliant displays and six goals in their run to a first quarterfinal appearance. A mazy run and dinked effort against Japan was bettered by a sensational chest, swivel and volley from 25 metres in the last-16 win over Uruguay.

K - Klose

The ageing Miroslav Klose scored his 16th World Cup goal to surpass former Brazil striker Ronaldo's record of 15. The German striker, who drew level with Ronaldo with an effort against Ghana in group play, took the record by scoring the second in the 7-1 thrashing of Brazil in the semifinal.

L - Lotto

The relatively small Italian kit maker managed to muscle out some of the major brands in Brazil thanks to Costa Rica's unlikely run to a first quarterfinal.

Sales of the Ticos' shirt rose 20-fold after they topped Group D by beating Uruguay and Italy and then edging Greece on penalties in the last 16.

M - Memes

Social media and the World Cup were as intertwined like never before. After Arjen Robben's theatrics led to a late penalty against Mexico in the round of 16, fans posted various memes of the Dutch winger lifting an Oscar for Best Actor, competing in Olympic diving, and plunging arms-flailing off the cliffs of Acapulco. Uruguay striker Suarez also received the same treatment after his bite, with pictures posted depicting him wearing a dog-cone round his neck, a Dracula outfit, or a Hannibal Lecter mask.

N - Neymar

It was all going so well for the Brazilian number 10 who delivered four goals in four games under the huge weight of expectation from a nation demanding a sixth World Cup win and first on home soil. But his tournament ended at the last-eight stage when he suffered a cracked vertebra after a heavy challenge against the Colombians. His injury led to his team mates wearing 'Forza Neymar' caps before the semifinal with defender David Luiz holding aloft the striker's number 10 shirt before kick off. It did them no good, though, as Germany smashed them 7-1.

O - Oldest

Colombian goalkeeper Faryd Mondragon became the oldest player to take part in a World Cup when the 43-year-old came off the bench in the South Americans' 4-1 win over Japan in Group C.

P - Penalties

A record-equalling four matches were settled by penalties in Brazil with Costa Rican enjoying the ecstasy of winning a shootout against Greece to make a first quarterfinal only to lose to the Dutch the same way. Keylor Navas was arguably the goalkeeper of the tournament for Costa Rica but he could not match the two saves by Dutch shootout specialist, Tim Krul, who came on specifically for the spot-kicks as the Europeans advanced.

Q - Queen kiss

Mario Balotelli, whose goal helped Italy beat England, said he would aid out his beaten foe by delivering a victory against Costa Rica in their next match. All the striker wanted in a return was a kiss from the British monarch for his efforts.

Unfortunately, the former Manchester City striker failed to keep up his end of the bargain as Italy lost

the match and England were eliminated.

R - Recife rain

Torrential rain in the north-eastern Brazilian city led to talk of the Group G decider between the US and Germany being postponed. Long tailbacks were seen on roads leading to the Pernambuco arena on the outskirts of the city with fans wading through waste-deep water to watch the game which Germany won.

Pre-match warm-ups for both teams were disrupted because of concerns about the pitch, with players forced to sprint and stretch behind the goal-lines in order to preserve the surface.

S - Spain

They arrived in Brazil with ambitions of successfully defending the title they won four years ago and winning a fourth consecutive major championship, but exited the World Cup embarrassingly early following a 5-1 defeat by the Dutch and a 2-0 loss to Chile in their opening matches.

T - Technology

Goal-line technology made its World Cup debut with France the first team to be indebted to it when Honduran goalkeeper Noel Valladares knocked a rebound from the crossbar over the line before scrambling it clear. Once upon a time Valladares would have got away with it but thanks to German company GoalControl that will no longer be the case.

U - Under arrest

A Rio court approved the detention of a chief executive of a Swiss hospitality company and 10 other suspects, who are believed to have run a scalping ring for World Cup tickets originally allocated to soccer federations and other VIPs.

Ray Whelan, of MATCH Services, was briefly arrested earlier in the week and released pending a court order. MATCH, which has denied any wrongdoing, is the main provider of hospitality packages for the World Cup and paid 240 million dollars for the exclusive rights to sell corporate hospitality at the 2010 World Cup and this one.

V - Vanishing spray

Another World Cup debutant in Brazil. Referees have been reaching for their canister to spray the white foam on the ground around the ball at a free kick and also 10 yards -- or 9.15 meters -- away to ensure no defenders encroach.

W - Water breaks

Searing temperatures and mid-day kick-offs caused players to wilt in the heat and FIFA approving the first water break. It came after 30 minutes in the Netherlands' 2-1 win over Mexico in the Last 16 in Fortaleza.

X - Xherdan Shaqiri

Dubbed the 'Alpine Messi' in some quarters, the Swiss midfielder scored a hat-trick in the Group E win over Honduras. It was the 50th treble in World Cup history and the second of the tournament after Thomas Mueller's trio for Germany in their 4-0 opening win over Portugal.

Y - Yuichi Nishimura

The Japanese referee was at the centre of the first officiating controversy of the World Cup when he awarded hosts Brazil a penalty in their Group A clash with Croatia. The match was level at 1-1 when Fred hit the turf theatrically with Nishimura pointing straight to the spot and leaving Croatia coach Nico Kovac fuming.

Z - Zuniga

Colombian defender Juan Zuniga became public enemy number one in Brazil when he carelessly thrust his knee into the back of the hosts' talisman Neymar, who suffered a cracked vertebra and was ruled out of the World Cup.



Winners of The Daily Star's World Cup 'Selfie' contest pose with their prizes at the AS Mahmud Seminar Hall at The Daily Star Centre yesterday. Dressed in their favourite team's jerseys, each of the 30 winners displayed their enthusiasm throughout the footballing extravaganza by staying up late and capturing the exact moment of excitement. With the 'selfies' covering different angles of the World Cup, the photos reflected the World Cup story.

PHOTO: STAR

Thorpe's admission

AFP, Sydney

Australian swimming champion Ian Thorpe revealed he was gay in an interview Sunday and said he was now comfortable admitting it after years of denying rumours about his sexuality.

The five-time Olympic gold medallist made the revelation in an interview with British presenter Michael Parkinson aired by Australia's Channel Ten.

"I have thought about this for a long time ... I am not straight," Thorpe said.

"This is only something that very recently, in the past two weeks, that I have been comfortable with telling the closest people around me exactly that."

Thorpe, 31, said he had "wanted to come out" for some time, but didn't feel as if he could make the admission.

"I was living somewhat of a lie in my life because I was trying to be what I thought was the right athlete by other people's standards," he said.



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