

4-day match shifted

SPORTS REPORTER

The second four-day match against between Bangladesh A and Zimbabwe A which was originally scheduled to begin today at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium (KSOAS), Fatullah, has been shifted by a day and will now start on Monday, 22 September.

A press release from the BCB stated that the change to the schedule was made due to 'unavoidable circumstances'.

The dates for the first two one day matches have also been rescheduled. Accordingly, the first one dayer will now be held on 28 September instead of 27 September while the second will be on 30 September instead of 29 September.

Bangladesh A won the first four-day contest, which had taken place in Cox's Bazar, by six wickets.

Bell will miss county final

AFP, London

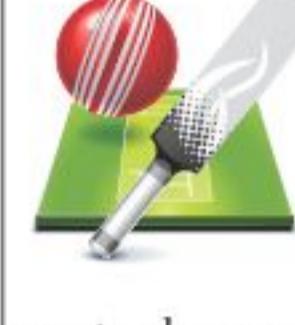
Warwickshire and England batsman Ian Bell has been ruled out of Saturday's county One-Day Cup final against Durham at Lord's, the Midlands side announced Friday.

Warwickshire native Bell, 32, who has spent his entire career with the Birmingham-based club, suffered a broken toe during net practice while on England duty earlier this month.

Dougie Brown, Warwickshire director of cricket, told the club's website on Friday: "Ian has been receiving intense treatment on his broken toe for several days, in hope that he could be fit for Lord's.

'Hard to quit when team is down'

SPORTS REPORTER



A similar scenario was in store for those who were waiting for the national cricket team at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday morning.

For the umpteenth time this year, captain Mushfiqur Rahim took the helm at the press conference; replying to each and every question with caution and patience -- gambits that he has had to adopt several times this year.

While the press meet lasted for a good eight minutes, the end result seemed a bit futile; for these were statements that the captain had been using for the last nine months.

"We could not bat up to our expectations. We started the one-day series well but could not hold on to our performance. Inconsistency was an issue. Hopefully next time we won't throw away a game after being in an advantageous position," said the captain when asked as to what went

wrong in the tour.

The 'copybook' replies came out when he was asked to pinpoint the exact areas where Bangladesh fell behind.

"There are obviously many reasons. Nobody loses just like that. We lost wickets in crucial moments, our bowlers did not get breakthroughs when required. Overall we did not successfully fulfill our duties in both the Tests and the ODIs," said Mushfiqur.

With a disastrous run for the Tigers this year and the Bangladesh Cricket Board mulling over the option of 'split-captaincy', questions regarding Mushfiqur's leadership skills were bound to be asked.

As he did so a number of times before, the captain -- instead of defending his position -- merely forwarded the matter to the board.

"That's the board's decision. They can speak best on the matter. They will do whatever is good for the team. I am not any one who can take a decision on it. They have given me the responsibility and if they want they will take it back," said the wicketkeeper-batsman.

"But it's hard to quit when the team is going through such a rough patch. My challenge will be to get this team back to the good old days and I will try my best to do that," he added.

Asked if the concept of 'split-captaincy' would relieve him of some pressure he replied: "Whether I am a captain or not, there will always be pressure if you are playing for the Bangladesh national team. So from that aspect the decision is theirs (BCB) to take. If they think that's the right way to go, then why not."

Mushfiqur's replies were in a sense aimed at balancing the act, by not providing any specific information. Unfortunately for the captain, the board does not seem to be on the same track. BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon in August had said that the board was keen on enforcing a 'split-captaincy' system.

With the Zimbabwe series less than a month away, the board does not have much time to decide. Will Mushfiqur Rahim lead the Tigers at home once again this year? Or is change imminent? Only time can tell.



LOOKING INTO A BLEAK FUTURE? A visibly demoralised Bangladesh contingent, which returned home yesterday morning after their dreadful tour of the West Indies, are on their way out of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport led by captain Mushfiqur Rahim.

PHOTO: STAR

Hockey humiliation

ANISUR RAHMAN from Incheon

The Bangladesh hockey team endured a terrible start to their Asian Games campaign when they suffered a 0-9 defeat to Japan in the Pool A opener at the Seonhak Hockey Stadium in Incheon, Korea yesterday.

It was Bangladesh's second biggest defeat, after last year's 0-9 defeat against South Korea in the Asia Cup, since Pakistani coach Naveed Alam took charge 13 months ago.

Prior to the match, Naveed had promised that Bangladesh would perform admirably against Japan, who are 17 places above Bangladesh in the world ranking. However reality was completely different as Bangladesh looked hapless throughout the match, which was a 60-minute affair divided into four sessions.

Japan took the lead in the third minute thanks to a misplaced pass from Bangladesh midfielder Sarwar Hossain and poor keeping by Ashim Gope.

Japan built up the game through the flanks with wingers Nagasawa Katsuyoshi and Sakamoto Hiroki sharing four goals among them while Tanaka Kenta came up with a hattrick to dash Bangladesh's hopes of pulling off a positive result.

After conceding the first two goals within

11 minutes, Bangladesh collapsed in all departments and goalkeeper Ashim Gope, the best performer for Bangladesh during their Asian Games Qualifiers and at the Hockey World League this year, could hardly move from his position while defence and midfield lacked communication and failed to provide anything for striking duo Pushkar Khisha Mimo and Hasan Jubair Niloy.

Bangladesh did win seven penalty corners but failed to capitalise on them, thanks to the brilliance of Japanese goalkeeper Takase Katsuya who foiled three shots from Mamunur Rahman Chayan in same fashion.

The margin could have been even bigger had substitute goalkeeper Abu Sayed Nippon not thwarted two penalty corners and three efforts from open play in the last six minutes of the game.

"It is a totally unexpected result. Conceding three goals within 15 minutes (21 minutes in fact) was the turning point of the game. Our players could not adjust to the turf and four players developed cramps," explained Naveed after the match.

"It is not a disaster because Japan are ranked 13th in the world. In my opinion, the margin could have been 5-2," said Naveed.

"Before tomorrow's (Sunday) match against Malaysia, we will be trying to gather as much information about them and I hope we will perform better than today," said Naveed.

Malinga may undergo surgery

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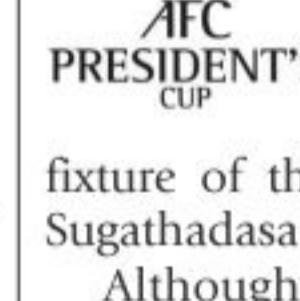
Lasith Malinga could be out of action until at least the end of the year if he goes through with surgery on a problematic left ankle, which he is currently receiving consultation on, in Australia. Malinga left for Melbourne on Saturday morning, after having experienced a significant increase in pain in his ankle while bowling.

He will see his orthopaedic on Sunday, after which a final decision on whether surgery is his best course of action will be taken. If

Malinga does undergo the arthroscopy surgery that has been suggested for him, he will be in doubt for each of Sri Lanka's limited-overs assignments until the World Cup. The normal recovery time for this surgery is 16 weeks, after which time Malinga should be able to return to full intensity at training.

Russel off the mark

SPORTS REPORTER



A 65th minute header from Nigerian striker Nkwocha Kingsley Chigozie gave Sheikh Russel Kirira Chakra a 1-0 win against FC Erichim of Mongolia in their opening fixture of the AFC President's Cup at the Sugathadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

Although pegged for much of the first half in the Group B opener, Chigozie's goal on a free-kick from Mithun Chowdhury was enough to give the debutantes a winning start to Asia's third-tier club competition.

While Sheikh Russel was under a lot of pressure in the first half, they regrouped in the second period and conquered the Mongolian challenge and the searing heat and humidity of Colombo.

"I am not satisfied with the performance despite the win. Due to the hot weather, it was difficult to play to our full potential," Sheikh Russel Zakaria Babu was quoted as saying by the AFC website.

The treble-winners of 2012-2013 season will get three day's time to regroup before they take on Rimyongsu club of North Korea, who are expected to be a much tougher challenge than the Mongolian one.

"I told the players at half-time not to worry about the goalless score-line and to play their normal game and the goal would come. I am convinced, though, that my team will be able to raise their game for the subsequent fixtures and I am pleased we have begun the tournament with a win," said Babu about his side's performance.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina distributes prizes among the winners of the 43rd Summer National School and Madrasa Sports Competition at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Shohag confident of clean chit

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur set for lengthy lay-off

SPORTS REPORTER

Off-spinner Shohag Gazi has said that he is confident of earning a good result from the bio mechanical test at the Cardiff University in Wales. The player, who was reported with a suspect bowling action during the second one-day international against the West Indies, had been tested on Friday.

The results of the

test--which is expected to be revealed in 14 to 20 days--will determine whether Shohag's action is legal. After being called for his action, the off-spinner had to return home midway through the series and missed out on the two Test matches.

I am confident that there

won't be any problem,'

Shohag told reporters. They

(testing panel) had told me

that it is quite fine,' the off-

spinner added.

The bowler was asked to

bowl six overs with the

panel taking regular breaks

to analyse his action after

each over.

"They asked me to

bowl round the wicket,

over the wicket and

me to bowl like how I

bowl in the match. It

seemed they were satis-

fied and asked me not to

worry," said Shohag.

Back pain, which is

quite a common com-

plaint for golfers around the world, first forced Siddikur out of an event in Russia which he was willing to participate in, in June this year. Since then Siddikur had undergone physiotherapy over the last three months before leaving for Zurich for the Omega Masters. He did well there at the Pro-Am event but after the first round of the main event, Siddikur withdrew complaining of an aggravation of the back pain.

"The physiotherapist there in Zurich overstretched my back, which did more damage to it. Now I'm in complete rest and I hope to be back in action once I completely recover," said Siddikur.

Since the start of the second half of the Asian Tour sea-

son, Siddikur has already missed two events and is likely to

miss five more even if he fully recovers and gets back to

action by the start of November.

Ana-Caroline finale

AFP, Tokyo

Ana Ivanovic of Serbia ousted top seed Angelique Kerber in straight sets Saturday to reach the final of the 1-million-dollar Pan Pacific Open against US Open finalist Caroline Wozniacki.

Third seed Ivanovic charged back from 3-5 down in the first set to beat the 26-year-old German favourite 7-5, 6-3 in the semifinals.

Denmark's Wozniacki, seeded second and looking to get over her loss to world number one Serena Williams in the US Open two weeks ago, outplayed Spain's Garbine Muguruza 6-4, 2-6, 6-2 in two and a half hours.

"I started a little bit slow but after the break I tried to get more explosive and moving a little more," Ivanovic said of her second round serve which put her 2-1 down at the start of the match.

She did not lose any more serves and broke world number eight Kerber four times altogether.

"It was for sure a tough match," said Kerber.

"We played great but she [Ivanovic] was able to catch the important moments."

Wozniacki, 24, broke Muguruza's serve five times but lost hers four times in a marathon match spiked with long rallies.

"I kept fighting. It was a very competitive match," said Wozniacki, who was the world number one in 2010 and 2011, now ranked ninth after returning to the top 10 with her US Open performance.

"I just tried to stay in there and in the end I think maybe I had a little bit more energy than what she had."

SPORTS REPORTER from Incheon

The inclusion of England-born shooter Quaysoor Miah in the Asian Games contingent has garnered attention about trap shooting among Bangladeshis.

Quaysoor failed to impress, finishing second from bottom with two rounds remaining. Nevertheless he drew interest due to his rather peculiar backstory. While most of the participants have been practicing for years, Quaysoor's interest in shooting only began last year, at the age of 35.

A structural engineer, working as a

highway manager in United Kingdom, Quaysoor found himself with a chance to represent Bangladesh at the Games one year into his shooting career.

Quaysoor is only the third overseas player representing Bangladesh internationally, after USA-based gymnast Syque Caesar and Denmark-based footballer Jamal Bhuiyan. All three are representing Bangladesh in the current Asian Games.

"I started shooting little over a year ago and have been practicing in a shooting complex in London every weekend. I had the option to play for UK and Bangladesh at international level and I chose to represent my motherland with the aim of doing something for the country. I contacted the

officials of shooting federation and joined Bangladesh team during the ISSF World Cup in Munich in June, and now I am participating in Asian Games," said a smiling Quaysoor at the Athletes Village yesterday.

Quaysoor has a dream of participating in the Olympics and bringing laurels for Bangladesh but he knows that the level of competition is very high and that he still needs more time to mature.

Meanwhile, Armin Asha,

Commonwealth Games finalist, finished miserably, ending in 33rd position among 52 competitors in the 10m Air Pistol followed by teammates Ardina Ferdous (40th) and Naznin Sultana (41st).

Sheikh Russel KC forward Nkwocha Kingsley watches his header beat FC Erichim goalkeeper at the Sugathadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFC.COM

17th Asian Games INCHEON 2014

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