

SPORT

U-21 hockey team leave for Punjab tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

A 20-member Bangladesh under-21 hockey team will leave for Punjab, India tomorrow on a 15-day tour to play at least seven practice matches against local teams as part of their preparations for Junior (U-21) AHF Cup which will begin in Dhaka at the end of November.

The young team, which features nine members of the current national squad, had a one and a half month long training camp under coach Mamunur Rashid. Bangladesh will play against Oman, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Sri Lanka in the U-21 AHF Cup. The hosts will begin their campaign with the match against Thailand on November 30. The round-robin tournament will act as a qualifier for the Junior Asian Cup championship to be held in China next year.

McGrath's top five bowlers

CRICKET.COM

Australian champion fast bowler Glenn McGrath has named the best five bowlers in the world at the moment, judged over the last 12 months and across all three formats of the game.

Speaking on Fox Sports' Inside Cricket, the 124-Test veteran picked Lasith Malinga and Rangana Herath of Sri Lanka, James Anderson of England, Dale Steyn of South Africa and his countryman Mitchell Johnson.



Opener Tamim Iqbal cautiously removes his batting glove from his injured right hand following a strenuous batting session at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday. The left-hander is recovering from a thumb injury.

PHOTO: STAR

Sun shines, will Tamim?

BISHWAJIT ROY from Khulna

The mighty sun rose high and brought along with it a sheer amount of heat and that could have taken a toll on the Tigers during their training session at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium had it not been for the cool breeze.

The gentle breeze did give them some comfort but they must be more happy with the fact that opener Tamim Iqbal batted in the net even against the pace bowlers to provide the positive impression about enough recovery of his dam-

aged thumb. The left-hander failed in both innings of the Dhaka Test that the home side won courtesy of their spin trio of Shakib Al Hasan, Taijul Islam and Jubair Hossain.

But the Bangladesh team desperately need the southpaw batsman to fire in the series, especially because the World Cup is drawing closer. And definitely coach Chandika Hathurusingha knows it better than anybody else and that might be the reason the Sri Lankan spent most of his time with the batsman in yesterday's net.

Hathurusingha gave him some practical tips, especially how much he would need to

bend to fend off the rising delivery as the opening batsman fell victim to it in the first innings of the first Test and many more like this will come in the World Cup to be held in the Australia and New Zealand conditions. A batsman who could score two consecutive hundreds in English conditions definitely has got that technique to make it possible but naturally when a batsman goes through a bad patch he must correct his basics first.

A batsman of his calibre cannot be running his career without Test hundred for almost four years as the Chittagonian scored

his last Test century against England in 2010. Many however doubt his fitness behind his failure to play big innings as on a number of occasions he had spoiled his good work by sudden madness. This is a series where he can find himself back and just cannot miss this golden opportunity against the comparatively weak opponents.

The team think-tank could understand how important it is to see one of their best batsmen get back his full rhythm. Now the onus is on the batsman. And why doesn't he make a fresh start from the Khulna Test?

ANAMUL yearns for a big knock

Many batsmen in world cricket have scored around eight to ten thousand runs despite not having good foot movement.

BISHWAJIT ROY from Khulna



Anamul Haque is no stranger to the Bangladesh camp as the right-hander is gradually establishing a place for himself in the team, especially in the shorter version of the game. However, his inclusion in the second Test raised questions as he averages only 9.12 in eight innings.

Anamul's batting technique, which is based more on hand-eye coordination rather than his footwork, was what dominated the press briefing yesterday. The batsman, who recently returned from India following an invitational tour, in his support stated that there were many batsmen in the world who have scored significant runs 'without any footwork'.

When Anamul was excluded from the squad for the first Test, the selectors openly stated that the 21-year-old's style did not suit Test cricket; barely a week later though, he



replaced Al-Amin Hossain. He is now in contention for a spot in the lower middle-order.

"Many batsmen in world cricket have scored around eight to ten thousand runs despite not having good foot movement. It's not that I won't be successful, but I am still working on my style. It is always good if someone can play shots with proper footwork," explained Anamul, who added that he was surprised with the call up, while speaking to reporters at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium here yesterday.

Rather than emphasising on his technique the batsman is hoping to get a good score in order to get his Test wagon rolling. "I am working on the technical issues but most importantly, right at this moment, I need a good innings in Test cricket. I am working on my forward defence and practising against swing bowling which I will face as an opener. I hope I can get over this nervous start after a good knock," said Anamul.

The team think-tank is considering replacing Shuvagata Hom who batted at number seven in the last Test and failed to impress. Anamul is likely to get the nod ahead of Marshall Ayub and fill that position. If this does take place, this will be the first time that the opener will bat down the order in international cricket.

"It's not confirmed as yet [whether he will be in the side]. But I won't mind if I bat down the order. There are enough examples in world cricket. Many famous cricketers, who have opened in the one-day format, have batted down the order in Tests. I will try my best if I get the chance.

"I was not an opener initially. Rather I batted at number four or five. Basically I started to open the innings in the Under-19 World Cup and as a result, I have been playing as an opener for the last four years. So I don't think there will be a problem to adjust with the new batting position. I am mentally ready to take the challenge," a confident Anamul said.



PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan paceman Imran Khan celebrates after taking one of his three Australia wickets on the third day of the second and final Test in Abu Dhabi on Saturday.

Pakistan take big lead

AFP, Abu Dhabi

Pakistan tightened their grip on the second Test and the series after the third day's play, stretching their overall lead to 370 at stumps in Abu Dhabi on Saturday.

Pakistan were 61-2 at the close in their second innings with Azhar Ali unbeaten on 21 and Younis Khan on 16 after another batting collapse saw Australia almost squander any chance of levelling the series.

Australia were dismissed for 261 in their first innings, 309 behind Pakistan's first innings total of 570-6 declared, but Misbahul Haq did not enforce the follow-on and chose to bat again so as to set a big target on the fourth day.

That put Pakistan in a strong position to win their first series against Australia in 20 years.

Pakistan won the first Test by 221 runs in Dubai.

Mitchell Johnson (2-29) gave the Pakistanis an early scare with the wickets of Ahmed Shehzad (14) and Mohammad Hafeez (three) but Ali and Younis ensured Pakistan did not surrender their strong position.

Australia once again failed to post a big total, with Mitchell Marsh hitting 87 and Michael Clarke scoring 47.

Australia had hoped skipper Clarke, who managed just two and three in the first Test, would bat long enough to counter the Pakistan attack but he fell after a good start.

Clarke looked well set during his 62-ball spell at the crease, hitting seven boundaries before he was bowled through the gap with a sharp incoming delivery by paceman Imran Khan who finished with 3-60.

Clarke added 64 for the sixth wicket with Marsh. Marsh batted solidly and hit a six off Babar and then took three runs to complete his half-century off just 56 balls.

BCCI wants Rs 250 cr from WICB

PTI, Bridgetown

Left fuming by the West Indian cricketers' mid-series pullout due to a pay dispute with their board, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has slapped a damages claim to the tune of 250 crore rupees on the WICB.

West Indies cricket plunged into an unprecedented crisis following the decision of the team to not go ahead with the tour of India following the fourth ODI in Dharamsala and the BCCI's damages claim could bring the bankrupt West Indies Cricket Board (WICB), which is going through its worst internal crisis, down to its knees.

LOSSES BCCI SUFFERED

2160m rs	media rights fee
100.1m rs	title sponsorship
96m rs	team sponsorship
30.5m rs	kit sponsorship
125m rs	ticket sponsorship

Rasel clinches Faldo Series qualifiers

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Rasel became champion in the qualifying tournament of the Faldo Series Bangladesh Championship, which concluded at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

Rasel is one of five qualifiers who will be participating in the 9th Faldo Series Asia Grand Final to be held at Mission Hills in Shenzhen, China next month. The other qualifiers are -- Akber Hossain, Zakia Sultana, Mohammad Nadim Hossain and Afnan Mahmud Mahi.

Khulna waits for the runs

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna



With the city dwellers barely getting an opportunity to watch international game in their own backyard, the long queue at the United Commercial Bank's Khan Jahan Ali Branch was not a surprise. Hopes of a series-win were in the air, with Bangladesh leading the series 1-0.

Zimbabwe though have left no stones unturned with regards to overcoming the spin-battle, which destroyed them in the first Test. Their practice sessions included batting on net-covered pitches, which provided turn and bounce.

With the Zimbabweans busy with their one-dimensional practice of sorts, the question that remains is whether the pitches in Khulna will respond in the same way as the pitch in Mirpur.

According to BCB insiders laying a similar wicket would not be possible, considering the difference in soil and weather. On the other hand, there's a good chance of witnessing a batting-friendly track in the second Test, similar to the one held here back in 2012 between Bangladesh and the West Indies.

BFF Academy starts Nov 13

SPORTS REPORTER



The long-awaited BFF football Academy in Sylhet is finally starting its journey on November 13.

informed an official of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday. The proposed football academy, which made a symbolic start two-and-a-half years ago through a digital inauguration by visiting FIFA president Sepp Blatter, will initially start with 40 students.

"The BFF Football Academy in Sylhet will open on November 13 with 40 players in under-13 and under-15 age-level initially," informed BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag. "20 players of under-13 level will be selected from an ongoing selection process led by the BFF Development Committee and 20 players of under-15 level, already selected from the pioneer football league, will be the

first batch of students. FIFA's regional development officer Rajaji Prabhakaran will be present at the inauguration where we have also invited honourable finance minister AMA Muhith," added Shohag.

Under Goal Project 3, Fifa provided 2.25 lakh dollars for the purpose of setting up the facility with a view to provide further funding of 3 lakh dollars once the long-awaited academy begins operations.

Even though the two grounds and the accommodation facilities for the students are complete, there is still a lot of work left on the swimming pool and the kitchen, while some equipments of the gymnasium are yet to be installed.

Five coaches of BFF will be given charge of these two groups of students under the guidance and direction of BFF technical director BA Jubair Nipu. The BFF will arrange for curricular education of the students in the evening, apart from their regular football education, informed Shohag.

ATN Bangla to sponsor nat'l hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) has roped in private satellite channel ATN Bangla as the title sponsors for the next five editions of the national hockey tournament. The tournament, which will be named as ATN Bangla Gold Cup, will start its 30th edition in two venues of the country from November 5, informed speakers at a press briefing at the Bangladesh Olympic Association auditorium yesterday.

19 teams, divided into six groups, will take part in the first round, to be held in Dhaka and Rajshahi. Six group champions will then be joined by -- Bangladesh Army, Faridpur District, BKSP and Dhaka district -- in the ten-team final round, to be held in Dhaka from November 12.

The title sponsors will give Tk 20 lakhs for each of the next five editions of the tournament. The champion team, in the 30th edition, will get Tk 50,000 while the runners-up team will receive Tk 30,000 as prize money.

ATN Bangla chairman Mahfuzur Rahman and BHF's acting general secretary Anvir Adil Khan were present, among others, at the press briefing.