

SPORT

Sheikh Jamal in final

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Premier League champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club moved into the final of the King's Cup in Bhutan after recording a come-from-behind 2-1 win against defending champions Manang Marshyangdi Club (MMC) of Nepal in the first semifinal at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu yesterday.

The Dhanmondi giants conceded the opening goal in the 55th minute, but found the equaliser in the 84th minute before snatching the winner in the first minute of thirty minutes of added time.

This is the third time in three attempts -- after their triumph in the Safal Pokhara Gold Cup in 2011 and runners-up finish in the IFA Shield in Kolkata earlier this year that the new leviathans of Bangladesh football have reached the final of an overseas tournament. Sheikh Jamal will take on the winners of today's second semifinal between Pune FC and Mohun Bagan in the final on December 2.

The two-time professional league champions were considered favourites against the defending champions as they won their group with two wins and a draw, and they started the match in the attacking vein. Haitian striker Vaniel Sirin managed to beat the MMC goalkeeper in the third minute, but his effort went inches wide of the target. Sirin's strike partner, Emeka Darlington, then produced a brilliant save from MMC 'keeper Bishal Shreshtha in the tenth minute.

RESULT

Sheikh Jamal 2 (Shakhawat Hossain 84, Landing Darboe 91) - Manang Marshyangdi 1 (Cedric Abo 55)

The Nepalese champions slowly started to find their feet and almost found the opening goal on the hour mark, but skipper Anil Gurung failed to find the target from an acute angle, with Sheikh Jamal goalie Mazharul Islam already beaten.

Sheikh Jamal's Gambian forward Landing Darboe was denied by a brilliant save by Shreshtha, just three minutes after restart, before the

Nepalese side broke the deadlock in the 55th minute. Gurung's initial effort was parried away by Mazharul, but only as far as Abo, who tucked the ball home.

Centre-back Nasiruddin Chowdhury, who moved up to centre-forward position, almost found the equaliser in the 80th minute, but his effort was cleared by a defender for a corner. But Sheikh Jamal's persistent pressure paid off five minutes later when substitute forward Shakhawat Hossain Rony found the back of the net as he ran onto a long ball before beating Shreshtha.

The equaliser took the match into extra time and Sheikh Jamal, boosted by the late equaliser, took just a minute into extra time to take the lead. Darboe, who had scored three goals already in the tournament, took advantage of a lethargic MMC defence before beating Shreshtha at near post.

Sheikh Jamal played the last ten minutes with ten men after Sohail Rana received a second yellow card and on his way had an altercation with the referee, but the Dhanmondi giants held on to their lead to earn a hard-fought ticket to final.



Sheikh Jamal skipper Nasiruddin Chowdhury (L) tries to win the ball during their King's Cup semifinal match against Manang Marshyangdi Club at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu yesterday. PHOTO: COURTESY

Hughes funeral Dec 3



Captain Michael Clarke is overcome by emotions while paying tribute to Phillip Hughes on behalf of the Australian cricket team and support staff in a press conference in Sydney yesterday. PHOTO: INTERNET

AGENCIES, Sydney

The first Test match between Australia and India was postponed on Saturday following the death of batsman Phillip Hughes, with a shattered skipper Michael Clarke admitting the team were in "deep pain".

Hughes, 25, died on Thursday from massive bleeding on the brain, two days after being knocked unconscious by a bouncer while batting at a domestic match at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Hughes's family confirmed on Saturday that his funeral would be held on December 3 in the sports hall of his old high school at Macksville at 2pm.

His death has thrown the cricketing world into mourning with the first Test against India, due to start on Thursday in Brisbane, postponed to allow the players time to grieve, Cricket Australia said.

"These are extraordinary circumstances and we simply couldn't or wouldn't expect our players to be emotionally ready to start a Test match the day after farewelling one of their teammates," CA chief executive James Sutherland said.

It is not yet known when the match will be rescheduled for, but Sutherland said it would be done in full consultation with the players, the Indian board, the International Cricket Council and broadcasters.

There have been reports that the Adelaide Test, in the adopted home town of Hughes, which is scheduled to be held over December 12-16 could be recast as the first of the summer, with the Brisbane fixture expected to be rescheduled to allow his shattered teammates some breathing space after his funeral. The alternatives would be to play the Brisbane Test after Adelaide and before the Boxing Day Test, or after the Sydney Test in January.

Earlier on Saturday a distraught Clarke had paid an emotional tribute to Hughes on behalf of the Australian cricket team and support staff.

Clarke spoke of Hughes's parents and family and said: "We share in the deep pain that you're feeling.

"Our dressing room will never be the same. We loved him and always will."

Hughes's death has reverberated around the

country in which cricket is considered the national game, with flags flown at half mast and cricket bats left outside front doors as a mark of respect, including at the Sydney residence of Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

"Words cannot express the loss we all feel as a team right now," Clarke told a brief press conference in Sydney, in which he took no questions and battled to keep his composure.

"Apart from when he was home on the farm with his beloved cattle, Hughes was at his happiest playing cricket for his country with his mates," Clarke said.

"Things were always put into perspective when Hughes said: 'Where else would you rather be boys

- ▶ Our dressing room will never be the same, says crying Clarke
- ▶ First India Test postponed, Adelaide could be the beginning
- ▶ Hughes's No.64 ODI shirt to be retired



than playing cricket for your country?"

Clarke said Hughes, who had played 26 Tests since his 2009 debut and who had appeared ready for his next call up, had epitomised what the baggy green cap that Australian Test cricketers wear was all about.

He said he had asked Cricket Australia to retire Hughes's one-day international number of 64, which they have agreed to do.

"The world lost one of its great blokes this week and we are all poorer for it. Our promise to Hughes's family is that we will do everything we can to honour his memory," Clarke said.

"His legacy of trying to improve each and every day will drive us for the rest of our lives."

4th edition in Dhaka next April

SPORTS REPORTER

The 4th Indo-Bangladesh Bangla Games will be held in Dhaka in April 2015, decided a meeting between the officials of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) and (West) Bengal Olympic Associations at the BOA house yesterday.

The meeting decided to include ten disciplines -- athletics, shooting, swimming, volleyball, badminton, boxing, football, kabaddi, gymnastics and weightlifting -- in the fourth edition of the Games. BOA secretary general Syed Shahed Reza led the Bangladesh convoy while the West Bengal envoy was led by Sree Ajit banerjee.

KP urges Cook to resign as ODI captain

AFP, London

Exiled England star Kevin Pietersen has called for Alastair Cook to resign as captain of his country's one-day side after Saturday's thrashing against Sri Lanka.

In the wake of England's eight-wicket loss against Sri Lanka in Colombo on Saturday, former England skipper Pietersen took to Twitter to express his concern over Cook's captaincy, while demanding Alex Hales is elevated to an opening batsman's position.

Soumya in for 5th ODI

SPORTS REPORTER

Uncapped all-rounder Soumya Sarker has been drafted into the squad for the fifth and final ODI against Zimbabwe to be held at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur tomorrow.

Faruque Ahmed-led selection panel added Sarker as a part of their policy to observe new players ahead of next year's World Cup to be held in February-March in Australia and New Zealand.

All-rounder Nasir Hossain and left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak were not considered for any matches in this series, which is also their last international engagement before the World Cup, indicating that they have little chance of being selected for next year's big event. The team management however may give Nasir another shot, but he will have to perform extraordinarily well in the Dhaka Premier League (DPL) to sway the decision of the selection panel his way. Razzak's chances to play the World Cup, however, is seemingly done and dusted.

"We know about their capabilities, so there is no point experimenting with them. Instead we thought it would be better for us to try some new players who have potential. I think it's a little early to talk about the World Cup combination at this moment," said chief selector Faruque diplomatically, when asked about Nasir and Razzak's fates.

"True, Soumya is yet to play an international game, but he has been around the national side for quite a long time and he is a player who is under consideration because of both his batting ability and pace bowling," he added.

There were whispers that injury-prone Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza may be rested for the last match, but Faruque said the decision rested firmly on Mashrafe.

"At this moment it's not possible to say anything. I can take a decision tomorrow. But I have no problem with my fitness, so let see what happens tomorrow (Sunday)," Mashrafe told The Daily Star, when asked about the matter.

However, there was good news for the Bangladesh team management as pacer Taskin Ahmed recovered from his side strain to play in his first league match on Friday, where he bowled nine overs and took one wicket and gave away 16 runs.

SQUAD
Masrafe Bin Mortaza (captain), Shakib Al Hasan (vice-captain), Tamim Iqbal, Anamul Haque, Mominul Hoque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad, Shabbir Rahman, Imrul Kayes, Rubel Hossain, Jubair Hossain, Abul Hasan, Taijul Islam and Soumya Sarker.

AHF U-21 CUP FROM TODAY Hosts eye title

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh are confident they can qualify for next year's Asian Youth Cup by emerging champions in the AHF U-21 Cup, which gets underway at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium today.

Chinese Taipei and Sri Lanka will face off in the only fixture of the opening day while Bangladesh will begin their campaign tomorrow taking on Chinese Taipei. The hosts will take on Thailand on December 2, Oman on December 4 and Sri Lanka on December 6. The five-team tournament will conclude on December 7. Top two teams from this tournament will qualify for the Asian Youth Cup in Malaysia next year.

Bangladesh coach Mamunur Rashid feels that his side can qualify for the Youth Asian Cup by winning the title at home.

KALABAGAN ACADEMY T20 Kangaroos clinch title

SPORTS REPORTER

Kangaroos emerged champions in the Kalabagan Cricket Academy Twenty20 Tournament beating Black Cats by 38 runs in the final at the Kalabagan cricket ground yesterday. Winning the toss, Kangaroos scored 109 runs in 20 overs, with Shahriar scoring highest 30 runs. Shahriar then took four scalps giving away 22 runs as Black Cats were bowled out for 71 runs in 15.2 overs. The all-rounder was adjudged man of the final.

Brendon, Kane lead run-fest

AFP, Sharjah

Brendon McCullum smashed a double-hundred but Kane Williamson missed his by eight runs as New Zealand posted their highest total against Pakistan in the third Test in Sharjah on Saturday.

McCullum hit 188-ball 202 while Williamson made 192 as New Zealand closed the third day at 637-8 with a world record of 19 sixes to pulverise a hapless Pakistan.

That gave New Zealand a mammoth lead of 286 runs over Pakistan's first innings total of 351, setting them up strongly for a series-levelling win.

Pakistan lead the three-match series 1-0 after winning the first Test in Abu

Dhabi by 248 runs and drawing the second in Dubai.

New Zealand surpassed Australia's record of 17 sixes in a Test innings against Zimbabwe at Perth in 2003.

This also becomes the highest total by New Zealand against Pakistan, beating the 563 they made at Hobart in 2003.

McCullum became one of only four batsmen to score three double-hundreds in a year.

The New Zealand skipper also created a new second-wicket record for New Zealand in all Test cricket of 297 with Williamson.

McCullum jumped out of his crease to hit Shah over the stadium roof at long-on for his 11th six to complete his double-hundred off just 186 deliveries.

Michael Clarke (four scores of over

200 in 2012) Ricky Ponting (three in 2003) and Don Bradman (three in 1930) -- all from Australia -- are the only other players to have achieved the feat.

It was an innings of full control which battered the Pakistani bowlers into submission, studded with 21 fours and 11 sixes -- one short of the record of most sixes in an innings held by Pakistan's Wasim Akram, against Zimbabwe in 1996.

SCORES IN BRIEF
PAKISTAN: First innings 351 (Hafeez 197, Azhar 39, Misbah 38; Craig 7-94, Vettori 1-41)

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 637 for 8 in 130 overs (McCullum 202, Williamson 192, Taylor 50, Anderson 50, Southey 50, Craig 34 not out; Rahat 4-89, Yasir 3-169)