

SPORT

Prime Bank top, Abahani second

SPORTS REPORTER

Promising batsman Liton Kumar Das slammed a hundred as Abahani confirmed their Super League berth with a seven-wicket victory against Kalabagan Cricket Academy in their tenth match of the Dhaka Premier League at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Dense fog continued to disrupt the proceedings of the tournament, but the 33 overs per side affair was enough for Liton, who has been drafted into the 30-member list for the 2015 ICC World Cup, to reach the three-digit mark as his side chased down Academy's 185 runs with an over to spare.

Abahani made it to the six-team Super League as the second-placed team, with Prime Bank maintaining their position at the top of the table with a 47-run victory over Kalabagan Krira Chakra in a 25 overs a side match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Prime Bank increased their overall tally to 18 points, with Abahani following them with 16.

Victoria Sporting Club kept their Super League hopes alive by beating Brothers Union in a 34 overs a side match at BKSP, securing a total of 12 points. But their fate will be decided after the last round of matches as Kalabagan Cricket Academy have 14 points and Legends of Rugganj, Mohammedan and Prime Doleshwar are tied on 12 points each.

Back in Fatullah, Liton smote five sixes and 10 fours in his 77-ball 108 and he shared a 147-run opening stand with Abdul Majid (45) as Abahani continued to enjoy a purple patch.

Earlier, Sabbir Rahman's sparkling 64-ball 83, which featured six fours and five sixes, helped Academy put up a fighting total on the board.

At Mirpur, a strong batting effort guided Prime Bank to 193 runs in 25 overs. Sadman Islam top-scored with 54 off 51 balls with six boundaries and his effort earned him the player-of-the-match award.

Kalabagan had a flying start but lost wickets at regular intervals in the face of a daunting task.

National opener Imrul Kayes starred in Victoria's victory with a 72-run knock as Brothers failed to capitalise on their good opening stand of 88 runs between Avishek Mitra and Yasir.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PRIME BANK: 193-6 in 25 overs (Soumya 35, Sadman 54, Riyad 22, Taiabur 26; Razzak 3-38, Nasum 3-28)

KALABAGAN KC: 146-9 in 25 overs (Uttam 23, Shamsur 29, Tasamul 31, Jupitar 21 not out; Taijul 2-19, Forhad 2-36, Enamul 2-33)

Result: Prime Bank won by 47 runs.

KALABAGAN CA: 185-10 in 32.5 overs (Imtiaz 48, Sabbir 83; Al-Amin 2-44, Saqlan 2-21)

ABAHANI: 186-3 in 32 overs (Liton 108, Majid 45)

Result: Abahani won by seven wickets.

VICTORIA: 203-6 in 34 overs (Mahbubul 31, Jasim 34, Imrul 72, Nadif 25; Asif 2-27, Sadiqur 2-58, Liam 2-26)

BROTHERS: 169-9 in 33 overs (Avishek 52, Yasir 65, Liam 26; Haydar 2-21, Shuvo 2-35)

Result: Victoria won by 28 runs (D/L method).



Stand-in India skipper Virat Kohli celebrates his century which led India to a strong position against Australia during the third day of the first Test at the Adelaide Oval yesterday. (INSET) The batsman is struck on the helmet by a Mitchell Johnson bouncer.

PHOTOS: AFP

Kohli hits defiant ton

AFP, Adelaide



Stand-in skipper Virat Kohli survived a fearsome blow on the helmet from a Mitchell Johnson bouncer as he scored

a defiant century to keep India in the first Test against Australia Thursday.

Kohli was heavily struck by the first ball he faced from Johnson, briefly setting nerves jangling following last month's freak death of Australian batsman Phillip Hughes.

But he went on to register his third Test ton against Australia as India reached 369 for five at stumps on Day Three, trailing the hosts' overnight first-innings declaration of 517 for seven.

Kohli was out for 115, three overs from stumps, when he hooked Johnson to Ryan Harris at fine-leg.

Rohit Sharma was not out 33 with wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha on one, after surviving a Johnson peppering, to place the

Virat Kohli became only the fourth Indian to score a century on debut as Test skipper, alongside greats like Vijay Hazare, Sunil Gavaskar and Dilip Vengsarkar.

tourists 148 runs behind with two days left.

It was Kohli's second Test hundred in Adelaide after his 116 almost three years ago at the famous ground.

The tourists easily negotiated the follow-on target of 318 on the placid Adelaide pitch to raise hopes of taking an innings lead.

It didn't start well with Kohli ducking into the path of Johnson's menacing bouncer, which thudded into the front of his helmet.

After a few moments of concern from the fielders, the Indian captain continued. Australian batsman

Hughes was fatally struck by a rising ball late last month, plunging the cricketing world into mourning.

"I went to Virat and asked him if he was all right, and first we checked the helmet to see if there was any damage but it was fine," batsman Cheteshwar Pujara said.

"He batted really well, forgetting about that particular ball. His innings was very crucial for us and it was fun to watch."

While Kohli went on to reach three figures, Murali Vijay (53), Pujara (73) and Ajinkya Rahane (62) all wasted good starts, failing to emulate Australia's three first-

innings centuries -- Steve Smith (162 not out), David Warner (145) and Michael Clarke (128).

"It was a great breakthrough with Virat's wicket and it was good to see Mitch get some reward for some pretty hard toil with the ball," Australia spinner Nathan Lyon said.

"If Virat doesn't play that shot and they're still four down it probably leans towards them."

Kohli is captaining India in the absence of wicketkeeper MS Dhoni, who is recovering from a hairline fracture of his thumb and is expected to resume his post for next week's second Test in Brisbane.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 517 for 7 declared (Warner 145, Clarke 128, Smith 162 not out, Marsh 41; Shami 2-120, Aaron 2-136, K Sharma 2-143)

INDIA: First innings 369 for 5 (Vijay 53, Dhawan 25, Pujara 73, Kohli 115, Rahane 62, R Sharma 33 not out; Johnson 2-90, Lyon 2-103)

2015-16 AFC Cup Sk Russel to face tough Tajik club

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russel KC will face a tough team from Tajikistan in the play-off stages for the 2015-16 AFC Cup as the draw of Asia's topmost club competition was held at the headquarters of Asian Football Confederation in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Keeping this year's Bangladesh Premier League champions Sheikh Jamal DC aside, 2013 winners Sheikh Russel have been given the opportunity to participate in the preliminary stages of the ever-evolving sub-continental club competition, following their qualification to the final round of the 2014 AFC President's Cup, which has been struck off the AFC calendar after the 2014 edition.

Sheikh Russel will play their first play-off match against Tajik Premier Division side FC Khayr on February 10 and then play the second play-off match against Lebanese Cup champions Salam Zgharta on February 17, subject to their victory over the Tajiks.

If Sheikh Russel overcome both of their opponents, they will enter the group-stage competition of the 2015-16 edition of the AFC Cup.

TT results

SPORTS REPORTER

Palolic Group, Ornima Welfare and Cicion Club notched victories in the Dhaka Metropolis Premier Division Table Tennis League at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Gymnasium yesterday.

Palolic beat Wari Club while Ornima Welfare dSheikh Russel and Cicion Club overcame Armanitola GS by identical 3-1 setwins.



PHOTO: STAR

Abahani's Liton Kumar Das acknowledges the crowd's applause as he leaves the field after hitting a century against Kalabagan Cricket Academy yesterday.

Heart misses a beat

AFP, Adelaide



Australia spinner Nathan Lyon said his heart skipped a beat when a fearsome Mitchell Johnson bouncer crashed into the helmet of India captain Virat Kohli in the first Adelaide Test on Thursday.

Bowling bouncers has become a sensitive issue following the death of Australian Test batsman Phillip Hughes, after he was fatally struck in the head by a short-pitched delivery in a domestic game late last month.

With emotions still raw, there was immediate concern as Kohli ducked into the path of Johnson's menacing rising ball, which thudded into the front of his helmet.

Fortunately, all was well and Kohli went on to score a fighting 115 in India's 369 for five at the close of the third day's play.

Lyon, who was on the field for New South Wales when South Australian batsman Hughes was hit, said the Kohli incident sent a chill through the players.

"Your heart skips a beat, especially for those four [NSW] guys out there," Lyon said.

"I went to everyone just to ask if they were okay because it's something that you don't want to see again when we were out there with Phil's [Hughes] incident and today that sound was pretty familiar.

"That's why we all ran in there quite quickly to see if Virat was okay. That was the main thing."

Lyon said at least players could take heart from the fact that Kohli's helmet was undamaged, indicating the Indian skipper was fully protected from the heavy blow.

"It's probably been a positive thing because we know that the helmets work and to have that confidence that our quicks can bowl the bouncer again," Lyon said.

Bidyut ends on a high

SPORTS REPORTER

Bidyut Kumar Roy ended his 27-year playing career with a silver medal, as the 43-year-old weightlifter finished second behind Farhad Ali in the 34th National Senior, 15th National Junior and 11th National Women's Championships at the National Sports Council gymnasium yesterday.

Bangladesh Ansar's Bidyut, who had started his career also with a silver medal in 1988 before grabbing 26 consecutive gold medals in different weight categories, lifted a total of 240kgs, 31kgs less than gold winner Farhad of Bangladesh Army in the -105kg category to bring down the curtains on a colourful career in emotional fashion.

"Going out of the championship with a gold medal would have been a great reward for me, but things cannot always go in your favour. However, I have no dissatisfaction winning the silver medal in my last championship today [Thursday] and the feeling is the same as how I felt in my maiden appearance in the national championship," said a smiling Bidyut, who also brought laurels to the nation, winning one

silver and three bronze medals in South Asian Games from 1998 to 2010.

The 2005 National Sports Award winner also won a silver medal in the 2013 Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships and 2012 South Asian Weightlifting Championships.

"It is the right time to say goodbye as promising athletes are knocking on the doors," said Bidyut. "I am lucky that I am retiring from the podium with the love of the current players."

The veteran weightlifter is now planning to prepare himself as a coach to mentor young athletes and is set to enrol himself in the Solidarity Coaches' Course that will begin from December 15 and earn some more coaching certificates from abroad, before starting his new career as a coach.

Bidyut also has an intention to record his name in the Guinness Book of World Records as the winner of 26 consecutive gold medals in national championships.

Meanwhile, two more national records were set on the concluding day with Mabi Akhter producing a record in snatch and jerk in 69kg category while Rokeya Sultana rewrote a record in snatch in 63kg category.

Root keeps England alive

AFP, Kandy



Joe Root scored an unbeaten century and James Taylor notched an inspired 68 as England beat Sri Lanka by five wickets in the fifth one-day international in Kandy on Thursday.

England's win keeps their chances alive in the seven-match series, with the visitors now trailing 2-3 against Sri Lanka with two matches still to play.

Root's 104 not out laid the foundation for England's win, and earned him man of the match.

Taylor was omitted for the first three games, and has been determined to prove the selectors wrong ever since, scoring 90 in the last game.

His robust knock of 68 this time around included five fours and a six.

Sri Lanka opened with two spinners when England began the chase on Thursday, after rain forced the visitors to abandon starting their innings on Wednesday night.

Sachithra Senanayake, the comeback man for Sri Lanka, struck in his fourth ball to dismiss the dangerous Moeen Ali and followed up later by trapping England captain Alistair

Cook lbw to leave England 35-2.

Senanayake had been raced into the side for Thursday's barely 24 hours after the International Cricket Council lifted its ban on the off-spinner over an illegal bowling action.

But after the two wickets fell, Root and Taylor took charge, with delectable strokeplay to leave the spinners reeling.

After Taylor's dismissal, Root added 86 for the fourth wicket with Ravi Bopara to take England closer.

Partnering with Root, Josh Butler scored two runs in the first ball of the final over to hand England the match.

The sixth international will be played in Pallekele on Saturday. The series gives both teams a chance to build for the World Cup to be held in Australia and New Zealand in February-March.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: 239 all out in 49 overs (Dilshan 35, Sangakkara 91, Mathews 40, Perera 27; Woakes 6-47, Jordan 2-56-2)

ENGLAND: 240 for 5 in 49.1 overs (Cook 20, Taylor 68, Root 104 not out, Bopara 28; Senanayake 2-35)

Result: England won by 5 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Joe Root.

Kieswetter not on for WC

AFP, London



England wicketkeeper Craig Kieswetter's hopes of going to the World Cup next year have been dashed after he admitted the eye damaged in a county match last season had not healed properly.

The 27-year-old South Africa-born player -- who was named in England's preliminary squad for the World Cup which gets underway in February in Australia and New Zealand -- may well miss the whole of the 2015 season.

Kieswetter, who has played 46 times for the England one-day side, suffered a broken nose, a damaged eye socket and cheekbone when a ball crept through the grille of his helmet playing for his county Somerset against Northamptonshire last July.

Somerset have said Kieswetter's long-term prognosis is unknown but he is "unlikely" to be fit for next year.

Kieswetter released a statement in which he explained his eyesight was still not 100 per cent despite recently playing in South Africa's Twenty20 competition.

"It is really disappointing but my eye is not 100 per cent and this of course is critical in maintaining the levels of performance that I expect of myself.

"I need to make every effort to resolve the matter and have the best specialist help in that regard."



Weightlifter Bidyut Kumar Roy is lifted by his well-wishers upon his retirement from the sport after an illustrious 27-year career.

PHOTO: STAR