

SPORT



NEW ERA BEGINS HERE

টুইস্টার দুর্ভাগ্য আজিত থাকে লাল স্ফটিক বিজয়

GPH ispat

Shakib, Wahab fined

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh allrounder Shakib Al Hasan and Pakistan pacer Wahab Riaz have both been fined for breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct during the final day's play of the drawn first Test in Khulna.

Both the players were fined 30 per cent of their match fees by Jeff Crowe of the Emirates Elite Panel of ICC Match Referees.

The players were found to have breached Article 2.1.8 (a) of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "conduct contrary to the spirit of the game".

The incident that saw them fined occurred in the 118th over of Bangladesh's second innings, when the two players unnecessarily halted play by arguing and pointing fingers at each other.

Both the players admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by Mr Crowe and, as such, there was no need for a formal hearing.



Mushfiqur Rahim hops over a railing after the Tigers landed at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday morning. (Inset) Players celebrate Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes' record stand with some cake in their dressing room at the SANS in Khulna on Saturday evening. PHOTOS: STAR

Tigers return to Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

After a satisfying draw in the first Test at Khulna, the Tigers returned to Dhaka yesterday morning. The tour has now entered its last leg with the second and final Test set to begin on Wednesday in Mirpur and the hosts will hope they can maintain their clean sheet by preventing a defeat in Mirpur as well.

The way Mushfiqur Rahim's men fought back after allowing the visitors to take a sizeable lead in the first innings was commended from various quarters. However, with the second Test due to begin in two days time, there is barely any time for the Tigers to get comfortable.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed however, following the great show from the Tigers in the first Test, is confident that Bangladesh can continue their good form.

"I think the best part about this team is that they are all young. Almost none of them have hit the 30-year mark and they are all doing well. They will only further improve with time," said Faruque.

The squad for the second Test is unlikely to witness any changes. The national players will rest today and resume training tomorrow. While the Tigers did put up a good performance in the first Test, there are certain issues that they will have to deal with in the second. The first being Mushfiqur Rahim's ability to keep behind the wickets.

Mushfiqur had hurt his finger during the first Test and it is still unconfirmed whether he will keep in the second. If he plays solely as a batsman, then Liton Kumar will be expected to make his debut. In that case Soumya Sarkar may have to make way for the youngster.

The other issues that the team management will be pondering are with regards to their bowling attack. Whether they will continue with Mohammad Shahid or bring back Shahadat Hossain is an aspect that they may be thinking of. They also might think of giving leg-spinner Jubair Hossain a go.

Hockey transfers deferred

SPORTS REPORTER

The inter-club players' transfer window for the Premier Division Hockey League has been deferred again after Usha Kira Chakra sought more time to form their squad.

The three-day transfer window will open on May 24 instead of the previously scheduled May 5 and the season's curtain-raising tournament, the Club Cup, will begin from June 10, decided a meeting of the league committee yesterday.

The league, which was supposed to comprise 12 teams, is likely to be held without four big clubs -- Mohammedan SC, Dhaka Mariner Young's Club, Wari Club and Bangladesh Sporting Club -- who have already announced they would boycott the league for the second successive season. Dhaka Wanderers Club are also unlikely to take part in the league unless the game's governing body brings back the four rebel clubs in the premier league, which was last held in January-February last year.

IN A NUTSHELL

An Andy conundrum

AFP, Paris

Andy Murray saw the funny side Saturday when a US celebrity magazine accidentally captioned the tennis star as a proud new father instead of Andy Roddick.

Roddick and his wife, actress and model Brooklyn Decker announced earlier that they were expecting.

However, when 'People CelebWatch' tweeted a picture of the couple, it was headlined: "Andy Murray and Brooklyn Decker Expecting First Child".

"Not sure my wife and Roddick will be pleased to find these out via Twitter!" tweeted Murray.

Roddick, a former US Open winner and a three-time Wimbledon runner-up, also saw the lighter side. "Murray... Hide," tweeted the American.

Rohit gets engaged to Ritika

PTI, New Delhi

Rohit Sharma is the latest cricketer to get hitched as he got engaged to his long-time friend Ritika Sajdeh.

The 28-year-old proposed Ritika, who is of the same age, at the Borivali Sports Club in Mumbai.

"From best friends to soulmates, couldn't get any better," Rohit wrote on twitter.

He has known Ritika for the last six years and she has worked as his manager. Congratulations poured in from their friends.



Imrul's impetus

SPORTS REPORTER

Tamim Iqbal might have stolen the show with his maiden double hundred in Khulna, but it was Imrul Kayes's humility that caught the attention of many during the post-match press conference in Khulna on Saturday.

There's no doubt that the bilateral series has so far belonged to Tamim. From tormenting Pakistan's bowlers in the ODIs to bamboozling them in the first Test, newspapers all over the country unanimously narrated the tale of Tamim's comeback. However, his partner in crime, a more quiet and sedate character, has an equally fascinating story.

One of Imrul's initial statements perhaps best described the kind of obstacles that he had to overcome in the last few years. "I really didn't know if I was going to play in this side. I didn't perform well in the World Cup and people were talking about that," the left-hander had said.

This coming from a man who had scored two centuries in the three Tests prior to the one in Khulna last week; and the reason behind that apparent insecurity was simple; despite his good run he hasn't been able to play for the national side on a consistent basis.

After a hiatus of nearly two-and-a-half years, Imrul returned to Test cricket in February 2014. After Kumar

Sangakkara flattened the Tigers with a triple century, Tamim Iqbal was out in the first over after the innings exchange.

Imrul arrived under those pressure-filled circumstances and battled to score a century and helped Bangladesh draw the game.

A fairytale comeback? Not quite. Right after that series came the West Indian debacle. After a brilliant performance with the A side in the Caribbean, Imrul was selected in the ODI side that toured the West Indies. Not only did he fail to perform in the ODIs, but had to return to the country without playing the second Test due to a skin infection.

The same medical condition kept him out of the first two Tests against Zimbabwe. Shamsur Rahman's lack of form in that series however compelled selectors to bring back Imrul for the third and final Test.

Within a span of nine months, the left-hander had to get set for a second comeback in his career; he had to prove that he was worth it yet again; and he did so in style.

He scored 130 in the first innings of that Test and, together with Tamim, put Zimbabwe out of the game.

His 150 against Pakistan in Khulna was arguably the best amongst the three centuries. He swept, reverse-swept, went down the track and looked extremely confident throughout the innings.

It wasn't just his batting that

inspired; the fact that he volunteered to keep after Mushfiqur Rahim's injury, despite barely having kept wickets in first-class cricket, displayed just how desperate the left-hander was to prove himself at the top level.

"There were many people who talked about Imrul Kayes and his inclusion in the Test side. But we decided to go by recent records. One can't be emotional. I am really happy that it worked," exclaimed BCB's chief selector Faruque Ahmed.

"He may not have been among the runs in the World Cup and in the Bangladesh Cricket League recently, but we knew he could comeback. We persist with players who we know can do well at this level, and he proved us right," added Faruque.

After becoming the fifth Bangladeshi player to score 150 and sharing a record stand with Tamim, Imrul was bombarded with a series of questions. "How does it feel to be in the big league?" asked a reporter. Another jokingly compared him to Kumar Sangakkara.

Imrul's reply was akin to his strong front-foot defence: "Tamim, Shakib [Al Hasan], they are big players. They have broken several records. I personally don't think I have managed to come up to their league yet."

It was a cautious statement. Going by Imrul's recent past, which has seen him travel in and out of the team, he knows that he has barely any scope to relax after that innings.

East Zone win a thriller

SPORTS REPORTER

In an intense finish to the second round of the Bangladesh Cricket League's four-day competition yesterday, Islami Bank East Zone edged past Walton Central Zone in Chittagong yesterday.

With an overnight score of 215 for 5, East Zone would have thought that the fourth and final day would have been an easy one for them as all they had to do was bowl Central out as quickly as possible and gobble down the target with ease, considering that they had a 125-run lead after the first innings.

While they did go on to win the game, things didn't exactly go according to plan. After reducing Central Zone to 233 for 7, they were struck by cameos from Sharifullah and Elias Sunny. The ninth wicket pair hammered 68 runs and took the overall score to 348 for 9. Sharifullah scored a valuable 75. Such was the confidence that they actually declared after taking a 223-run lead.

With the game into the last session, no one expected East Zone to go for the target, but all that changed once Shadman Islam and Nafees Iqbal began thumping the drives. They hammered 127 runs in 18 overs before the partnership was broken.

That was followed by quick cameos from Asif Ahmed and Alok Kapali. Despite losing seven wickets, East Zone reached their target with one ball remaining in the day.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WALTON CENTRAL ZONE: 179 and 348 for 9 dec in 79 overs (Sharifullah 75, Rokibul 65; Abul 4-78)
ISLAMI BANK EAST ZONE: 304 and 227 for 7 in 30.5 overs (Shadman 78, Nafees 56; Sharifullah 2-44)
Result: East Zone won by three wickets.

Mayweather wins 'fight of the century'

AFP, Las Vegas

Floyd Mayweather danced his way to a unanimous decision over frustrated Manny Pacquiao at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas on Saturday.

Boos rang out from a pro-Pacquiao Las Vegas crowd as Mayweather's emphatic victory was confirmed by all three scorecards after 12 rounds of action. Mayweather picked off his Filipino rival and snuffed out any chance of the full-blooded slugfest that the more aggressive Pacquiao was hoping to ignite in front of the crowd of 16,507.

The win extended Mayweather's remarkable 19-year unbeaten record to 48-0. The 38-year-old Mayweather retained his World Boxing Council and World Boxing Association welterweight titles and seized Pacquiao's World Boxing Organization belt.

"I am the American dream," Mayweather said. "I knew I had him from round one. I have so much

experience I could calculate his moves. I was born a winner and I am going to die a winner. Everyone said this guy could beat Floyd. That Floyd is a chicken. The non believers, well Floyd turned them into believers."

Saturday's fight is widely believed to be the most lucrative in boxing history with revenues of \$400 million, with Mayweather getting 60% while Pacquiao receives 40%.

Ringside judge Dave Moretti scored the bout 118-110 for Mayweather, while judges Glenn Feldman and Bert Clements both scored it 116-112 for the American.

Pacquiao said he was hindered by an injured right shoulder that he hurt in training several weeks ago.

"I did my best but my best wasn't good enough," Pacquiao said. "From the third round on I felt a pain in my shoulder."

Fans in the Philippines echoed the disappointment of those in the ring, crying foul over the judges' decision and claiming their man was robbed of a deserving victory.

There is no denying that the 36-

year-old made Mayweather work for the victory as he hit the American with "three or four" thundering shots.

He was the aggressor, pressing the action from the first round and was able to land some right-left combinations on Mayweather's head, especially on the ropes and in the final seconds of the early rounds.

But Pacquiao wasn't able to keep up his frenzied pace for all 12 rounds and Mayweather managed to set traps which allowed him to slip in counterpunches and hard right hands.

Even so, Pacquiao said he thought he did enough to earn the victory.

"I thought I won the fight," he said. "He didn't do nothing."

Mayweather reiterated afterwards that he plans to retire after his next fight in September. "My last fight is in September. I'll do that and I will hang it up. My goal was to make nine figures in one night. I'm almost 40 years old now. I've been in this sport for 19 years and have been a champion for 18 years. I'm truly blessed," said Mayweather.



Floyd Mayweather (L) and Manny Pacquiao had a bout lasting 12 rounds, at the end of which Mayweather was declared the winner by unanimous decision, adding around \$240 million to his bank account.

PHOTO: AFP