

SPORT

Mashrafe's return delayed

SPORTS REPORTER

It seems that whenever Mashrafe Bin Mortaza wants to do anything he has to do it the hard way. After he went through a strenuous fitness training session, the 32-year-old paceman was set to play the third round of the National Cricket League. However, one the eve of the four-day match starting today, which would start the process of reviving the Bangladesh ODI and T20I skipper's Test career, he was diagnosed with dengue.

Constant injuries and below-par fitness levels might have hindered Mashrafe's longer-version career in the past, but this time around the skipper's dream of returning to four-day cricket was spoiled by dengue. Mashrafe was admitted to Apollo Hospital in Dhaka on Thursday night with fever, and doctors confirmed on Friday that he had contracted dengue; the disease which has afflicted more victims this year than in the past eleven.

"Mashrafe has dengue. The tests conducted on him have confirmed that. His platelet count is low and that's why he will have to be in the hospital for a while. He will be there for at least a week. He is better now. I have spoken to him and he is doing fine. He just needs some time to recover," said Dr. Debashish Chowdhury, Bangladesh Cricket Board's physician yesterday.

Chief Selector Faruque Ahmed expressed his disappointment over the news.

"It's sad that he has been diagnosed with dengue at a time when he was preparing himself to make his comeback in the longer-version of cricket. I hope that he recovers from his illness and comes back quickly," said Faruque.

When Mashrafe, on his 32nd birthday, said that he wanted to make a Test return, there were fears that he would aggravate his already weak knees and perhaps injure himself, but all of his fans were still hoping that Mashrafe would be able to fulfil his desire.

It seems that adversity and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza go hand in hand. The pacer has fought back from injuries repeatedly throughout the course of his career, and this setback is just another one the Bangladesh leader will come back from, perhaps with more determination.



MASHRAFE BIN MORTAZA



Bangladesh football team captain Mamunul Islam (C) and his teammates are all set to board a plane from the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airpor for Bishkek where they will face Kyrgyzstan in a World Cup qualifier on October 13.

PHOTO: STAR

Oz would've lost, thinks Dean Jones

STAR SPORT DESK

In an article published on the Sydney Morning Herald yesterday, former cricketer turned columnist Dean Jones said the Aussies were lucky that the tour to Bangladesh was cancelled, saying they would most likely have been beaten by an in-form Bangladesh side.

"The Australian cricket team avoided embarrassment when their tour to Bangladesh was postponed due to security concerns. The Bangladeshis are in rich form of late and I believe would have beaten the Australians had the tour gone ahead. The Australian record in the sub-continent is poor and, with an inexperienced team, it was ripe to being beaten," began Jones.

Jones then moved on to talking about the inexperience in the team, specially in sub-continent.

"Apart from Steve Smith, Australia's middle order is vulnerable to the dry, turning pitches that Bangladesh would have produced."

Teams look to adjust

SPORTS REPORTER

The third round of the National Cricket League (NCL) will resume today without the players who were selected for Bangladesh's second-string side, who are leaving for South Africa on Wednesday.

Their departure will mean that the league will miss out on some of the in-form players. Barisal, for instance, won't have the services of 19-year-old Mosaddek Hossain, who has hit 423 runs in the competition thus far and currently tops the run-getters list.

Currently placed second in Tier Two, Barisal will meet third-placed Chittagong at the port city. Hosts Chittagong, on the other hand, won't miss any player. After a defeat in the previous match, Tamim Iqbal and co will hope they can perform better in the third round.

The other two teams of Tier Two, Rajshahi and Sylhet, will face-off at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra.

Mushfiqur Rahim, who had taken a leave and did not play the last match, is set to be back and will lead the Tier-Two leaders again. Bottom-placed Sylhet will hope they can shrug off their misery. Rajshahi's Sabbir Rahman and

Sylhet pacer Abu Jayed Chowdhury will also miss out due to the A team's tour.

The worst affected though will be Khulna, currently placed second in Tier One. They will be missing out on Soumya Sarkar, Mohammad Mithun and Al-Amin Hossain.

Besides that, they will also be gutted by the fact that Shakib Al Hasan is on leave. Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, who was supposed to play for Khulna in this round will also not be available as the ODI skipper was diagnosed with dengue yesterday.

They will host third-placed Rangpur at the Sheikh Abu Naser

Stadium. Rangpur themselves will field a side without two of their top players - Liton Das and Mahmudul Hasan - both of whom will be touring with the A team.

League leaders Dhaka will face last-placed Dhaka Metro at the Khan Saheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah. It will be a challenge for Dhaka to maintain their position at the top and continue their winning run since they will have to field a side without Rony Talukdar, Shuvagata Hom and Tajjul Islam. Especially since both Shuvagata and Tajjul played crucial roles in Dhaka's last win.

Metro on the other hand, will be without their opener Sadman Islam.

U-17s only get a draw

SPORTS REPORTER

The first three-day match between the under-17 outfits of Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) ended in a draw at BKSP yesterday. CAB U-17 finished the last day on 158 for 3 in their second innings.

In the first innings, the hosts declared after posting a massive 400 for 8. The innings was led by Aminul Islam's century. Soon after, BCB XI bundled CAB out for just 148 and enforced the follow-on. The visitors put in a better effort in the second innings and avoided a defeat.

YEANGDER C'SHIP 2nd day's play called off

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's premier golfer Siddikur Rahman was stranded in joint 48th position at even-par (72) after the second day's play of the Yeangder Tournament Players Championship was called off due to persistent rain on Friday.

The second round of the 500,000-dollar event will now be played today, with the third and final round scheduled to be staged on Sunday at the Linkou International Golf and Country Club.

Lin Wen-tang of Chinese Taipei and countryman Hung Chun-kang are tied for the lead after firing matching five-under-par (67) in the opening round.

Pepsi pulling out of IPL?

PTI, New Delhi

The highly-successful Indian Premier League could have a new title sponsor in its next edition after beverage giant PepsiCo expressed its interest to terminate the association with the BCCI.

PepsiCo, which had bagged the title sponsorship contract till 2017 by paying a whopping Rs 396 crore, is keen to pull out since the game has been brought into disrepute in the wake of the spot-fixing scandal.

The company is now in talks with the BCCI to settle the issue.

"BCCI and PepsiCo have had a longstanding cordial relationship and have been in discussions to work out a solution which addresses PepsiCo's concerns. Both parties will share it when ready," a joint statement issued by PepsiCo and BCCI said.

Shuvagata to lead BD A

SPORTS REPORTER

Shuvagata Hom has been named captain of Bangladesh A, with Soumya Sarkar his deputy, for their tour of

Zimbabwe and South Africa. The second-string side are scheduled to leave for Zimbabwe on October 14. The 16-member side will play six one-dayers, one three-day game and two four-day matches against their South African and Zimbabwean counterparts.

In South Africa, Bangladesh will play all their matches at the Irene Villagers Club in Pretoria. Following those matches, the visitors will leave for Zimbabwe on October 30. The three one-dayers will be played at the Queen Sports Club, while the two four-day matches will take place in Bulawayo.

A couple of the players from the side however, may travel back to Bangladesh at the end of their tour of South Africa, since the national side of Zimbabwe are expected to visit Bangladesh in November to play two Tests. There is also a possibility for the two teams to play three ODI's next month, instead of the Tests, depending on what the boards agree to during the ICC meeting in Dubai, which began yesterday.

Players with Test experience in the A team like Soumya Sarkar, Tajjul Islam, Mohammad Shahid, Al-Amin Hossain, Jubair Hossain and Shuvagata may be asked to come back prior to November.

Shuvagata, who was included in Bangladesh A's tour of India as well, performed with both the bat and ball. It was as a result of his good outings that he was declared captain of the team. He will hope he can make it count and earn a comeback to the Test side.

ITINERARY	
Oct 14:	Departure
Oct 19:	1st one-day v SA A
Oct 21-23:	Three-day match v SA A
Oct 27:	2nd one-day v SA A
Oct 29:	3rd one-day v SA A
Oct 30:	Depart for Zim
Nov 2:	1st one-day v Zim A
Nov 4:	2nd one-day v Zim A
Nov 6:	3rd one-day v Zim A
Nov 9-12:	1st four-day v Zim A
Nov 15-18:	2nd four-day v Zim A

Jibon's new life

Nabib Newaj Jibon is the new face in the national team and is likely to make his debut on October 13 in the World Cup qualifying fixture against Kyrgyzstan as a lone centre-forward. The 24-year-old talked to The Daily Star Sport's Anisur Rahman yesterday on the eve of the team's departure for Bishkek.



The Daily Star: How do you feel about the prospect of wearing the red and green of the national team?

Nabib Newaj Jibon: It is a feeling that makes me happy because it was my childhood dream to play for the national team.

TDS: What things did you do to accomplish your dream?

NNJ: I went through hard work and had to sacrifice a lot for football. I played in Chittagong league, Khulna league and was often hired to play at different tournaments.

DS: Who was your inspiration behind becoming a footballer?

NNJ: My uncle Shahinul Kabir Shimul, who was a national footballer, always inspired me to become a footballer. He taught me techniques of football. Besides, there is another person named Nur Hossain, who was my teacher.

DS: How much assistance did you get from your parents?

NNJ: My parents never wanted me to become a footballer; rather they wanted me to study for a job. My father was also a footballer but he did not allow me to play football. However, they are happy now.

DS: You were dropped from the BFF U-17 final squad in 2006. Did that drive you to become a better player?

NNJ: I was picked for the



preliminary squad of BFF U-17 squad for the AFC Championships after I performed well for Gaibandha in the final round of the JFA U-16 Championship. I was with the team for 40 days but was dropped just a day before the team fled out of the country. I

was shocked but it made me determined to play for the national team one day.

DS: Bangladesh is expected to play counter-attack based football against Kyrgyzstan. How prepared are you for that?

NNJ: I will feel myself as lucky if I get a place in the starting eleven. I will give my hundred percent. There will be no shortage of effort on my part.

DS: Is there any personal goal for you?

NNJ: My personal goal is to make my debut a memorable with a goal. However, I want to cement my place in the squad through a good performance the match against Kyrgyzstan.

IN A NUTSHELL

Warne fires at Chappell as he costs Scotland, Agarkar blasts Dhoni

Shane Warne has hit back at fellow Australian Ian Chappell who suggested his cricket all-stars are too old.

"I've always thought that the reason for retiring is that you wanted to stop playing," Chappell told ESPN Cricinfo. "The other thing I don't understand is why people want to watch older cricketers."

Warne said Chappell was one of very few who had taken a negative view of the series.

"It's a bit harsh for Chaps to say that," Warne said.

"I would have thought he would have seen the bigger picture about spreading the game of cricket globally, and that actually we're doing a good thing if we make sure these games are fun and entertaining."

Did a selfie-taker cost Scotland their place at the Euro finals in France next year?

A young fan stunned Poland's Robert Lewandowski when he ran onto the pitch and took a selfie with the Bayern Munich star.

And that incident could have prolonged the game long enough for the Pole to score the equaliser with the final kick of the ball in the 94th minute.

A total of six substitutions meant that an extra three minutes were due and with no stoppages for treatment, it appears referee Viktor Kassai added an extra minute to account for the fan-cam incident, costing Scotland a goal and their place in the 2016 Euros.

Former India fast bowler Ajit Agarkar has called for the selectors to scrutinise Mahendra Singh Dhoni's role not just as limited overs captain, but as a player as well.

"He [Dhoni] has been great for India, but you don't want him to become a liability. He needs to perform a lot better than he has been. Just because he has done it over the years, doesn't mean it's okay for him to fail. The selectors need to have a closer look at what MS Dhoni is doing," Agarkar said on Friday.

Agarkar was also highly critical of Dhoni's decision to bat at No. 4 in the ODIs, saying that it was unfair on somebody like Ajinkya Rahane and "would not work for the team."

Compiled by Star Sport Desk

'We won't have it easy'

PTI, Kolkata



South Africa may have clinched the T20 series comprehensively but their star batsman JP Duminy feels that his side will not have it easy in the ODI series.

"As a team, we definitely expect them to put in a big performance. We are under no illusion that it is going to be a walkover in the ODI series. We know that we have to fight hard and play well and take it one game at a time," Duminy, who was adjudged man of the series, told a news conference after Thursday's washout.

Termed the Dharamsala win as a turning point, Duminy said, "It was a big one for us especially chasing 200 gave us a lot of confidence going into the second T20I. That is going to be a big tick for us in the T20 format. With the results that we have got here now, they will give us a lot of confidence going into the T20 series against England and Australia and obviously the World cup coming in a few months."

"We spoke long and hard coming here... It can get quite painful if you start off in the wrong fashion. We are happy the way we have started but we also know that there is a lot of hard work ahead of us," Duminy said.

Asked what makes the Proteas good travellers, Duminy said it's about enjoying each others' company and success.

"It doesn't matter which part of the world we are in. No matter what challenges we face, we face it head on. We find ways of enjoying ourselves in a long tour."