

## Siddikur fires four-under

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace golfer Siddikur Rahman moved up to joint 17th position after firing four-under-par (68) in the second round of the Yeangder Tournament Players Championship yesterday. The 30-year-old golfer, who started the day at joint 39th position, carded six birdies against two bogeys at the Linkou International Golf and Country Club for a four-under-par (140) at the end of second round, which was delayed by a day due to persistent rain on Friday.

Siddikur was seven shots off the new leader, Miguel Tabuena of Philippines, who fired seven-under-par (65) for 11-under-par (133). Today will stage the final round of the 500,000-dollar event, which has been reduced to a 54-hole affair.

## Herath mulls retirement

ANI, Colombo

Sri Lanka's spin spearhead Rangana Herath has revealed that he will consider taking a call on his international career after the conclusion of the Twenty20 World Cup next year in India.

"If I put a target to end my career I will not be able to give my maximum to the team. Every time I play I look to give 100 percent to the team. But before long I will have to take a decision on my future. I will decide after the World T20 which is to be played in India next year," Herath was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

The 37-year-old left-arm also admitted that he is struggling to stay fit and deliver his best due to his recurring knee problems.

Herath said that he had reduced the number of one-day matches and play only Tests in order to prolong his career.



A focused Tamim Iqbal gets set for an incoming delivery during his unbeaten 90 at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong on Day One of the National Cricket League's third round yesterday. PHOTO: BCB

# Tamim gets his mojo back

SPORTS REPORTER



Following painstaking scores of 0 and four in the previous match, Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal, much to the delight of the home crowd, hit form yesterday as he drove himself to an unbeaten 90 in the third round of the National Cricket League.

Sylhet's Imtiaz Hossain was the other batsman who had his groove on, scoring his second consecutive century in the league. He followed his 127 in the previous game with an unbeaten 125.

After being put into bat at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, Tamim and Nafees Iqbal shared a 98-run stand. The foundation laid by the brothers led Chittagong to 206 for two by stumps on Day One.

Nafees was the more dominant partner in the opening stand, scoring 56 of those 98 runs. However, the elder brother was sent back to the pavilion right

## SCORES IN BRIEF

<b>CHITTAGONG V BARISAL</b> CHITTAGONG: 206 for 2 (Tamim 90 not out, Nafees 56; Shohag 1-50)	<b>DHAKA V DHAKA METRO</b> DHAKA: 261 for 4 (Rakibul 89 not out, Abdul Majid 66; Arifat 3-79)	<b>KHULNA V RANGPUR</b> KHULNA: 211 all out in 64.3 overs (Mehedi 63, Anamul 41; Sanjit 4-37, Sohrawardi 4-81)	<b>SYLHET V RAJSHAHI</b> SYLHET: 236 for 4 (Imtiaz 125 not out, Ruman 81 not out; 2-44, Sanjamul 1-52)
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before lunch and Mominul Haque's quick departure soon after took some of the sheen off Chittagong's opening stand.

Tamim though found support in Tasamul Haque. While Tasamul held one end, Tamim went on his merry way. He ended up hitting eleven fours and a six. However, the opener couldn't reach the three-figure mark as rain brought a premature end to the day. Chittagong only managed to bat 57.1 overs.

At the Shaheed Chandu Stadium, Imtiaz's century helped revive Sylhet from a precarious 82 for 4 against Rajshahi. After being put into bat, Sylhet lost their senior players Alok Kapali and Rajin Saleh within 35 overs and were in danger of a collapse. However, Imtiaz and Ruman



IMTIAZ HOSSAIN

Ahmed shared an unbeaten 154-run stand to bring their side back from the brink.

Both batsmen played patient knocks. 30-year-old Imtiaz faced 285 balls for his 125. While he hit eleven fours and a six, his strike-rate remained below 45. His partner Ruman scored an unbeaten 81

off 159 deliveries.

At the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna, the hosts were bundled out for 211 against Rangpur. Khulna felt the absence of a host of their first-team players. They didn't field Mustafizur Rahman, who was rested as per the instruction of the national team management. They also couldn't play Al-Amin Hossain and Mohammad Mithun as they were selected for Bangladesh A's tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Khulna had to bank their hopes on Bangladesh under-19 captain Mehedi Hasan Miraz, who topped with 63. However, that wasn't enough to outdo Rangpur's three-man spin attack, who took all ten wickets. Sohrawardi Shuvo and Sanjit Saha took four each while leg-spinner Tanveer Haider took two.

At Fatullah, league leaders Dhaka began on a strong note as they finished the day on 261 for 4. They were guided by opener Abdul Majid's 66 and Rakibul Hasan's unbeaten 89.

# Booters brace for Kyrgyz challenge

SPORTS REPORTER



With the target of adding to their single point in the World Cup qualifying campaign so far, the Bangladesh national football team reached Kyrgyzstan capital Bishkek in the early hours of Saturday. The men in red and green, who will take the field against the hosts in their fifth match on October 13 -- their first competitive fixture since Fabio Lopez took charge on September 10 -- had their first practice session at Kyrgyzstan's football federation ground in the afternoon.

Thanks to the jetlag from a 17-hour flight, the team's first practice session was confined to a mere warm-up, with no match-play simulation or hard training. Assistant coach Masud Parvez Kaiser, over phone from Bishkek, said that the coach briefed the players before the practice session where he asked them to give their hundred per cent in the match.

The Italian coach, who has already come under scrutiny for tinkering with his available options and the positioning of key players, was said to have defended his experiments as he felt skipper Mamunul Islam was not utilised fully in Bangladesh's previous matches against Australia and Jordan. The coach did not give a hint about his preferred starting eleven, but it is believed that Bangladesh will take the field with a counter-attack based approach and a draw in mind.

The assistant coach added that the conditions at the match venue, the Dolen Omurzakov Stadium, will not be completely alien to the Bangladesh players due to the fact that Sheikh Jamal DC, which lends a large number of players to the national team, played at the same ground in the AFC Cup Qualifiers (Playoff) just two months ago. However, the former Sheikh Jamal assistant coach also reminded that the hosts might go all out for a big-margin win following their 2-2 draw at home against Tajikistan on Thursday.



Bangladesh booters disembark at the Manas International Airport in Bishkek yesterday. PHOTO: BFF

# IN A NUTSHELL

## Ivanovic swaps base

Former world number one tennis player Ana Ivanovic is swapping her base in Switzerland for Bolton to be closer to her footballer boyfriend.

Ivanovic, who has been dating German midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger since 2014, plans to establish a base at The Bolton Arena.

The 27-year-old has already been spotted around the city centre with



Schweinsteiger since he transferred to Manchester United.

Ivanovic's fitness coach Howard Green is head of strength and conditioning at The Bolton Arena.

## The Whitchurch connection

Most schools would be proud to have one former pupil as an international sport star, Whitchurch High School in Cardiff has three.

Cyclist Geraint Thomas, Rugby player Sam Warburton and footballer Gareth Bale all attended the same school growing up.

And ahead of one of the biggest weekends in Welsh sporting history, Team Sky rider Geraint delivered a message to his former schoolmates to spur them on in their respective games. Warburton faced Australia last night while Bale takes on Bosnia.

Geraint was assisted by the school, as they wished Bale and Warburton the best of luck.

## Lehmann questions Maxwell

Glenn Maxwell's future in the Australian Test squad could be in the balance after coach and selector Darren Lehmann criticised his temperament in the Matador Cup and warned he needed to "be really hungry to make big runs".

The Victorian was named in Australia's Test squad for the postponed tour of Bangladesh and has so far been a subcontinent specialist in the longer format, with his three appearances in the Baggy Green coming in India and against Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates.

Maxwell has repeatedly stated his desire to cement a place in the Test side, travelling to the United Kingdom during the winter in an attempt to increase his exposure to red-ball cricket at Yorkshire.

"He's exciting, but we have to see him be really hungry to make big runs," Lehmann told 6PR radio.

"Take the example of his performance on Friday. He was out caught at deep third man, where the wicket was low and slow. He really could have played a technical innings, which we know he can do."

## Sainz doing fine

Carlos Sainz's father and his manager both said he was fit and well after his high speed crash during Saturday's final practice for Sunday's Russian Grand Prix.

His father, former world rally champion Carlos Sainz tweeted, "Just talked to Carlos. Thanks to God, he is ok. More testing going on, but much happier now. Thanks to everyone for the support."

His manager Borja Ortiz-Echague said the 21-year-old was doing 'perfectly' in hospital following the accident.

Sainz later tweeted a photograph of himself giving a thumbs up from his bed.

"All ok! Nothing to worry about! Already thinking how to convince the doctors to let me on the grid tomorrow!" he wrote.

Compiled by Star Sport Desk

## Proteas look to start strong

AFP, Kanpur

South Africa hope to build on their Twenty20 success in India by winning the one-day series starting Sunday as rival skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni prepared to douse the fire around him.

However, Proteas coach Russell Domingo was not looking too far ahead, saying his team will not take victory for granted despite the T20 success.

"India are pretty good in all three formats so we are very pleased with the results so far," Domingo said of the team that defeated his boys in the World Cup earlier this year.

"But we have only played two days of cricket on the tour and there are 25 days of cricket still left. We have to focus all our energy on Kanpur."

India's Dhoni, meanwhile, needs to bounce back in the one-dayers to silence critics after the T20 loss. Team director Ravi Shastri said the endeavour was to get Dhoni back to his best batting form, adding he was confident India will perform better in the upcoming series.

"We know what he can do when he starts striking," Shastri said of the captain. "The world knows, I don't have to say anything."

"In one-dayers, we understand our game better. We are a much better side in one-dayers and Tests than in T20s and I expect a very, very good contest."

# BFF focused on youth

SPORTS REPORTER



The frustrating performances of the under-16 and under-19 teams in the recently concluded AFC Championship Qualifiers campaigns seems to have spurred the development committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to focus more on enhancing the skills of the grassroots level coaches and improving the scouting process altogether. The committee, in a meeting at the BFF House yesterday, made a number of decisions regarding strengthening the structure of age-level football, with a coaching course set for December.

"There will be a coaching course in the presence of two FIFA instructors for 30 coaches selected from 64 districts. These coaches, who are involved with coaching at grassroots level, will help us scout players for under-12, under-14 and under-16 levels," said Badal Roy, head of the BFF's development committee, after the meeting.

Roy said that the committee would engage the coaches in scouting talented players from the Bangabandhu Gold Cup, a nation-wide football tournament involving

primary level students of government schools, as the BFF will be actively involved in the tournament from now on.

"We have noticed two things. Firstly, the age-limitation is not maintained in this tournament. We will try to extend our technical assistance and make sure that the age limit is strictly enforced. We are also thinking about suggesting the removal of height-restriction from this tournament," said Roy, adding that players from this tournament could ensure the pipeline for the national under-12 team and under-13 teams, which are scheduled to take part in the Super MOK Cup, a football fiesta to be held in Malaysia later this year.

Meanwhile, Roy also informed that the BFF is likely to receive a lump-sum amount from the National Sport Council (NSC) as part of the Tk 20 crore to be sanctioned by the Ministry of Youth and Sports for training and development purposes of different sports.

"The money we receive will be used for two separate under-14 and under-16 tournaments. From those we will select the best players for a year-long training program," said Roy, adding that they also plan to send the under-12, under-14 and under-16 teams to the BFF Academy in Sylhet for long-term training.

## Sachin keen to expand league

AGENCIES, Dubai

Sachin Tendulkar hints that there could be action in Dubai as early as next year.

Speaking to Sport360, Tendulkar said his latest venture along with Shane Warne, Cricket All-Stars, could see them bring the band of 28 retired superstars of the game to the UAE.

"We don't mind coming here to Dubai and the UAE. This is where the headquarters of ICC is. For us, it is about creating the festive atmosphere and hopefully, get some new fans to the game."

"We would like people to talk about these games, even long after we have had the matches," said Tendulkar, who retired two years ago after smashing 100 international tons in a storied career of 24 years.

"Of course, we'd like to go to places where we are invited to. We are open to ideas and invitations and we will definitely look into it. It will be very nice if we come to the UAE next year because we do want to travel around the globe."

"I realised the passion for cricket was very much alive in all the players despite having retired. We thought why not use this to promote cricket in various parts of the world and globalise the game. I spoke to Shane and he said he was thinking on the same lines. That's when we decided to do this together."



National Bank of Pakistan accorded a dinner reception in honour of the visiting Bangladesh women's cricket team at the Southend Club in Karachi on October 4. Bangladesh played two T20Is and as many ODIs against their Pakistan counterparts during a brief tour earlier this month. PHOTO: COLLECTED