

SPORT



Wali Faisal gave the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup a rousing start, scoring the opening goal of the tournament with a sumptuous free-kick, as Abahani beat Karachi Electric FC 3-2 at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Young guns fire on final day

SPORTS REPORTER



A fighting effort from Dhaka's middle-order batsmen snatched a victory from league leaders Khulna as Mohammad Sharif's men successfully batted out the entire fourth day to force a draw. Going into the final day of the National Cricket League's fourth round, Dhaka were placed in a precarious 37 for 2 after being set a target of 470. They finished the day on 233 for 7. However, the result didn't come easy. The sole focus of Dhaka's middle-order was to stay at the crease for as long as possible. Their defence was led by Saif Hassan who scored an unbeaten 64 off 191 deliveries. But Saif's effort of course, wasn't going to be enough; he needed his partners to step up and that's exactly what they did. Mosharraf Hossain, who came in to bat at number seven, scored just one run but battled 40 deliveries. Similarly, their keeper Saghir Hossain faced 76 deliveries for his eight runs. While Dhaka's effort didn't make a difference at the top of the table -- Khulna still lead with 39 points, while Dhaka have

34 -- it still kept the capital city a win away from the top spot. The game between Barisal and Sylhet at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium was the only match that produced a result, with the former winning by 150 runs. It was a win which took Barisal over Mushfiqur Rahim's Rajshahi at the top of Tier Two. Sylhet began the final day on 54 for 2 and much like Dhaka, their target was to see off the day. However, a five-wicket haul from Shohag Gazi dented Sylhet's hopes on the brink of the day's play. They lost their last wicket towards the end of the last session and were bundled out for 297. Despite the defeat, it was a good day for 17-year-old Zakir Hossain -- a member of Bangladesh's current under-19 unit -- who scored his first first-class century yesterday. The youngster stood smart with an unbeaten 137 at the end of the day. Zakir's under-19 teammate, Nazmul Hossain Shanto, achieved a similar feat and scored his first century yesterday. His 101 ensured Rajshahi's safety against hosts Chittagong. He was guided by national Test skipper Mushfiqur Rahim who posted an unbeaten 50. The match between Dhaka Metro and Rangpur in Khulna ended as a draw as well.

BCB U-17s begin well

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Bangladesh Cricket Board Under-17 made a good start against Cricket Association of Bengal Under-17 on the first day of their fourth and final three-day encounter. The hosts finished Day One on 273 for 6 in the Rangpur Cricket Garden. BCB mainly relied on Mahmudul Hasan and Aminul Islam, both of whom scored cautious half-centuries. Mahmudul, who bats at number three, posted 81 off 101 deliveries, smacking 12 fours and three sixes. Aminul remained unbeaten on 92. He was a lot more reserved, scoring his runs off 206 deliveries. While they ended the day on a high, it didn't begin well for the hosts who lost Sajibul Islam in only the second over of the day. However, Ratul Khan and Mahmudul shared a century stand for the second wicket and helped revived the hosts. Aminul, who came in next, made full use of the foundation set for him.

Contrasting starts for Abahanis

SPORTS REPORTER from Chittagong



Abahani's bid to making the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup a memorable one got off on the right note as they handed a 3-2 defeat to Karachi Electric FC in the opening match at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday, but it was not the same story for the tournament's hosts, Chittagong Abahani, who went down 1-2 against East Bengal in the day's second match. The scoreline of the first match might give an impression of competition, but the reality is that the local side ruled the roost for most of the match except for the last 15 minutes. The Sky Blues got off to a cautious start with a five-man backline against a side who have recently qualified for the AFC Cup play-offs by beating teams from Bhutan and Macau. However, Abahani soon changed their formation by sending in right-back Nasirul Islam to the wing as Karachi Electric's attacks never looked threatening. Nigerian striking pair of Sunday Chizoba and Kester Akon was a constant threat to the visitors while

midfielders Emon Babu and Shahedul Alam Jr played key roles in almost every attack. Abahani came close to taking the lead in the 11th minute, but Akon floated his shot over the post with goalkeeper Ghulam Nabi to beat, before Nabi denied Sunday in the 20th minute. Three minutes later, Wali Faisal gave Abahani a deserved lead with a curling free-kick from 25 yards out before Sunday cleverly headed a high ball from Emon home on the half-hour mark. Karachi Electric showed signs of

deposing another goal in the 90th minute, with Abayomi Sunday bundling home from the spot. "It is a perfect start for us," said Abahani coach Amalesh Sen, adding, "We observed the opponents for the first 10 minutes and then went into attacks. The two goals that we conceded were due to complacency and excessive dribbling by our players." While the Abahani from Dhaka dominated the first match in their victory, their Chittagong brothers found it hard against East Bengal. The Kolkata giants, who released 14 players for the ISL ahead of this tournament, took the lead in the 32nd minute when Mohammad Rafique tapped in from close-range after goalkeeper Rasel Mahmud Liton had failed to grip a header, before Prohlad Roy doubled the lead in the 72nd minute, availing a cross from Abinash Ruidas. The hosts reduced the margin in the 78th minute when Hemanta Vincent Biswas's cross was deflected into the net by an East Bengal defender, but they failed to find the equaliser as three chances were wasted in the final passage of play.

KARACHI ELECTRIC	2	-	3	ABAHANI
CTG ABAHANI	1	-	2	EAST BENGAL

comeback at the other side of the break, but Muhammad Riaz and Muhammad Rasool wasted two close-range efforts. The latter, though, made amends by scoring with a brilliant volley in the 75th minute. Abahani's lead was increased minutes later when a Karachi Electric defender diverted a free-kick from Wali into his own net, but the visitors made the last few minutes interesting by

'BD may host Asia Cup'

STAR SPORT DESK



BCCI secretary Anurag Thakur yesterday echoed Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan Papon's sentiments that the Asia Cup next year would be hosted either by India or Bangladesh. Thakur confirmed that the event would take place in February next year; he however, said that the venues were yet to be finalised. "The Asia Cup will be held in mid-February, next year. However we have not decided the venue of the tournament. It could be Bangladesh or it could be India also. It will be decided in some time," Thakur said on the sidelines of the selection

committee meeting. Upon his arrival from the ICC board meeting in Dubai last week Papon had said that Bangladesh would host the Asia Cup if India were unwilling. "Since Bangladesh hosted the last two Asia Cups, at the moment the chances of India hosting the tournament are a lot more. However, if they don't want to host the competition, then it will be us," Papon had said on Friday. According to Papon a final decision would be taken towards the end of this month. Bangladesh successfully hosted the event in 2012 and 2014, reaching the final in 2012, only to lose to Pakistan in heart-breaking fashion.



BATTING & FIELDING									
Mat	Inns	Runs	HS	Ave	100	50	4s	6s	Ct
Tests	104	180	8586	319	49.34	23	32	1233	91
ODIs	251	245	8273	219	35.05	15	38	1132	136
T20Is	19	18	394	68	21.88	0	2	43	16

BOWLING						
Mat	Inns	Runs	Wkts	Ave	4w	5w
Tests	104	91	1894	40	47.35	0
ODIs	251	146	3853	96	40.13	1
T20Is	19	1	20	0	-	-

A daredevil retires

AFP, New Delhi

Swashbuckling opener Virender Sehwag, the only Indian batsman to score a triple century in Test match cricket, announced his international retirement on Tuesday. "God has been kind and I have done what I wanted to do," Sehwag said in a statement on his 37th birthday after again being overlooked by the selectors for the ongoing series against South Africa. "Cricket has been my life and continues to be so. Playing for India was a memorable journey and I tried to make it more memorable for my teammates and the Indian cricket fans." The right-handed batsman also confirmed that he was retiring from the Indian Premier League, an annual Twenty20 tournament that takes place in April and May. Reports however said that Sehwag would continue to play first class cricket for his state side Haryana in the domestic Ranji Trophy competition. After making his debut against South Africa in 2001, Sehwag became one of the most feared batsmen in world cricket, forming part of a formidable line-up that also included Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid. Although he had not played for his country since a Test against Australia in 2013, many fans had hoped that he would return to the national side with which he also won the 2011 50-over World Cup on home soil. Sehwag is widely credited with transforming the role of opening batsman in Test cricket with a hard-hitting style that brought him a top score in Test matches of 319, against South Africa in Chennai in 2008.

WHAT THEY SAID

Didn't see Viv Richards bat in person but I can proudly say I have witnessed Virender Sehwag tearing apart the best bowling attacks. **-MS Dhoni**

The legend I played with. The miracle I had the fortune of knowing. The most spectacular ever. Will miss u Sehwag. **-Suresh Raina**

Sehwag leaves his signature on the game with his tremendous achievements. Loved his instinctive approach to batting and life. Had the best seat during most of his superlative performances on field. I'm sure Viru will do much more to bring joy & smiles to our faces. **-Sachin Tendulkar**

Players' auction now on October 22

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Premier League's governing council has decided to bring ahead the dates of the players' Draft Programme, an event where the BPL franchises will be able to buy their players, to October 22. The irregularity with regards to the governing council's decisions continued yesterday as it was the third time that the body decided to shift the dates of the players' auction. Initially, it was supposed to take place on October 31. Last week, that date was shifted to October 26. And finally, a press release sent by the BCB yesterday announced that the programme would take place on Thursday. According to BPL governing council member-secretary, IH Mallick, the date was shifted as per the request of the franchises. "The national players are expected to begin their camp for the Zimbabwe series later this month and during that time the franchises won't get any access to the players. They will have very little time to interact with them about their commercial activities and so they asked us to shift the dates," said Mallick. Earlier, the governing council declared Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim, Nasir Hossain and Mahmudullah Riyad as the icon players of the tournament. They will be earning the highest, Tk 35 lakh, amongst the local players. Their teams will be decided based on a lottery during the auction on Thursday. Apart from the six of them, the BCB also revealed a list of 117 local players and 196 foreign players who have been registered for the tournament.



Officials of the Barisal Bulls and the Bangladesh Cricket Board pose for the cameras during a ceremony that unveiled the logo and the title song of the Bulls for the third season of the Bangladesh Premier League, due to begin on November 22.

No headway in Indo-Pak series

Khan leaves without meeting Manohar

PTI, New Delhi



Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shahryar Khan on Tuesday conceded that the prospects of an Indo-Pak bilateral cricket series are "very low" as "pressures" were preventing the Board of Control for Cricket in India from taking any initiative on the issue. He added that although disappointed with the BCCI's response, PCB never threatened to boycott the World Twenty20 in India next year. "I never used the word boycott. Once we have a clear idea that the series won't happen then we will see all options. I have no other plan, I am going home now. No response from the BCCI was given to me. There is no direct communication from BCCI," he said. "I am not optimistic [about the series] after what has happened here because obviously there are pressures here. As of now, the chances are very low. I am not going to make any effort now," Khan told reporters without specifying what he meant by pressures. "Once we have a clear idea that the series won't happen then we will see all options. It takes two hands to clap," he said. Elaborating on the entire sequence of events since his arrival in the country, Khan said he came on BCCI chief Shashank Manohar's invitation. "He [Manohar] was gracious and wanted to talk. He asked me to come to Mumbai for a chat. As you know half an hour before we were to meet, I got a message from the BCCI that we will delay the talks, then came another message," he said referring to the Shiv Sena activists' storming of the BCCI headquarters yesterday. Khan was in the capital on Tuesday and met IPL Chairman Rajeev Shukla at his residence. "I came here and the idea was to meet other people and engage with BCCI. But there has been no word from BCCI on how they intend to move forward. So I am now going home because it is very clear that there are pressures here that are preventing BCCI. So I am going and no meeting now. I met Shukla ji because I know him for several years. Meeting him is not meeting the BCCI," he explained. "The series, whether it will happen or not, where it will happen, how it will happen, will be decided only after talks, if at all the talks take place," he said.