



Eleta Kingsley (C) was the toast of his teammates as his brilliant brace powered Chittagong Abahani to a 3-1 win over De Spin Ghar Bazan at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday, taking the hosts to the final of the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Socceros due on Nov 14

SPORTS REPORTER

The Football Federation Australian (FFA) yesterday corresponded to its Bangladesh counterparts confirming that the Socceros will arrive in Dhaka on November 14 ahead of their World Cup qualifier against the hosts on November 17.

In a reply to an e-mail from the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), the Socceros' manager, Joel Freeman, yesterday wrote that the Socceros will be arriving on 14 November night by a Singapore Airlines flight with a contingent of 40-plus members. The FFA has preferred the Westin Hotel in Gulshan's diplomatic zone as their staying place, confirmed BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag.

"The FFA, through an e-mail, informed us today [Tuesday] that its national team will arrive in Dhaka on November 14 at 10:40pm by Singapore Airlines. The e-mail suggested that their preferred staying place is the Westin Hotel," said Shohag last night.

The fate of Bangladesh's home fixture against the Socceros, who had won the home leg 5-0 in Perth on September 3, was thrown into some doubt after the FFA raised its concern about security situation in Bangladesh following the cancellation of Australia cricket team's tour to Bangladesh in the last week of September. The Australian football authorities later took the issue to the world football's governing body, FIFA, requesting a shift of fixture to a neutral venue. However, FIFA's stance is

believed to be against moving the match from Dhaka. The FFA released a statement on Monday where it hinted that the FIFA is sticking to its decision's to holding the match in Dhaka. "FFA is communicating with FIFA, AFC (Asian Football Confederation) and DFAT [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade] on the security situation in Bangladesh. FIFA's current position is that the World Cup qualifier on 17 November will be played as scheduled. FFA is seeking more information from all parties, in particular Bangladesh authorities, on security arrangements and will continue to monitor the situation," the statement was quoted by Sydney Morning Herald on Monday.

Shohag further informed that the FFA has not made any queries about the security arrangements here as the security issue is under the sole jurisdiction of the FIFA. Earlier, Freeman, along with two other officials of FFA, came to Dhaka in August and expressed their satisfaction over the facilities here, including the two hotels - the Westin Hotel and the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel - that they inspected.

The Socceros, with nine points from four matches, are four points behind Group B leaders Jordan, who have played five matches. Bangladesh, on the other hand, are languishing at the bottom of the table with a single point from five matches.

This particular fixture between Bangladesh and Australia at the Bangabandhu National Stadium has been an eagerly awaited one for the football fans in Bangladesh ever since the World Cup qualifying draw was held on April 14 this year.



Shakib stays number one

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan has retained the number one Test all-rounder spot in the ICC rankings. The list was revealed yesterday morning through an ICC media release following the conclusion of the Colombo and Dubai Tests.



While the all-rounder has retained his spot, it has been nearly three months since he played his last Test.

Shakib would have gotten an opportunity to play more longer-version cricket had Australia played their two Tests in Bangladesh as per schedule, however that series was postponed.

Meanwhile, England's batsman Joe Root became the number one Test batsman.

Pakistan's wrist-spinner Yasir Shah became the second highest-ranked bowler in the world for the first time in his career in the latest ICC Test Player Rankings.

Yasir picked up eight for 180 in Pakistan's 178-run victory over England, which earned him 25 points.

This has, in turn, enabled him to leapfrog the pace trio of England's James Anderson and Stuart Broad, and New Zealand's Trent Boult.

Sachin & Shane want cricket at Olympics

BBC ONLINE, London

All-time greats Shane Warne and Sachin Tendulkar have called for Twenty20 cricket to become an Olympic sport.

Cricket has not featured since 1900 but the sport's governing body is meeting the International Olympic Committee next month to discuss a possible bid.

"I'd love to see it as an Olympic sport and, who knows, down the track it might be," Warne told BBC Stumped.

"I think it's a great idea and I reckon T20 is the best format for it," added Tendulkar on the World Service show.

Hosts storm into final

ANISUR RAHMAN from Chittagong



Ever since they were introduced to top-flight domestic football, Chittagong Abahani were never reckoned as a force, let alone being contenders for any silverware. But on Tuesday night, in front of a full-throated packed home crowd, the hosts took a giant stride towards creating a small piece of history in their sporting existence by beating De Spin Ghar Bazar 3-1 in a pulsating first semifinal of the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup.

The MA Aziz Stadium in the port city, which has been in a festive mood for the last one week, finally saw the fruition of an otherwise poor men's Abahani, with their Nigerian forward Eleta Kingsley hitting a brace after Yoko Samnick had provided the early breakthrough.

The defeat also ended a fantastic unbeaten run for the Hawks of the White Mountains, who fought gallantly on the pitch despite having their thoughts back in Afghanistan where a terrible earthquake on Monday took a heavy toll, including on some of the relatives of the players of this team.

Chittagong Abahani coach Shafiqul Islam Manik had brought some positional changes to his eleven by sending Mithun Chowdhury upfront keeping Zahid and Kingsley on the flanks while striker Zahid Hasan Emily and midfielder Hemanta Vincent Biwas played on either side of Yoko Samnick in the midfield. That ploy paid dividends as the hosts

CTG ABAHANI 3 - 1 SPIN GHAR BAZAN

launched a planned attack in the eighth minute through the right flank when three constant attempts from Kingsley, Emily and Zahid were thwarted.

The hosts kept pressing through the right flank as Zahid exposed the opposition's defence time and again before De Spin Ghar winger Anwar Akbari tried his luck from a distance, only to narrowly miss the target.

The constant pressure helped the hosts win a couple of corners and Zahid curled one of those,

which Samnick put into the far corner of the net after Emily's header found him unmarked inside the box in the 24th minute.

Unlike their previous matches, De Spin Ghar did not resort to wing-play, rather tried a direct route down the middle. Chittagong Abahani had to spend a nervous last 15 minutes in the first half despite some good defending from centre-back Rezaul Karim.

After resumption, Chittagong Abahani re-established their control in midfield, but neither Zahid nor Kingsley cashed in on two opportunities while goalkeeper Rasel Mahmud Liton denied De Spin Ghar substitute Reza Allah Yari brilliantly to hold on to the lead.

Kingsley, however, helped established the hosts' authority in the 58th minute with a powerful shot off the left foot after running on to a defence-splitting pass from Samnick. De Spin Ghar hit back in the 79th minute, with Sayed Mohammad Hashemi reducing the margin with a header before Kingsley, availing a pass from Zahid, killed off the contest with a powerful shot one minute before the end.

Sylhet end drought with a flourish

SPORTS REPORTER



Alok Kapali's Sylhet completed their first win of the ongoing National Cricket League (NCL) yesterday as they beat hosts Chittagong on a tense final day at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium.

Going into Day Four, the port city were poised at 188 for 6. A fluent 81 from Yasir Ali and a few hits from the tail ensured that Chittagong posted a competitive fourth innings target of 261 for Sylhet.

Kapali and co needed to chase down that total in two sessions. It might have been a risky decision, but Sylhet went for it. Openers Imtiaz Hossain and Shanaj Ahmed unleashed their strokes right from the start and raced to 50 runs in the first eight overs. They received further encouragement when Imtiaz was dropped on 39 in the tenth over.

The century-stand was completed in 19.4 overs and by tea Sylhet looked menacing at 130 for no loss. A brilliant foundation was built by the two openers and the middle-order batsmen merely carried on from there.

By the time Imtiaz and Shanaj departed for 74 and 76 respectively, Sylhet were cruising at 185 for 2. All-rounder Abul Hasan and wicketkeeper-batsman Zakir Hasan shared a 48-run stand to bring Sylhet closer to the target.

By the time Kapali came to the crease, Sylhet were cruising at 233 for 3. Kapali unfortunately departed for just seven, but

that didn't really affect the score-line as his side romped to a victory with eight overs remaining. The colossal batting effort, which saw Sylhet score at more than five runs an over, ended with a stylish six from Ruman Ahmed's bat. Shanaj was adjudged the player-of-the-match for the calm that he had shown during the chase.

Barisal had crushed Rajshahi on Monday, and the two remaining matches of the day ended in draws. Tier One leaders Khulna further consolidated their position at the top after they drew against Dhaka Metro in Fatullah yesterday.

Metro, on the other hand, overtook Dhaka Division on the table and are currently placed second. While Khulna have 47 points, Metro have 41.

However, the game could have gone in another direction had it not been for Sharifullah's rigid 154-ball 67. Metro had crumbled to 161 for 7 and were in danger of losing the game. However, Sharifullah batted for nearly three hours and shared long stands with the tail to bore Khulna out of the game.

Dhaka division escaped a defeat at the hands of Rangpur in their fixture yesterday. Rangpur had enforced the follow-on and the men from the capital were struggling overnight at 34 for 1 and were more than 150 runs behind Rangpur. However, resolute half-centuries from Saif Hassan and Nadif Chowdhury ensured that Dhaka didn't get bundled out. They reached stumps at 247 for 4.

BD A keep on losing

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A's batting blues continued as they suffered an 11-run defeat against Northern's Academy in the second one-dayer at the Irene Villagers Club ground in South Africa yesterday.

The second-string Bangladesh side were bundled out for just 167 runs in 33.3 overs in reply to the hosts 178 to continue their losing streak on the tour.

The margin of defeat could have been much higher had tail-ender Mohammad Shahid not scored a team-high 38. Mahmudul Hasan (35), Rony Talukdar (33) and Soumya Sarker (21) were the only other batsmen who reached double digits.

Selector Habibul Bashar, who is touring with the team as manager, expressed his disappointment by saying, "It was same old story as there was no application from the batsmen. It's really frustrating. If you look at the run-rate you can understand that all they wanted to do was play their shots."

Earlier, impressive bowling created the opportunity for the visitors to taste their first victory of the tour.

Al-Amin Hossain, Kamrul Islam Rabbi and Shahid took two wickets each, while Mahmudul Hasan and Saqlain Sajib captured one each.

Bangladesh A will play the third and last one-dayer against Gauteng Strikers at the Irene Villagers Club tomorrow.

IN A NUTSHELL

Warner's thumb won't heal

Australian opener David Warner admitted that he expects to suffer pain from a broken thumb for the rest of his career, but insisted it would not affect his batting. He sustained the injury against England during a one-dayer in September.

He has not played since but returns a Sheffield Shield clash starting Wednesday, ahead of the Test series with New Zealand starting November 5.

"I think I got hit against India in Brisbane on the same thumb last season as well and the pain is always going to be there," Warner told reporters.

"It is about me getting through that pain. You speak to any wicketkeeper in the world -- they are playing with broken fingers so I am not complaining at all."

The church of Zlatan

Zlatan Ibrahimovic has made a significant investment in Sweden this week, purchasing a house of God.

According to Swedish daily Aftonbladet, the 34-year-old PSG star has invested in buying a church in the Swedish suburb of Ostermalm in Stockholm.

The property didn't come cheap as Zlatan has spent about 9 million pounds on it.

Rather than keeping the building as a church, Ibrahimovic is apparently going to convert the building into a residential property. However, Zlatan isn't expected to occupy the property himself.



THE MONEY MOBILE: Retired boxer and five-division world champion Floyd Mayweather purchased a brand new Buggati Veyron Grand Sport Vitesse worth \$3.5 million. The 38-year-old showed-off his latest set of wheels on Instagram on Monday.

Baki eyes a quota

Shooters off to Kuwait

SPORTS REPORTER

A 14-member Bangladesh shooting team left for Kuwait yesterday morning to participate in the 13th Asian Shooting Championship scheduled for November 1 to 12.

The team, comprising eight shooters in junior section and two in the senior section, will compete in 10-metre air rifles, 10-metre air pistol and skeet events.

However, all the attention will be on Commonwealth Games silver medallist Abdullah Hel Baki, who will be looking to snatch a quota place for next year's Olympic Games. Baki said he was confident of grabbing the quota by qualifying for the final round in Kuwait.

"Since a number of shooters from the other countries have already earned their quotas, I will probably be eligible if I can qualify for the eight-man final round. If I can replicate my performance from last month's Asian Airgun Championship in Delhi, which was my best performance, I can hopefully qualify for the final round," said the best shooter of the country.

The other shooters in the team are: Shovon Chowdhury, Risalatul Islam, Jesimuzzan, Rabiul Islam, Syeda Atkia Hasan, Sharmin Akter, Jui Chakma, Shakil Ahmed and Sabbir Hasan.

SCORES IN BRIEF

DHAKA METRO V KHULNA Dhaka Metro: 399 and 262 all out in 107.5 overs (Sharifullah 67; Mehedi 3-58, Razzak 3-136) Khulna: 367 and 84 for 2 (Anamul 31; Sunny 2-21) Result: Match drawn	DHAKA V RANGPUR Rangpur: 463 Dhaka: 276 and 247 for 4 (Saif 84, Nadif 58 not out; Sajedul 1-13) Result: Match drawn	CHITTAGONG V SYLHET Chittagong: 270 and 272 all out in 109.5 overs (Yasir 81, Tasamul 77; Rahatul 4-72) Sylhet: 283 and 264 for 5 (Shahna 76, Imtiaz 74; Nabil 3-71) Result: Sylhet won by five wickets
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