

SPORT

BPL 120

WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 6s HIT **44** | TOTAL 4s HIT **111**

Most 6s hit by a player: 5, Jeevan Mendis and Tamim Iqbal, Chittagong Vikings
Most 4s hit by a player: 13, Dilshan Munaweera, Sylhet Superstars



Chittagong Vikings are delirious after confirming their last-ball win over the Sylhet Superstars. Bowler Mohammed Amir (L) takes off running, Tillakaratne Dilshan jumps for joy while captain Tamim Iqbal uproots the stumps to celebrate the victory. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Last-ball win for Vikings this time

SPORTS REPORTER

The thrill it seems is never ending. For the second consecutive day, the Bangladesh Premier League's day fixture witnessed a tantalising finish. Although the match between Tamim Iqbal's Chittagong Vikings and Mushfiqur Rahim's Sylhet Superstars began late, the ending was worth the wait.

Chittagong scrambled to a one-run win yesterday, denying Mushfiqur a chance to celebrate his unbeaten 50. Such was the intensity of the game that Tamim held onto the ball after the last delivery and stayed near the wicket to ask the umpire if play was finally dead.

It was only after he got the umpire's nod that he jumped in the air and celebrated the win.

Batting first, the Vikings posted a competitive 180, courtesy of half-centuries from Yasir Ali and Tamim. However, they were far from comfortable because they had lost from an even stronger position against Rangpur Riders the previous day.

And after the exchange it seemed as though they were headed for another defeat as Sylhet opener Dilshan Munaweera single-handedly tore apart Chittagong's opening bowlers. He smacked a 30-ball 64 and it was an innings that witnessed 13 fours and a six.

Six of those 13 fours in fact came in the second over when he absolutely destroyed his senior colleague Tillakaratne Dilshan.

At the end of six overs, they were at 65 for no loss and in a perfect position to chase down the total. But that was when the wickets began to tumble. In the next two overs they lost three wickets, including the crucial one of Munaweera.

From 65 for no loss, they were 76 for 3 and the flow of runs seemed to be throttled. However, Mushfiqur Rahim and Nurul Hasan -- after initially taking their time to get set -- started to take the attack to the bowlers to put Sylhet on top again.

The onslaught began in the 13th over when Nurul came down the track thrice and played baseball-esque hits to smack Taskin Ahmed for a six and two fours. However, once Nurul was out, it was all up to Mushfiqur.

Mushfiqur did well, but didn't receive support from the other end which eventually left Sylhet requiring 21 runs off 12 deliveries. Mushfiqur smacked a six and brought the equation down to nine from six. He beautifully drove Mohammad Amir through the covers for a four in the penultimate ball, but got just one from the last ball of the match when he required three for a win.

Earlier, Tamim smacked six fours and four sixes to post a 45-ball 69 to guide the Vikings.

Bulls upstage Riders

SPORTS REPORTER

Rangpur Riders, the best team on paper, did manage to snatch a victory on the first day of the BPL, but they failed to repeat their death-over heroics against a spirited Barisal Bulls outfit.

A brilliant five-wicket haul from Kevon Cooper and a patient half-century from Mahmudullah were the highlights of the Bulls' 13-run win. While Cooper bowled a brilliant four-wicket maiden to defend 15 runs in the last over, Mahmudullah's half-century helped Barisal recover from 15 for 4 to post 155.

The target didn't seem that high initially. Soumya Sarkar and Lendl Simmons unleashed their drives from the very first over of the match. However, they lost the two crucial wickets of Soumya and Shakib Al Hasan within the first six overs and that slowed the run-rate. The pressure increased on the middle-order once Misbahul Haq -- the hero for the Riders in the last match -- got caught behind in the 12th over. At that point in time, Barisal were struggling at 66 for 4.

However, as witnessed a number of times in this league already, a partnership ensued and revived Rangpur's chase.

Mohammad Mithun and Thisara Perera put on 68 runs in 6.3 overs. Mithun was the main aggressor scoring a beautiful 55 off 32 balls. He drove the ball with precision and caressed five fours and two sixes.

Mithun fell in the penultimate over and Rangpur, akin to the scenario in the last game, required 15 runs off the last over with Marlon Samuels on strike.

However, Samuels was caught in the deep off the first ball and the rest of the tail-enders managed just two runs in that over.

Earlier Barisal Bulls had made their worst possible start to the third season of the BPL.

Their top four batsmen were sent back in the opening four overs and the match seemed like it was heading towards a quick end.

Shahriar Nafees, Sabbir Rahman and Rony Talukdar were all removed by Perera. Shakib Al Hasan had come to the party as well, as he removed Zimbabwe's Brendan Taylor in the third over.

However, that's when Mahmudullah came to the crease and, together with Nadif Chowdhury, began the Bulls' revival. The duo shared an 82-run stand for the fifth wicket, which came in 11.2 overs.

Mahmudullah ended up scoring a responsible 51 off 43 balls, an innings which contained five fours and a six, while Nadif provided ample support with his 31-ball 30. Both of them were removed by Shakib in the 16th over.

BPL hits a snag

Tamim accuses Sylhet owners of verbal abuse

NAIMUL KARIM

Chittagong Vikings skipper Tamim Iqbal yesterday accused Sylhet Superstars owners of insulting his family prior to the start of their fixture as the BPL's second day descended into chaos.

Speaking to reporters after the match, which was delayed by an hour and ten minutes, the agitated left-hander said that he would request the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to take disciplinary action against that particular person.

"People need to respect national cricketers. People have money but that doesn't mean they have the right to treat a national cricketer like a beggar. We are here to play cricket; I haven't come here to hear swear words about my parents or my family. If they start treating us like beggars then maybe we should just stop playing the game," Tamim said during the post-match press conference.

"I was very nice to that individual; I even called him 'sir'. He asked me to stand up and talk to him and I even did that. Then he uttered a really bad word about my family, which was very insulting and it came out of nowhere.

"These people may be rich but the fact remains that the franchisees in the IPL are a thousand times richer. I may not have played in the IPL, but I have seen how they treat their players," Tamim added.

Prior to the start of the game, Tamim was seen speaking to Azizul Islam -- father of the Sylhet Superstars owner Azimul Islam -- in front of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium's Grand Stand. To everyone's surprise, the discussion between the two ended with a visibly angry Tamim storming

back to the dressing room. However, Azimul denied the allegations and said that his father had no reason to insult Tamim or his family.

The events took place after Chittagong Vikings refused to play due to certain technical issues. The match witnessed a delayed start because two of the foreign players -- Joshua Cobb and Ravi Bopara -- that Sylhet wanted to include, did not have no-objection certificates [NOC] from their home-boards.

The BPL's technical committee decided to bend the rules to allow

walkover which could have 'tarnished the image' of the competition.

After the ruling, the two captains exchanged team lists and the toss took place at 1:55 pm. However as the match was about to begin, Sylhet fielded four foreign players including Bopara and Cobb.

Tamim and Tillakaratne Dilshan protested and walked off the field, ensuring a near hour-long discussion between the players, franchise officials and members of BPL's technical committee.

"They [Sylhet] received their NOCs



Chittagong Vikings skipper Tamim Iqbal storms off the pitch after Sylhet Superstars came onto the field with two players who were not in their original team-list. PHOTO: STAR

Sylhet Superstars to play the match with only two foreign players. However, according to the rules of the BPL, a team must field four foreign players every match.

As per the playing conditions, the BPL's technical committee has the right 'edit or delete' a rule if it feels necessary. And the convener of the technical committee, Jalal Yunus, later said that they changed the rule in order to prevent a

at 1:59pm, which was four minutes after the toss. So they wanted to include the two other players. However, the only way that a team can be changed after the toss is if the opposition captain agrees to it; and Chittagong didn't agree," said Yunus.

"What Sylhet did was not right. They couldn't have included players in the team without the opposition captain's permission," he added.



BATTLE OF THE ACES: Barisal Bulls captain Mahmudullah Riyad's 51 helped his side recover after Shakib Al Hasan's three-wicket haul. PHOTO: STAR

Boult faces fitness test

AFP, Perth

Key New Zealand pacer Trent Boult has back trouble and must prove his fitness in training to play in this week's historic day-night Test against Australia, coach Mike Hesson said Monday.

The left-armed bowler has an irritated disc in his back, similar to the complaint which hindered his new ball partner Tim Southee during the first Test loss in Brisbane.

Boult did not bowl in the two-day tour practice game against a Western Australia XI in Perth over the weekend, and needs to show he can deliver at full pace without hindrance to play in Friday's third Test in Adelaide.

"We'll have to see how he travels to Adelaide but he's certainly an option for the Test," Hesson told reporters.

Who's getting TT's money?

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) has recently discovered financial anomalies in Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation's (BTF) training camp for the upcoming South Asian Games.

Since the start of the BTF training camp on August 20, the federation has shown the presence of Indian coach Soumik Kar and took Tk 54,000 for two-month allowances from the BOA but the reality is the Indian coach is yet to arrive in Bangladesh.

The BOA training and development committee investigated the matter recently and asked the game's governing body to reimburse the money. The committee also found that the players were not attending the camp regularly, yet the federation is regularly paying their daily allowances with money from the BOA, which is running the camp for the SA Games to be held in India from February 6 next year.

As the committee also found the absence of four players in the camp, the BOA allocated Tk 3,48,400 against Tk 4,44,500 submitted by the BTF as advance payment for the month of November.

When asked about the issue, BTF general secretary, Khandokar Hasan Monir said: "We took the money from the BOA after being ensured that he (Soumik) will arrive in Dhaka on time, but he could not come due to dengue fever."

SL to host Indo-Pak series?

PTI, Dubai

Sri Lanka has emerged as the likely venue for the much-awaited Indo-Pak bilateral cricket series and an official announcement may be made on November 27.

While BCCI made it clear that they will not play in the United Arab Emirates and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) refusing to play in India, the only feasible option left was the island nation, which will act as the neutral venue.

With only a month's window available after India finish their Test series against South Africa on December 7, the series is likely to be confined to three ODIs and two T20 Internationals instead of the original two Tests, five ODIs and two T20 Internationals, according to top BCCI sources.

The proceedings had been fast-tracked once BCCI president and current ICC chairman Shashank Manohar met PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan and senior official Najam Sethi here in presence of ECB supreme and chairman of 'Pakistan Task Force' Giles Clarke.

Without divulging any details, both Sethi and Khan had said yesterday that the meeting with Manohar was "fruitful" giving an

indication that the deadlock on the marquee series was broken.

"Since PCB will need the permission of Nawaz Sharif before going official, Shaharyar Khan will need to go back to Islamabad and seek the Prime Minister's permission. Once he gets the green light from the PM, he will again come back to Dubai and intimate his decision to Clarke. Clarke is likely to officially announce the series on November 27," the source told PTI today.

It has been learnt that Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has been approached by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and they seem to be keen to host the series.

The two stadiums earmarked for the series are Khettrama (R Premadasa Stadium) and Pallekele (Kandy). While the receding monsoon has hit the island nation badly, the weather forecast for the last part of December looks good.

While some T20 matches are scheduled at the Khettrama, the SLC will reschedule them at the first notice, once the official announcement is made.

This will be the first time that a Test playing nation has rejected playing a series in the UAE since it became Pakistan's adopted home after the 2009 Lahore attacks.