

SPORT

BPL

WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 6s HIT **61** | TOTAL 4s HIT **162**

Most 6s hit by a player: 8, Tamim Iqbal, Chittagong Vikings
Most 4s hit by a player: 19, Dilshan Munaweera, Sylhet Superstars



Skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has won many battles for his country and clubs. But on Tuesday he surprised many by leading Comilla Victorians to trump Chittagong Vikings in a BPL game, where he scored an unbeaten 50 batting at number five. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Al-Amin makes it two in two for Barisal

SPORTS REPORTER

Barisal Bulls edged past the Sylhet Superstars by one-run in a 'sea-saw' contest, which went right down to the last ball in Mirpur yesterday.

The exciting low-scoring encounter witnessed a five-wicket haul from Al-Amin including a hatrick, and a confident last over from Taijul Islam which saw him defend eight runs successfully. Unfortunately for Sylhet, this was their second consecutive one-run defeat in two days.

After bundling out Barisal for 108 on a slow track, it was assumed that Mushfiqur Rahim's Sylhet would be able to cruise through.

However, that was not to be as Al-Amin caused early damage with a brilliant hatrick. It was a phenomenal spell of bowling from the 25-year-old.

Sylhet initially lost Mominul Haque in the second over, who edged one to the keeper. In his next over, Al-Amin bowled a similar delivery to get Ravi Bopara caught behind in the second ball. While that delivery moved away from the batsman, his next wicket, Quazi Nurul Hasan, came courtesy of a beautiful in-swing.

For Al-Amin to complete the hatrick, he had to get Sylhet's main man, Mushfiqur Rahim out and at the onset it seemed like a near-impossible task, for the little man has been in terrific form ever since the Zimbabwe series.

However, Al-Amin managed to bowl the perfect delivery to uproot Mushfiqur's stumps. It was quick, pitched up and swung just enough to beat Mushfiqur's front-foot defence.

The mood that he set with his five-wicket haul was in complete contrast to the one that he had created just before the end of Barisal innings. After getting bowled by his national colleague, Mohammad Shahid in the 20th over, Al-Amin went to the bowler and gave him an unnecessary shove. Mushfiqur had to run from his keeping position to separate the players.

After Al-Amin reduced Sylhet to 18 for 4, Dilshan Munaweera and Owais Shah shared a 43-run stand for the fifth wicket and helped revive the innings.

Both Shah and Munaweera, though, were removed by Taijul in the 12th over and it brought the momentum back towards Barisal. They could have further stamped their authority if Nazmul Islam Apu was caught in the 15th over off Taijul at long-on. The fielder however, just managed to push it out of the boundary for a six.

That brought the equation down to 20 runs off 24 balls and that's when the intensity of the match notched up a degree.

Mohammad Sami removed Apu in the last ball of the 17th over before Al-Amin came back to remove Nazmul Hossain in the third ball of the 19th over, to complete his five-wicket haul. However, a boundary from Fidel Edwards in the last ball of that over brought the equation down to eight runs off six balls.

Shahid, though, was caught in the first ball of the last over and eventually Sylhet's last pair was drained out and managed just six runs.

Mash even surprised himself

NAIMUL KARIM

As cool as a cucumber and as sharp as a knife, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza showed his more established batsmen how it's done. Never mind that the Comilla Victorians were struggling at 54 for 3 against Chittagong Vikings when he arrived at the crease, never mind that he had never scored a half-century in a T20 format of the game; all that Mashrafe put in his attacking instinct and sheer will-power into perspective.

Yesterday's win in a BPL game at Mirpur meant a lot to the Bangladesh skipper, which was evident from the way he celebrated.

As soon as he glided Mohammad Amir to the third-man for a boundary, he threw his bat in the air and sprinted towards the dressing room. It was a half-century that he had thoroughly enjoyed.

Such was the intensity of the celebrations that Mashrafe had actually forgotten to take his bat off the field; a calm-looking Marlon Samuels had to complete that job later on.

"Even when that ball went for a four I couldn't really believe that we had won it. I didn't really expect to score a 50 when I came into bat. I guess that's why I was very excited. I never really finished an innings for a team before so I enjoyed it quite a bit," Mashrafe later told reporters while reflecting on his emotional victory celebration.

"I have been practicing my batting a lot more than before and credit for that goes to coach Chandika Hathurusingha. He always ensures that I get batting practice like the other batters because we play with seven batsmen in the national team now," added the skipper.

A brilliant 123-run stand between Samuels and Mashrafe led the Comilla Victorians to a seven-wicket win over

Tamim Iqbal's Chittagong Vikings. The score-line may suggest that Comilla had it easy, but that wasn't the case.

Chasing 177, Comilla lost Liton Das and Imrul Kayes with just 16 runs on the board. Shuvagata Hom had come in next, looked good with two sixes and four fours but eventually perished in the eighth over for a 16-ball 30. With 120 runs required of the last 12 overs, Mashrafe decided to promote himself. The idea of course was to score some quick runs since they didn't really have too many hitters in the side and the plan worked like a gem.

The skipper came in and together with Samuels started stitching a mature partnership. While they did concentrate on rotating the strike, they ensured to smack a boundary in each over.

The highlight of the chase came in the 14th over when Saeed Ajmal was torn apart for 20 runs. It included a six off Mashrafe and a four off Samuels. Since then the pair

looked back.

Chittagong however, didn't make things too easy for them either, dropping a number of catches. Mashrafe was dropped off Shafiu Islam in the 15th over while Samuels got a life in the 18th.

The batsmen made the most of the reprieves and eventually required just 12 of the last two overs. Samuels and Mashrafe smacked Amir for a four each and finished the game with seven balls in hand.

While Samuels finished on unbeaten 52-ball 69, Mashrafe hammered a 32-ball 56.

Earlier, Chittagong, playing their third match in as many days, continued their good run with the bat. This time though there weren't any half-centuries and it took a team effort from the Vikings to post 176. While the top order gave them a good start, a brilliant 16-ball 39 from Ziaur Rahman towards the end gave them a good finish. Ziaur smacked three sixes and two fours in his 24-ball 39.

BD youths downed

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19s succumbed to second defeat against their Indian counterparts in the ongoing tri-series in Kolkata yesterday.

Batting first, the visitors rode on a brilliant 90-ball 87 from Mehedi Hasan Miraz to post 222. Miraz smacked two sixes and ten fours. However, he didn't get much support from the rest of his teammates.

Initially the visitors had stumbled to 81 for 4 in 30 overs and were headed for a low score. However, that's when Miraz entered the picture and began Bangladesh's revival. He shared a crucial stand with Mohammad Saifuddin who smacked a 26-ball 30 and helped the visitors pass the 200-run mark.

However, that score eventually wasn't enough as India batsmen cruised home with 1.2 overs remaining.

Miraz, after a good batting knock, took two wickets and contributed with the ball as well.

Half-centuries from Rishabh Pant and Sundar Washington, who had earlier scalped two wickets, helped the hosts achieve their target.

Bangladesh will play Afghanistan next and will need to win that game in order to seal a place in the finals.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH UNDER-19s: 222/7 in 50 overs (Mehedi 87; Sundar 2/25)

INDIA UNDER-19s: 223/6 in 48.3 overs (Rishabh 51, Sundar 50; Mehedi 2/50)

Result: India Under-19s won by four wickets.

PREMIER cement

SCOREBOARDS

VIKINGS V VICTORIANS					BULLS V SUPERSTARS				
CHITTAGONG VIKINGS	R/B	4/6			BARISAL BULLS	R/B	4/6		
Tamim c Mahmudul b Zaidi	33/31	1/3			Nafees c Bopara b Edwards	12/11	2/0		
Dilshan c Imrul b Zaidi	36/21	6/1			Rony c Mushfiqur b Subashis	20/15	2/0		
Anamul not out	39/30	4/0			Taylor c b Nazmul	9/9	2/0		
Kapugedera b Mashrafe	2/4	0/0			Mahmudullah run out	7/13	1/0		
Yasir st Liton b Narine	22/18	2/1			Sabbir c Shah b Nazmul	15/14	0/1		
Ziaur not out	39/16	2/3			Nadif run out	24/28	1/1		
Extras: (lb-2, w-3)	5				Prasanna c Milton b Nazmul	0/3	0/0		
Total: (For 4 wks in 20 overs)	176				Cooper c Mushfiqur b Bopara	2/3	0/0		
Did not bat: Shafiu Islam, Saeed Ajmal, Asif Ahmed, Mohammad Amir, Taskin Ahmed					Taijul not out	10/17	1/0		
Fall of wickets: 1-63, 2-79, 3-84, 4-123.					Sami run out	0/0	0/0		
Bowler	O	M	R	W	Al-Amin b Shahid	3/6	0/0		
Mahmudul	2	0	23	0	Extras: (lb-1, w-3, nb-2)	6			
Santokie	3	0	19	0	Total: (All out in 19.3 overs)	108			
Mashrafe	3	0	30	1	Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-34, 3-48, 4-53, 5-75, 6-75, 7-80, 8-101, 9-101.				
Narine	4	0	29	1	Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaidi	4	0	29	2	Shahid	3.3	0	15	1
Hider	4	0	44	0	Edwards	4	0	35	1
COMILLA VICTORIANS	R/B	4/6			Subashis	3	0	19	1
Liton c Ziaur b Amir	9/12	2/0			Nazmul Islam	4	0	18	3
Imrul c Tamim b Amir	0/1	0/0			Bopara	4	0	14	1
Samuels not out	69/52	8/1			Munaweera	1	0	6	0
Shuvagata c Dilshan					SYLHET SUPERSTARS	R/B	4/6		
b Shafiu	30/16	4/2			Munaweera c Prasanna	36/31	6/0		
Mashrafe not out	56/32	4/3			b Taijul	2/6	0/0		
Extras: (lb-2, w-11)	13				Mominul c Taylor b Al-Amin	4/3	1/0		
Total: (For 3 wks in 18.5 overs)	177				Bopara c Taylor b Al-Amin	4/3	1/0		
Did not bat: Mahmudul Hasan, Alok Kapali, Ashar Zaidi, K Santokie, SP Narine, Abu Hider					Nurul b Al-Amin	0/1	0/0		
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-10, 3-54.					Mushfiqur b Al-Amin	0/1	0/0		
Bowler	O	M	R	W	Shah lbw b Taijul	11/29	0/0		
Amir	3.5	0	27	2	Milton c Taijul b Al-Amin	15/21	1/0		
Taskin	4	1	34	0	Nazmul b Sami	16/14	0/1		
Shafiu	4	0	43	1	Shahid c Nadif b Taijul	2/6	0/0		
Ajmal	3	0	35	0	Edwards not out	11/6	1/0		
Asif	2	0	18	0	Subashis not out	1/2	0/0		
Ziaur	2	0	18	0	Extras: (b-4, lb-1, w-4)	9			
Result: Comilla Victorians won by 7 wickets.					Total: (For 9 wks in 20 overs)	107			
Player-of-the-match: Mashrafe Bin Mortaza.					Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-18, 3-18, 4-18, 5-61, 6-62, 7-90, 8-95, 9-101.				
					Bowler	O	M	R	W
					Sami	4	1	9	1
					Al-Amin	4	0	36	5
					Prasanna	4	0	20	0
					Cooper	4	0	14	0
					Taijul	4	0	23	3
					Result: Barisal Bulls won by 1 run.				
					Player-of-the-match: Al-Amin Hossain.				

India eye series

AFP, Nagpur

India will start as favourites to wrap up the series after South Africa's pace spearhead Dale Steyn was sidelined again for the third Test which starts in Nagpur on Wednesday.

India lead the four-match series 1-0 after winning the first Test in Mohali inside three days before rain washed out the last four days of the drawn second match in Bangalore.

With another dry, spin-friendly pitch laid at the VCA Stadium on the outskirts of Nagpur, the top-ranked Proteas are in real danger of losing their nine-year unbeaten series record on foreign soil.

South African captain Hashim Amla confirmed that Steyn will not take field, saying his premier fast bowler had not recovered from the groin strain he suffered in Mohali.

"Not having Dale in the team is a setback because not having the services of the best bowler in the world is never a nice thing," he said. "But we've got to deal with it and, hopefully, the guys who play will get a chance to stand out."

When South Africa played a Test in Nagpur in 2010, Steyn picked up a 10-wicket haul, including a career-best 7-57 in the first innings, to fashion his team's emphatic win by an innings and six runs.

Indian captain Virat Kohli, however, insisted Steyn's absence will not make a difference to his team's prospects.



THE HATTRICK WICKET: Pace bowler Al-Amin Hossain (R) has Mushfiqur Rahim's furniture disturbed with a fast and furious delivery to claim only the second hatrick in BPL after the exploit of Pakistan pacer Mohammad Sami in the inaugural edition in 2012. PHOTO: STAR

BSL closer to reality

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to hold franchise-based Bangladesh Super League (BSL), styled after the Indian Super League, in the 2016-17 season with the help of three parties -- UK Soccer League, Celebrity Management Group of India and Saif Power Tec Ltd.

The announcement was made yesterday after a meeting among the BFF high-ups and representatives of CMG and Saif Power Tech at the Gulshan residence of BFF president Kazi Salahuddin.

"It was a long desire and today [Tuesday] we have reached a decision to hold the Bangladesh Super League with the help of three parties from the 2016-17 season. We will let you know about the details within the next 30 days," said Salahuddin after the meeting.

CMG, a Kolkata-based event management company, had initially proposed the BFF to hold the franchise-based league before UK Soccer League came up with its own proposal. "The decision to hold the BSL has been finalised and I think we can hold it successfully," said Salahuddin, adding that the marketing and promotional aspects of the league will be launched by January next year. The BFF boss also informed that a total of Tk 100 crore would be needed to stage the tournament.

Replying to a query, Salahuddin said: "It is too early to say names of franchises, which depends on which districts and divisions are applying for the league. However, we are thinking of holding the league in four cities -- Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rajshahi."

Saif Power Tec has recently sponsored the Sheikh Kamal International Club Cup in Chittagong. "We will be involved in organising the tournament and we may have a franchise from Chittagong," said Tarafder Ruhul Amin, the managing director of the company, and also the football committee chairman of Chittagong Abahani club.