

Victorians end Bulls' streak

SPORTS REPORTER



A brilliant bowling performance on a slow Mirpur track led Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's Comilla Victorians to their second consecutive win of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

While Mahmudullah Riyad's Barisal Bulls did defend a 108 the day before, they failed to repeat the magic after being bundled out for just 89 runs yesterday. The total set by the Bulls was the lowest score by a team batting first in current BPL.

It therefore was no surprise when the Victorians ambled their way to an eight-wicket victory.

The damage initially began with Sri Lanka pacer Nuwan Kulasekara taking two scalps in as early as the second over. He got both Shahriar Nafees and Brendon Taylor caught behind. Skipper Mahmudullah was the next batsman to follow as he was undone by a full-length delivery from 19-year-old left-arm pacer Abu Hider. Two overs later, Hider hit the stumps again; this time to remove Rony Talukdar.

At 36 for 4, the Bulls were under pressure and the runs almost dried up. They did still have hope with the hard-hitting Sabbir Rahman and the experienced Nadif Chowdhury at the crease.

However, that's when Mashrafe introduced slow left-amer Ashar Zaidi into the attack. The Pakistani bowler knew the conditions in Mirpur well for he used to be a regular in the domestic circuit here and he made full use of the experience.

He removed both Sabbir and Seekkuge Prasanna in consecutive deliveries of the 12th over and then came back in the 14th to bowl out Nadif Chowdhury.

Kevon Cooper came in next and provided a slight amount of resistance. He scored a 21-ball 22 before becoming Kulasekara's third victim.

Sunil Narine then mopped up the tail.

While the Bulls were down, they were far from being out. Going by the way they fought back in the last match, the game was far from over.

Al-Amin Hossain and Mohammad Sami once again opened the bowling striving for a repeat. However, this time the match followed a rather different path.

While Al-Amin did get Imrul Kayes out in the fourth over, Marlon Samuels and Mahmudul Hasan ensured there were no worries with a 37-run stand for the second wicket.

By the time Mahmudul was sent back in the 13th over, the job was almost done. Samuels and Shuvagata Hom took Comilla home with two overs to spare.



Rangpur Riders' left-arm spinner Arafat Sunny (L) and Darren Sammy celebrate the prized scalp of Dhaka Dynamites' Kumar Sangakkara in a BPL fixture that the Riders won by a massive 69 runs at Mirpur yesterday.



WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 6s HIT 71

TOTAL 4s HIT 195

Most 6s hit by a player: 8, Tamim Iqbal, Chittagong Vikings

Most 4s hit by a player: 19, Dilshan Munawwar, Sylhet Superstars

BD youths face India in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19s comfortably overcame their Afghan counterparts in an Under-19 cricket tri-series match at the Jadavpur University ground yesterday. Set a target of 100 runs to win, Bangladesh reached home with eight wickets and 25.3 overs to spare.

The win means that Bangladesh have grabbed a place in the final where they will battle it out against India -- a team which has already beaten them -- on November 29.

Bangladesh had some early jitters, losing Saif Hassan and Sheikh Imon, as they faltered to 29-2. However, the youths kept their cool and overhauled the Afghans' score without any further hiccups.

Najmul Hossain Shanto and captain Mehedi Hassan Miraz remained unbeaten and forged a 72-run partnership to take the hosts over the line.

Earlier, Bangladesh spinners Saleh Ahmed and Saeed Sarkar spun a web around the Afghan batsmen, and they picked up crucial wickets at regular intervals to hold the hosts to a below-par score.

Only four Afghan batsmen could get into double-digits, as Tariq Stanikzai top-scored with 27.

Bangladesh finished their games with nine points and finished second behind India.

Riders defuse Dynamites

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) witnessed its first one-sided contest when the Rangpur Riders decimated the Dhaka Dynamites by 69 runs in Mirpur. The margin of the victory was in fact the fourth highest in a BPL tournament.

Having lost their previous game, Rangpur -- considered the strongest team on paper -- needed to bounce back. And they did that in style as their key performers clicked yesterday.

In the last two matches, neither of Rangpur's openers managed big scores. However, yesterday was different as the West Indies' Lendl Simmons scored a responsible 51 off 39 deliveries. The foundation built by Simmons made things a lot easier for the rest of the batsmen. He smashed three sixes and five fours.

The West Indian took off in the third over

when he smashed Nasir Hossain for a six and four. Abul Hasan was his next victim, getting hit for 15 runs in the sixth over.

In addition to Simmons' innings, brilliant all-round performances from Thisara Perera and Shakib Al Hasan helped the Riders clinch the game with ease. While Thisara scored 27 with the bat and finished with figures of 3 for 25, Shakib scored 24 and took a crucial 4 for 16.

After electing to bat first, the Riders posted 176. It was a different line-up compared to the last game as they decided to drop Misbahul Haq. It was a decision that initially came as a surprise considering that the Pakistani had scored a match-winning half-century in the first game.

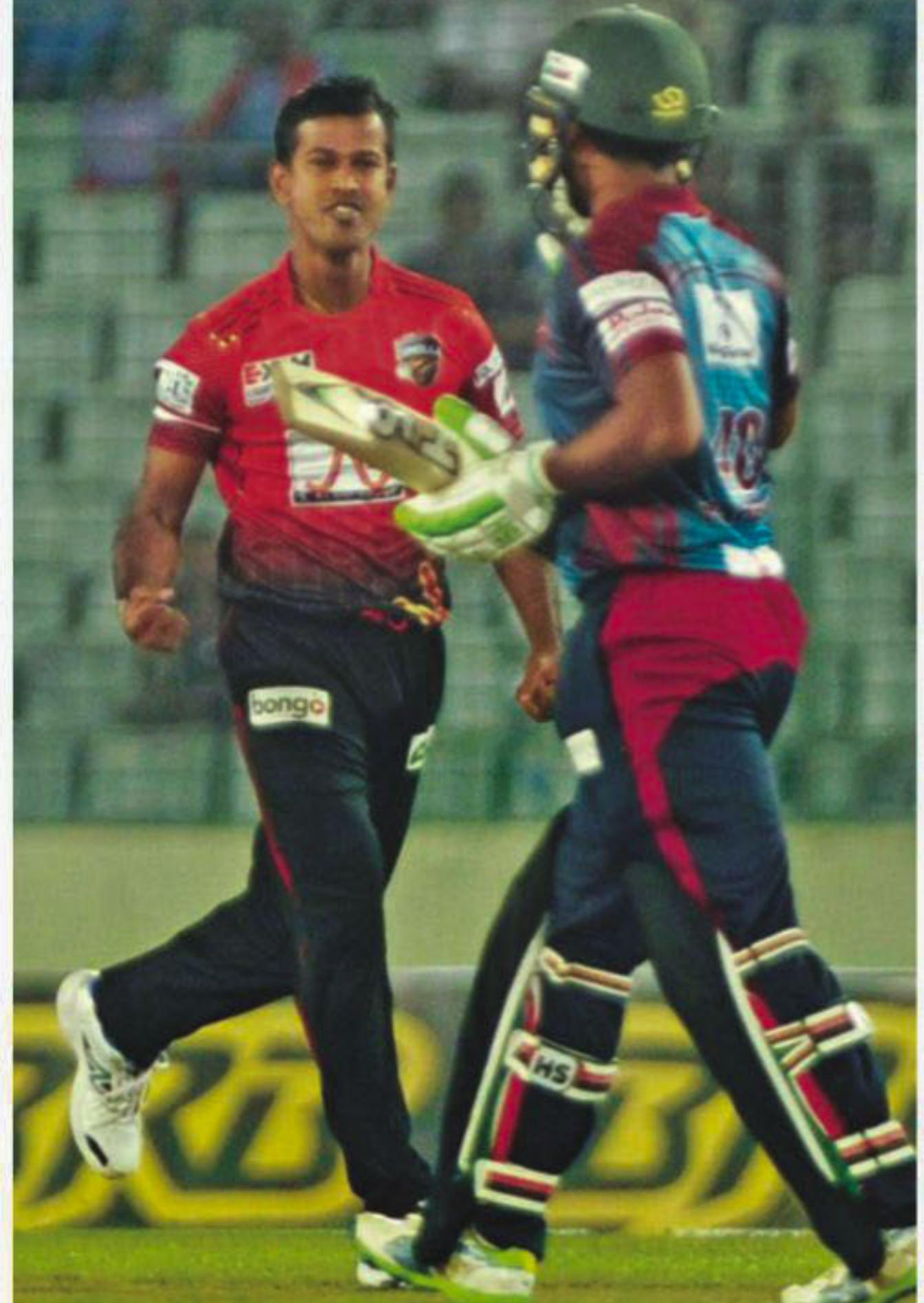
The decision was taken as Rangpur decided to utilise the all-rounders in their side to the fullest. With Shakib, Perera, Marlon Samuels and Mohammad Al-Amin in the side, they decided to draft in specialist off-spinner Sachitra Sananayake.

The ploy seemed to work for Rangpur, as after the exchange the wicket slowed down a tiny and that provided Rangpur's slower bowlers with a bit more help.

Dhaka's openers, Nasir Jamshed and Shamsur Rahman, were both removed by Shakib in the third over. The next two batsmen, Kumar Sangakkara and Mosaddek Hossain, fell victim to left-arm spin as well, with Arafat Sunny scalping their crucial wickets.

Had it not been for the turnarounds witnessed in the last few matches, many would have considered the game done and dusted by the 11th over when the Dynamites were struggling at 53 for 4.

However, there were no hard hits and no exciting finishes yesterday as Dhaka's lower order batsmen found no avenue for their shots. The intensity was lost in the last five overs and it almost seemed to end in slow motion. The Dynamites were bundled out for 107 in 19.4 overs.



Nuwan Kulasekara (L) of Comilla Victorians bowled beautifully against Barisal Bulls to finish with miserly figure of 3-8 in his three overs during the second BPL match at Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Wickets a concern

NAIMUL KARIM



The one thing that has been absolutely obvious in the third season of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) is that the wicket at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur tends to wear down a bit during the evening matches.

The difference in statistics of matches played in the day compared to those played in the evening -- both of which are played on the same wicket -- have been evident.

We have seen matches where totals like 187 and 176 have been chased down with ease during the day, whereas the day before yesterday Barisal Bulls successfully defended 108 in the evening.

According to ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, there is a chance for scores to further decrease as the tournament progresses.

"There are two matches everyday and the curators are probably not getting enough time to prepare the wickets. So day-by-day the wicket is getting worn down. The wicket is getting slower and lower," said Shakib after his side's thumping 69-run win over Dhaka Dynamites.

"In the afternoon it's a fresh wicket so the ball comes to the bat well. As time passes, the wicket gets slower, so it becomes a little difficult to bat in the

later games," he added.

When asked if he expects the wicket to get more difficult towards the end of the tournament, Shakib said, "I think so. But we just have to adjust to this and make our team combination accordingly. Like today we had around 8 to 9 proper batsmen in the side."

Dhaka Dynamites opener Shamsur Rahman echoed Shakib's sentiments.

"The wicket was a bit slow. I think it was dangerous to bat against the spinners," said Shamsur.

I HAVE NO ENERGY IN MY BODY

Shakib hasn't had the best of games since his return from America. While he did scalp a four-wicket haul in the game yesterday, he still seems a bit on edge with the bat. Shakib admitted that he was struggling but was confident of a comeback.

"Actually I have no energy in my body. I played 15-16 balls yesterday and out of them three to four deliveries should have been hit for sixes. After coming here I still have a bit of jetlag. I am also a bit sick as I am suffering from dysentery and flu.

"You can't do many things when you don't have energy and that's why I am struggling. I may have scored 25, but I didn't bat well. It's going to take some time. That I am not able to practice in between the matches doesn't help much, but it will eventually come. Thankfully though my bowling is going

PREMIER cement

SCOREBOARDS

RIDERS V DYNAMITES	R/B 4/6	BULLS V VICTORIANS	R/B 4/6
RANGPUR RIDERS	R/B 4/6	BARISAL BULLS	R/B 4/6
Simmons c Farhad	51/39 5/3	Nafees c Dhiman	3/8 0/0
b Mosharraf	24	b Kulasekara	17/22 2/0
b Soumya c Mosaddek	4/0	Rony c & b Hider	10/13 1/0
b Mustafizur	3/2	Taylor c Dhiman	7/15 0/0
Mithun lbw b Hasan	3/2	b Kulasekara	0/2 0/0
Perera c Jamshed	2/2	Mahmudullah b Hider	9/13 1/0
b Mustafizur	2/2	Sabbir c Dhiman b Zaidi	10/13 1/0
Sammy c Sangakkara b Yasir 3/4 0/0	0/0	Nadif b Zaidi	7/15 0/0
Shakib not out	3/0	Prasanna c Shuvagata	0/0 0/0
Al-Amin st Sangakkara	0/0	b Zaidi	0/1 0/0
b Yasir	0/0	Cooper lbw b Kulasekara	22/21 2/0
Jahurul not out	0/0	Taijul run out	3/9 0/0
Extras: (lb-5, w-4)	9	Samir b Narine	6/3 0/1
Total: (For 6 wkts in 20 overs) 176		Al-Amin not out	0/4 0/0
Did not bat: Senanayake, Arafat Sunny, Abu Jayed.		Extras: (lb-1, w-11)	12
Fall of wickets: 1-38, 2-94, 3-122, 4-140, 5-142, 6-150.		Total: (All out in 18.3 overs) 89	
Bowler O M R W		Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-3, 3-27, 4-36, 5-49, 6-49, 7-58, 8-78, 9-81.	
Nasir 2 0 13 0		Bowler O M R W	
Farhad 3 0 24 0		Moshrafe 4 0 22 0	
Mustafizur 4 0 38 2		Kulasekara 3 1 8 3	
Hasan 4 0 41 1		Narine 3.3 0 21 1	
Mosharraf 3 0 31 1		Hider 4 0 21 2	
Yasir 4 0 24 2		Zaidi 4 0 16 3	
Al-Amin not out		COMILLA VICTORIANS R/B 4/6	
Extras: (lb-1, w-11)		Imrul c Sabir	
Total: (All out in 18.3 overs) 89		b Al-Amin 13/14 2/0	
Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-3, 3-27, 4-36, 5-49, 6-49, 7-58, 8-78, 9-81.		Mahmudulc	
Bowler O M R W		Mahmudullah b Cooper 31/43 4/0	
Nasir c Sabir		Samuels not out 23/38 0/0	
Ten Doeschate c Sabir		Shuvagata not out 12/13 1/0	
b Perera 8/14 0/0		Extras: (b-8, lb-3) 11	
Nasir c Jayed b Shakib 15/20 0/0		Total: (For 2 wkts in 18 overs) 90	
Farhad b Shakib 1/2 0/0		Did not bat: Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Alok Kapali, Sunil Narine, Ashar Zaidi, KMDN Kulasekara, Abu Hider, Dhiman Ghosh.	
Yasir c Al-Amin b Perera 12/11 1/0		Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-60.	
Mosharraf b Jayed 3/8 0/0		Bowler O M R W	
Mustafizur not out 1/2 0/0		Sami 2 0 11 0	
Extras: (b-4, lb-2, w-5, nb-1) 12		Arafat 4 0 29 1	
Total: (All out in 19.4 overs) 107		Taijul 4 0 12 0	
Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-15, 3-35, 4-53, 5-63, 6-78, 7-83, 8-102, 9-104.		Al-Amin 2 0 29 1	
Bowler O M R W		Prasanna 4 0 16 0	
Shakib 4 0 16 4		Cooper 3 0 7 1	
Senanayake 3 0 21 4		Sabbir 1 0 4 0	
Arafat 4 0 15 2		Jayed 0.4 0 1 1	
Al-Amin 2 0 13 0		Result: Rangpur Riders won by 69 runs.	
Sammy 2 0 10 0		Player-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan.	
Perera 4 0 25 3		Player-of-the-match: Nuwan Kulasekara.	
Jayed 0.4 0 1 1			
Result: Comilla Victorians won by 8 wickets.			
Player-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan.			

India 215; Proteas 11 for 2

AFP, Nagpur



Morne Morkel and Simon Harmer bamboozled India with pace and spin on a tricky wicket but South Africa also suffered early blows in the third Test in Nagpur on Wednesday.

Off-spinner Harmer claimed four wickets for 78 and fast bowler Morkel took three for 35 as the Proteas bowled India out for 215 in the post-tea session of the first day's play.