

SPORTS

WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 6s HIT **147** | TOTAL 4s HIT **456**

Most 6s by a player: 9, Tamim Iqbal Chittagong Vikings
 Most 4s by players: 28, Dilshan Munaweera, Sylhet Superstars and Tillakaratne Dilshan, Chittagong Vikings

Gayle force incoming

SPORTS REPORTER from Cig

West Indian batsman Chris Gayle will arrive in Dhaka today to take part in the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League. Gayle, who will be playing for the Barisal Bulls, is expected to play his first game on Sunday when the Bulls take on Sylhet Superstars at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Gayle has a brilliant record in the BPL with three hundreds in six matches. The dominant batsman also averages an unbelievable 100.50.

Barisal, who are already doing well in the competition, will definitely be boosted by the West Indian's arrival.

In Evin Lewis Barisal already have a player who can smack the ball quite hard and with Gayle coming in, their opening pair may go on to prove to be the most dangerous in the competition.



Barisal Bulls pacer Al-Amin Hossain picked up three wickets in yesterday's match against the Rangpur Riders at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong and inspired his side to second place in the Bangladesh Premier League table.

Victorians bury Vikings

NAIMUL KARIM from Chittagong

Chittagong Vikings' journey at home ended in the worst possible manner as they suffered an agonizing five-wicket defeat to the Comilla Victorians yesterday.

Firstly their chances of making it to the last four received a huge dent following the loss. And secondly, they will anxiously be waiting to know if the Bangladesh Premier League's technical committee will take any action against their top player Tillakaratne Dilshan, who seemingly tried to obstruct Imrul Kayes' path as the left-hander attempted to take a run.

Replays showed Dilshan coming in Kayes' path after which the players collided and fell on the ground. In the meantime Kayes' partner Ahmed Shehzad had already run the distance and arrived at the batsman's crease. With no one at the runners end, Chittagong completed the run-out. The incident took place in the fourth ball of the second over.

However, as the events transpired, the umpires eventually decided that it was a deliberate attempt to obstruct the batsman. As a result, five penalty runs were awarded to the Comilla Victorians and that particular ball was deemed dead.

From there, the momentum seemed to shift towards the Victorians and Chittagong's body language deteriorated.

That particular over gave away 15 runs, which was a lot considering that the Chittagong had posted just 136 runs on the board.

Kayes and Shehzad shared a 52-run stand for the second wicket and laid a good foundation for the team.

Dilshan did eventually get Kayes caught behind in the tenth over. However, that brought the in-form Shoaib Malik to the crease. Together with his Pakistani colleague, the duo further consolidated Comilla's dominance with a 39-run partnership in five overs.

There was more drama in store though. Comilla suffered a mini-collapse once Shehzad departed in the 15th over for 37. After that, Mohammad Amir was brought back into the attack and he took the wickets of both Ashar Zaidi and Shuvagata Hom in the 17th over.

That meant that Comilla needed 24 runs off the last three overs with five wickets in hand.

Alok Kapali smacked Bilawal Bhatti for a four in the 18th over and brought the equation down to 16 from 12.

The penultimate over of the match saw Amir give away nine runs as Malik carved him for a boundary through point.

Comilla required just seven runs off the last over. An easy task was made easier after Bhatti bowled a beamer and gave away a free-hit. Eventually Comilla reached home with two balls remaining.

Earlier, Chittagong failed to make the most of the start provided to them by their openers and had to settle for a below-par score. Dilshan and Tamim Iqbal put on 51 runs in 7.2 overs and it seemed as though the hosts were headed for a big score. However, after Tamim's departure in the eighth over, the scenario began to change. Anamul Haque was run-out in the same over and suddenly the hosts found themselves at 54 for 2.

The middle-order, except for Umar Akmal, couldn't do much to stop the bleeding.

Had it not been for Akmal's unbeaten 49 off 34 deliveries, things would have been much worse for the hosts. He smacked four fours and two sixes towards the end to help his side past the 130-mark.

Bangladesh women qualify for T20 WC

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's women cricketers confirmed their qualification for next year's ICC Women's World Twenty20 after beating Zimbabwe by 31 runs in the first semifinal of the qualifiers at Terdthai Cricket Stadium in Bangkok yesterday.

The Bangladesh team, under the leadership of Jahanara Alam who recently replaced Salma Khatun as the Twenty20 skipper, comfortably defended an 89-run total. Bangladesh will play against Ireland -- who beat Scotland by nine wickets in the second semifinal yesterday -- in tomorrow's final.

Sent in to bat first, Bangladesh posted 89 runs in their allotted overs and lost five wickets. Middle-order batter Farzana Haque scored a run-a-ball 43 and was ably supported by opener Sharmin Akter, who scored 22 runs. The two got together in the fifth over when Bangladesh were in a spot of bother, having lost three for ten. However, their 41-run partnership ended when Sharmin was run out before Farzana herself was also dismissed in the same fashion towards the end of the innings.

The Zimbabwe innings never got going and they were skittled for 58 in 19.1 overs. Zimbabwe's chase was stifled by the four-pronged spin attack of Bangladesh, led by Rumana Ahmed, who took 4 for 8. Fahima Khatun and Shailla Sharmin grabbed two wickets each.

Bangladesh and Ireland will join reigning champions Australia, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the West Indies in the final round of the World Twenty20 to be held in India from March 11 next year.

Bulls gore Riders

SPORTS REPORTER from Chittagong

A disciplined performance from Barisal Bulls' pacers combined with poor batting from the Rangpur Riders led the Bulls to a comfortable six wicket win at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

The win took Mahmudullah Riyad's Barisal to prime position with ten points from six matches. Following yesterday's defeat, Shakib Al Hasan's Rangpur have eight points from seven matches.

Batting first, Rangpur were restricted to 104 for nine in 20 overs. However, Barisal's target was revised to 75 off 13 overs as per the Duckworth-Lewis method after play was stopped due to rain for an hour in the second innings.

Barisal were poised at 19 for 1 in 3.3 overs when rain stopped play. Upon resumption they required 57 runs off 56 balls. It was a task which seemingly made them a bit nervous as they initially struggled against Rangpur's turners.

By the end of the eighth over, Barisal had lost three wickets and were at a precarious 42 for 3. They

needed 33 off 30 at that point. However, that's when Mahmudullah and Nadif Chowdhury joined hands and calmed the nerves. They both charged the spinners and put on a 30-run stand in 4.5 overs.

By the time Nadif was caught off Arafat Sunny in the 12th over, Barisal required just three more runs to win. They reached home with three balls to spare.

Earlier, Rangpur's batsmen struggled after being put into bat courtesy of their hurried approach.

Soumya Sarkar was caught at cover after attempting a lazy drive off Al-Amin Hossain in the second over. Shakib Al Hasan was dismissed four balls later when he came down the track and attempted to cut a delivery which was close to his body, but all he did was provide the easiest of catches

to mid-on. Desperately trying to break the shackles, the rest of Rangpur's top order fell in similar fashion. Mohammad Mithun was caught in the sixth over for a nine-ball 2, while Jahurul Islam misread a slower one and was caught at cover in the tenth over.

After ten overs, Rangpur were struggling at 39 for 4. However, this type of scenario wasn't alien to the Riders.

Their middle-order batsmen had bailed them out from such desperate situations a number of times in the past, but yesterday wasn't one of those days.

In the next five overs, Rangpur lost three more wickets, including that of Misbahul Haq as only a few late hits from Wahab Riaz and Mohammad Al-Amin helped them pass the 100-run mark.

Barisal's pacers, led by Al-Amin, put on a good show once again, scalping seven of the nine wickets. The manner in which Al-Amin improvised with his line and length depicted an immense improvement in his bowling approach in this format.

Al-Amin finished with three scalps, while Mohammad Sami and Rayad Emrit took two each.

POINTS TABLE

Teams	Mat	W	L	Pts	NRR
Comilla Victorians	7	5	2	10	+0.644
Barisal Bulls	6	5	1	10	+0.422
Rangpur Riders	7	4	3	8	+0.189
Dhaka Dynamites	6	3	3	6	-0.216
Chittagong Vikings	8	2	6	4	-0.465
Sylhet Super Stars	6	1	5	2	-0.544



After a so far undefeated campaign in the qualifiers, Bangladesh qualified for the ICC Women's World Twenty20 after defeating Zimbabwe by 31 runs in a semifinal encounter in Bangkok yesterday.

Shane frustrated with approach

SPORTS REPORTER from Chittagong

Rangpur Riders coach Shane Jurgensen lamented his batsmen's approach during their six-wicket defeat to the Barisal Bulls in Chittagong yesterday.

The approach used by Rangpur's top-order batsmen in particular seemed to surprise many. Both Soumya Sarkar and Shakib Al Hasan seemed impatient and were dismissed quite cheaply in the end.

According to Jurgensen, his batsmen weren't able to evaluate the pitch properly. "We didn't assess the wicket well and probably played a bit too aggressively. You have to play like that in T20s but when we look back now at how we lost the wickets... we just needed a few more runs," said Jurgensen at the post-match press conference.

"We speak about adapting to conditions but we didn't do that today. It wasn't a 170 wicket but we didn't play all that smartly unfortunately. It is disappointing because of the amount of talent we have in our line-up. Another 10-15 runs could have made a big difference to the end result," he added.

Rangpur's batsmen, in the last few games, haven't had the best outings. While their openers put up a good show in the previous game against Chittagong, yesterday was a completely different story.

The batsmen's shot selection, according to Jurgensen, remains a concern.

"The shot selection at times hasn't been what we would have liked. It is not in our plans to lose that many wickets in the first six overs. We are disappointed as a group because after playing so well in the last game, we then turned up two days later and were convincingly beaten.

"When you walk out there, it is bat against ball. You have to play and see it as it comes. We have to look at how we assess the pitch. The nature of T20 cricket is that you can lose the game in the first six overs. The team that makes fewer mistakes wins the game," said Jurgensen.

While Jurgensen was disappointed, player-of-the-match Al-Amin Hossain was, expectedly so, a happy man during the post-match press conference.

With his three-wicket haul yesterday, Al-Amin took his tally to eleven for the league and remains one of the highest wicket-takers of the competition.

The lanky pacer removed both Soumya and Shakib in the same over and set the tone for Barisal.

"They are both very good batsmen and it feels good to get their wickets. I would say I got plenty of help from the pitch. It was wet and I knew that if I could hit the right length in the first six overs, I could get wickets," said Al-Amin.

PREMIER cEMENT

Hockey squad trimmed to 27

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation has trimmed the number of players in the camp for the upcoming South Asian Games from 43 to 27, keeping 14 players from the under-21 team which recently participated in Junior Asia Cup.

Most of the senior members including Rasel Mahmud Jimmy, Zahid Hossain and Mamunur Rahman Chayan have made the cut as the reduced squad will continue its training camp at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

"We have had one month of preparation thus far and by this time the players' fitness level has improved a lot. Now we will be concentrating more on with-the-ball training," said head coach Mahabb Harun yesterday.

"Since the juniors have recently played in an international tournament, their fitness level is much better compared to the seniors and they also have had a boost of confidence. However, the senior players, who have been out of action for quite some time, will have to work harder," added Harun, who guided the under-21 team to a sixth-place finish among eight teams in the Junior Asia Cup last month.

SQUAD:
 Zahid, Ashim, Nippon, Ashraf, Pintu, Shitul, Rezaul, Tapash, Belal, Chayan, Shohag, Nayeem, Niloy, Sarwar, Rana, Rabbi, Mimon, Kowshik, Milon, Jimmy, Rummon, Krishna, Khorsheedur.

RIDERS V BULLS				VIKINGS V VICTORIANS					
RANGPUR RIDERS	R/B	A/6		CHITTAGONG VIKINGS	R/B	A/6			
Jahurul c Mahmudullah				Tamim c Zaidi b Shuvagata	27/23	3/1			
b Emrit	24/32	1/1		Dilshan b Zaidi	39/42	5/0			
Soumya c Emrit b Al-Amin	0/1	0/0		Anamul run out	0/2	0/0			
Shakib c Mahmudullah				U Akmal not out	49/34	4/2			
b Al-Amin	1/3	0/0		Amir c Imrul b Hider	8/13	0/0			
Mithun c Emrit b Tajjul	2/9	0/0		Ziaur run out	2/3	0/0			
Misbah c Rony b Sami	22/27	3/0		Bilawal not out	2/3	0/0			
Perera c Maruf b Prasanna	9/10	1/0		Extras: (b-3, lb-2, w-4)	9				
Nabi c Maruf b Sami	5/5	1/0		Total: (For 5 wickets in 20 overs)	136				
Al-Amin b Emrit	17/13	2/1		Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-54, 3-78, 4-108, 5-131.					
Riaz c Maruf b Al-Amin	12/10	2/0							
Muktar not out	9/10	1/0							
Arafat not out	0/0	0/0							
Extras: (b-2, w-1)	3								
Total: (For 9 wickets in 20 overs)	104								
Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-10, 3-23, 4-36, 5-54, 6-64, 7-65, 8-88, 9-99.									
Bowler	O	M	R	W	Bowler	O	M	R	W
Sami	4	0	16	2	Malik	4	0	27	0
Al-Amin	4	0	30	3	Kulasekara	4	0	27	0
Emrit	4	0	18	2	Hider	4	0	34	1
Tajjul	4	0	21	1	Shuvagata	4	0	25	1
Prasanna	4	0	17	1	Zaidi	4	0	18	1
BARISAL BULLS	R/B	A/6		COMILLA VICTORIANS	R/B	A/6			
Rony c Nabi b Arafat	23/19	3/1		Litonc Ziaur b Taskin	3/8	0/0			
Lewis lbw b Riaz	4/4	1/0		Imrul c Anamul b Dilshan	35/28	5/0			
Maruf st Mithun b Shakib	3/14	0/0		Haque c Nuwan Kulasekara, Abu Hider.	37/41	4/0			
Mahmudullah not out	23/18	2/0		Malik not out	34/23	2/1			
Nadif c Misbah b Arafat	16/19	1/1		Zaidi c Anamul b Amir	8/8	1/0			
Prasanna not out	1/1	0/0		Shuvagata b Amir	2/2	0/0			
Extras: (lb-2, w-3)	5			Kapali not out	10/9	1/0			
Total: (For 4 wickets in 12.3 overs)	75			Extras: (w-7, nb-1, pen-5)	13				
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-30, 3-42, 4-72.				Total: (For 5 wickets in 19.4 overs)	142				
Bowler	O	M	R	W	Did not bat: Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Ariful Haque, Nuwan Kulasekara, Abu Hider.				
Shakib	3	1	12	1	Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-55, 3-94, 4-110, 5-113.				
Nabi	1.3	0	15	0					
Riaz	3	1	12	1	Bowler	O	M	R	W
Perera	2	0	12	0	Amir	4	0	22	2
Arafat	2	0	11	2	Taskin	3	0	31	1
Muktar	1	0	11	0	Bilawal	3.4	0	31	1
					Shafiqul	3	0	20	0
					Asif	4	0	22	0
					Dilshan	2	0	11	1
Result: Barisal Bulls won by 6 wickets (D/L method).					Result: Comilla Victorians won by 5 wickets.				
Player-of-the-match: Al-Amin Hossain.					Player-of-the-match: Shoaib Malik.				

Hosts vanquished

SPORTS REPORTER

Ahsan Habib Parash and Shapla Akter were the only local badminton players remaining after the Yonex-Sunrise Bangladesh Open International Badminton Challenge moved into the quarterfinal stage yesterday.

The pair of former national champions Parash and Shapla had beaten their Nepali counterparts on Wednesday to set up a quarterfinal clash against the Singaporean pair of Yong Kai Terry and Wei Han Tai, which will be held this morning.

However, it was the defeat to Elina Sultana and Dulali Haldar that ended Bangladesh's participation in the singles events of this international tournament.

Elina conceded a straight-sets defeat (10-21, 10-21) against third-seed Ksenia Polikarpova of Russia, while Dulali lost against top-seed Iris Wang of America in straight sets (6-21, 6-21).

Elina, who also lost in mixed doubles yesterday, lamented the lack of round-the-year training facilities in the country.

"It is true that there are much higher quality opponents from Russia, Malaysia, Singapore and other countries playing in

this tournament. But if we could have trained all year round, we could have done a better job," said the current national No. 1.

"We have been training for the South Asian Games for the last three months, but once that ends we will be on our own again. I have seen that others, like my Nepalese opponent who I beat in the first round, have improved a lot over the years because they practise for longer periods and even take part in foreign competitions," added Elina.

Polikarpova, the Russian who beat Elina yesterday, will meet Malaysia's Lee Zi Yui in the quarterfinals, while world number 36 Wang, who beat Dulali, will play against Malaysia's Yen Mei Ho.

Wang said she was looking forward to taking part in a few other tournaments after finishing her assignment here. The 20-year-old Californian informed that she has kept her university studies on hold for two years after finishing her first year in business economics from the University of California, Los Angeles.

"After this tournament I will go back to USA and play in the US Open. Thereafter I will take part in a couple of events including the Mexican Grand Prix," said the former Pan Am Games silver medalist, adding that she trains five to six hours every day when she is not travelling due to international tournaments.