

SPORT



WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 6s HIT **154** | TOTAL 4s HIT **489**

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

Hafeez takes u-turn, joins Dynamites

AGENCIES, Karachi

After initially refusing to feature in the ongoing edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), Pakistan's experienced batsman Mohammad Hafeez has joined the Dhaka Dynamites.

Hafeez claimed that he had turned down an offer to play for the Chittagong franchise since the squad also included left-arm fast bowler Mohammad Amir. However, the franchise had denied making any offer to the batsman.

The 35-year-old is set to depart to join his Dhaka-based team.

Indian kabaddi coach sacked

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation (BKF) yesterday terminated national women's kabaddi team coach Balwinder Kaur, the Indian who has been incapacitated to conduct training due to a back injury.

Kaur, recommended by the Asian Kabaddi Federation, was appointed as head coach of the Bangladesh women's team in August, with the objective to prepare the team for the SA Games. However, the 22-year-old aggravated her back injury in the last week of November and doctors have advised her to take a month's rest.

"With the recommendation from doctors as well as the instructions from the Bangladesh Olympic Association, we decided part ways with her. The local coaches will now take care of the women's team for the SA Games," said Nizamuddin Chowdhury Parvez after an emergency meeting.

He also said that Kaur, who is now receiving treatment at the city hospital, would return to India within a week.



Rangpur Riders' Jahurul Islam cuts one off the back foot on his way to scoring an unbeaten 35 to fashion an easy six-wicket win against Dhaka Dynamites in the second BPL fixture at Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Rangpur one step closer

SPORTS REPORTER

An all-round performance from Shakib Al Hasan's Rangpur Riders led them to a six-wicket win over the Dhaka Dynamites in Mirpur yesterday.

The victory took Rangpur's overall tally to ten points in eight matches and all but confirmed their spot in the last four.

Dhaka on the other hand, have six points from seven matches and at the moment it looks like they will have to battle against the Sylhet Superstars who have four points from seven matches for the fourth and final spot.

Batting first, the Dynamites were

restricted to just 135 for 7. In reply, a series of cameos from Jahurul Islam, Darren Sammy and Soumya Sarkar helped Rangpur reach their target with 10 balls remaining.

While they ended up winning comfortably, the initial phases weren't that easy. By the 12th over, Shakib, Soumya Sarkar and Lendl Simmons were out. However, Jahurul, who ended up scoring a brilliant 35 not out, and Sammy shared a 45-run stand to calm the nerves and take them closer to the target.

By the time Sammy was bowled by Mohammad Irfan in the 16th over, Rangpur required just 17 runs. With six wickets in hand, they eased past the target. Earlier Dhaka Dynamites' below par run with the bat continued as none of

their batsmen managed to make the most of their starts.

In an attempt to strengthen their top order, Shamsur Rahman was brought back into the eleven. However, the former national player was trapped in front by Shakib Al Hasan and departed cheaply for four.

Sadman Islam and Saikat Ali also got starts, but failed to build on those.

POINTS TABLE					
Teams	Mat	W	L	Pts	NRR
Comilla Victorians	7	5	2	10	+0.644
Rangpur Riders	8	5	3	10	+0.246
Barisal Bulls	7	5	2	10	-0.088
Dhaka Dynamites	7	3	4	6	-0.275
Sylhet Superstars	7	2	5	4	+0.001
Chittagong Vikings	8	2	6	4	-0.465

At 39 for 3 in seven overs, Nasir Hossain and Kumar Sangakkara had to team up once again to revive their side.

They shared a 45-run stand, but once their partnership was broken Dhaka barely got moved. Similar to the last match, Sangakkara was run-out yesterday as well, courtesy of a brilliant direct hit from Shakib in the 14th over, who had just one stump to aim at.

Nasir was next to depart. He had just hit a six and was looking good on 30. However, his attempt to smack Arafat Sunny out of the ground in the 16th over, led to him getting bowled.

At the end of 16 overs, Dhaka were at 101 for 5. The Dynamites posted 34 runs in the last four overs courtesy of a few hits from Mosaddek Hossain

Mushy quits captaincy!

SPORTS REPORTER

The biggest surprise for everybody prior to yesterday's first match in the BPL at Mirpur came as Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi came to the middle for the toss in favour of Sylhet Superstars against Barisal Bulls. Afridi soon revealed that he took the job as Mushfiqur Rahim, Bangladesh's Test captain, was uncomfortable with the duty.

It was unexpected for everybody and that's why everyone was searching for the answer about whether he willingly handing over the duty to his Pakistani teammate or whether he was forced to do so. That's the reason the post-match briefing was dominated by the issue.

Barisal captain Mahmudullah Riyad was just as surprised by Mushfiqur's decision to quit.

"It was unexpected. I didn't know that Mushfiqur wouldn't be the captain. But of course it is their decision," said Riyad.

However, Sylhet coach Sarwar Imran, who attended the post-match briefing, said that Mushfiqur resigned as captain on his own terms.

"As far as I know, Mushfiqur said that he wanted to see a change in captaincy. There's a lot of pressure on him. He has to bat, keep wickets and on top of that we have lost two matches by a solitary run and one by six runs. He wanted some relief. I heard about it from the team owner. Afridi had asked Mushfiqur to remain as captain but Mushfiqur handed the duty over to him," said Imran.

Imran was not ready to comment when asked how someone could handle the pressure at the international level if he couldn't cope with it in this level following some close defeats.

Though Imran repeatedly said that Mushfiqur wanted relief from the duty, it still came as a surprise. True, this was not the first time that Mushfiqur resigned from the captaincy as the little man quit the Bangladesh captaincy in May 2013 following an ODI series defeat in Zimbabwe, but he later termed his decision as a 'mistake'.

In September 2014, he lost the ODI and T20I captaincy to Mashrafe Bin Mortaza following one defeat after another; that decision frustrated him most because he is a man who always enjoyed captaincy.

Superstars take Bulls by horns

SPORTS REPORTER

When Barisal Bulls' Chris Gayle smacked pacer M o h a m m a d Shahid for six over cover in the fourth over, the crowd became electrified, anticipating yet another Gayle-storm in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

However, Shahid showed the dashing batsman the door to the dressing room with the very next delivery, thanks to Nazmul Hossain Milon who took a well-judged catch at long-on.

Before that, another West Indies batsman, Evin Lewis, the lone centurion in the tournament, dragged a pull and was caught at mid-on off Sohail Tanvir. That not only ruined the pre-match talk of two West Indies batsmen's fireworks

but also set the Barisal Bulls on a downward spiral, culminating in the lowest total of the tournament -- 58 runs.

Sylhet Superstars then easily chased down the small total with nine wickets in hand to make a turnaround in the tournament as their second win in seven matches kept them in the race.

The way Barisal's batting stumbled with the departure of West Indies duo, the question was raised whether the remaining batsmen suffered from the Gayle-effect. Sylhet's bowlers did a wonderful job to capitalise on the juicy track, but that in no way justified the Bulls' batsmen fishing outside the off-stumps.

That was why Bulls skipper Mahmudullah Riyad didn't hesitate to say that poor batting was the reason behind the massive defeat.

"We batted poorly. There was some

bounce in the pitch but the wicket was not too bad," said Riyad.

"There is only one Chris Gayle in the world," was the response from a smiling Riyad when asked about whether all the batsmen tried to play like Gayle, who has a brilliant record in the BPL with three hundreds in six matches.

"I believe he will come back strongly," he added.

Pacer Shahid took the prize scalp of Gayle and finished with two for 23, Ravi Bopara claimed three wickets in the tenth over to demolish the Bulls middle-order, Shahid Afridi -- who turned Sylhet's fortunes after taking over captaincy from Mushfiqur Rahim -- returned with most economical four-over spell in the BPL, giving away just five runs and taking two wickets. Pacer Rubel Hossain did his part by taking two vital wickets to make it a bowlers day, but in the end Junaed Siddiqui got



There was no Gayle-storm in the BPL at Mirpur yesterday. The big-hitting West Indian scored just six runs for his side Barisal Bulls, who also hit the tournament low when they were bundled out for 58 against Sylhet Superstars. PHOTO: STAR



PREMIER cement

SCOREBOARDS

BULLS V SUPERSTARS					DYNAMITES V RIDERS				
BARISAL BULLS	R/B	4/6	8/8	0/1	DHAKA DYNAMITES	R/B	4/6	8/8	0/1
Gayle c Milon b Shahid	8/15	2/0			Shamsur lbw b Shakib	4/7	0/0		
Lewis c Razzak b Tanvir	12/15	2/0			Shadman run out	16/20	3/0		
Rony c & b Rubel	3/4	0/0			Shykat c Perera b Sammy	18/13	2/1		
Maruf c Mushfiqur b Bopara	4/12	0/0			Sangakkara run out	29/23	0/2		
Mahmudullah c Tanvir b Rubel	2/9	0/0			Nasir b Arafat	30/28	1/1		
Sabbir c Mushfiqur b Bopara	3/9	0/0			Ten Doeschate c Jahurul				
Prasanna b Bopara	2/2	0/0			b Arafat	6/12	0/0		
Sami c Rubel b Shahid	16/21	0/1			Mosaddek run out	13/10	2/0		
Tajjul b Afridi	2/5	0/0			Hasan not out	2/2	0/0		
Sajedul lbw b Afridi	1/9	0/0			Sohail not out	8/5	1/0		
Al-Amin not out	1/2	0/0			Extras: (lb-5, w-4)		9		
Extras: (lb-3, w-1)		4			Total: (For 7 wickets in 20 overs) 135				
Total: (All out in 16 overs)		58			Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-35, 3-39, 4-84, 5-101, 6-112, 7-125.				
Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-21, 3-24, 4-27, 5-34, 6-36, 7-37, 8-46, 9-50.									
SYLHET SUPERSTARS					RANGPUR RIDERS				
Munaweera c Sajedul b Sami	0/5	0/0			Simmons c Mosaddek b Hasan	18/22	2/0		
Junaid not out	34/37	6/0			Soumya c Shadman b Hasan	21/27	2/1		
Nurul not out	23/26	2/0			Jahurul not out	35/26	4/0		
Extras: (lb-4, w-1)		5			Shakib c & b Mustafizur	8/6	1/0		
Total: (For 1 wkt in 11.2 overs) 62					Sammy b Irfan	23/21	4/0		
Did not bat: Razzak, Shahid, Rubel, Milon, Tanvir, Mushfiqur, Afridi, Bopara.					Perera not out	8/8	1/0		
Fall of wickets: 1-0.					Extras: (lb-15, w-8)		23		
					Total: (For 4 wickets in 18.2 overs) 136				
					Fall of wickets: 1-38, 2-55, 3-74, 4-119.				
Bowler O M R W					Bowler O M R W				
Sami	3	1	9	1	Irfan	4	0	22	1
Al-Amin	3	0	22	0	Sohail	3.2	0	30	0
Gayle	2	0	8	0	Mustafizur	3	1	5	1
Sajedul	2	0	8	0	Hasan	4	0	25	2
Sabbir	1	0	7	0	Shykat	3	0	31	0
Tajjul	0.2	0	4	0	Nasir	1	0	8	0
Result: Sylhet Super Stars won by 9 wickets.									
Player-of-the-match: Junaid Siddique.					Result: Rangpur Riders won by 6 wickets.				
					Player-of-the-match: Jahurul Islam.				

Proteas 72 off 72 overs

AFP, New Delhi



South Africa fought on Sunday to try to save the fourth and final Test after Ajinkya Rahane scored his second century of the match to give India control on the second-last day.

Chasing a highly improbable target of 481, South Africa stone-

walled the opposition with some defensive batting, scoring at just a run an over on a slow strip at the Feroz Shah Kotla Ground in New Delhi.

At stumps on the fourth day, the Proteas were 72-2 from 72 overs with skipper Hashim Amla on 23 off 207 balls and AB de Villiers unbeaten on a 91-ball 11.

The top-ranked tourists, who have already lost the series 2-0, will need to bat out three full sessions on Monday to snatch a draw and salvage some pride.

A 300-plus target has been chased successfully just once in a Test match on Indian soil -- by the home team which made 387-4 to defeat England in Chennai in 2008.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, the highest wicket-taker in the series with 28 scalps so far, took 2-29 but the other bowlers were denied any success.

Amla, who has had a miserable tour, resorted to dead-batting for

most of his innings, managing his first run only after facing 46 balls.

The usually flamboyant de Villiers, who has the distinction of scoring the fastest ODI century, also curbed his natural attacking instincts.

In a low-scoring series where no batsman had previously managed to score a hundred, Rahane earlier hit his second ton of the match to help the hosts declare their second innings on 267-5 half an hour before the lunch break.

He smashed three sixes and eight fours in his unbeaten 100-run knock and also shared a 154-run partnership with captain Virat Kohli (88), the highest of the series.

India, who bowled out the Proteas for 121 in their first innings after making 334, have already bagged the series with wins in the first and third Tests. The second Test in Bangalore was washed out after the first day's play.

India tasted early success during South Africa's second innings when

Ashwin had opener Dean Elgar (four) caught at slip with just five runs on the board.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 334

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 121

INDIA: Second innings 267 for 5 decl (Dhawan 21, Pujara 28, Kohli 88, Rahane 100 not out, Saha 23 not out; Morkel 3-51)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 72 for 2 (Bavuma 34, Amla 23 not

STATS

South Africa had a run-rate of 1 at the end of the fourth day, scoring 72 in as many overs.

That was the second-lowest by any team in a Test innings of at least 50 overs.

Hashim Amla scored 23 runs off 207 balls. AB De Villiers scored 11 from 91 and Temba Bavuma scored 34 from 117

Hashim Amla played 45 dot balls before scoring his first run of the second innings.

Amla's strike rate of 11.11 is the lowest of any batsman who has faced 200 or more deliveries

Amla and de Villiers scored at 0.78 runs per over in their 23-run stand, the lowest of all partnerships of at least 175 balls.

Before his partnership with AB, Amla added 44 off 232 balls with Temba Bavuma at a run rate of 1.13

De Villiers has featured four times in the ten slowest partnerships of 175 or more balls, and also features twice in the ten fastest partnerships of 175-plus balls, showing his ability to adapt.

Out of the 72 overs bowled by India till the end of Day Four, they had 43 maidens.

WHAT THEY SAID

At this scoring rate we will reach the target by tea-time, on Friday next week.

-UysVentura
6 from first 100 and 15 from next 87 balls. Amla is accelerating boys.

-Nirdheeshwar
Hashim Amla should park his car on the pitch so that the game gets timed out.

-ToastySnack111
Soon we will need seven decimal points to measure SA strike rate.

-FelixSeba7
Amla and AB giving the most beautiful display of blocking since the last solar eclipse.

-@pavilionopinion
Hashim Amla is playing so slow that even the third empire has changed the channel.

-@itsaashu
Even though I don't agree with the approach of the 2 SA batsmen, I can't fault them for their application & fighting spirit

-VVS Laxman
Amla & De Villiers are using the Van Gaal philosophy

-razorSedge



BLOCKATHON MEN: AB de Villiers (L) and Hashim Amla walk back to the dressing room after featuring in an obdurate third wicket stand against all odds on the fourth day of the fourth Test against India at the Feroz Shah Kotla yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

BFF owes Tk 2.8 crore to clubs

SPORTS REPORT

A top Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) official yesterday said that the cash-strapped federation owes nearly Tk 2.8 crore to the top clubs participating in the Professional Football League. The dues are mostly participation and prize money pending for the last three seasons.

The issue of unpaid bills has been addressed recently when Sheikh Jamal demanded the BFF to clear their prize and participation money worth Tk 82 lakh. Mohammedan on Saturday last claimed that the BFF owes Tk 80-90 lakh to them. Abahani have dues of Tk 45 lakh while other clubs have average dues of Tk 10 to 15 lakh each.

"We have pending dues approximately Tk 2.8 crore as the participation fees and prize money for different competitions of last three seasons," informed BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag yesterday adding that they have been trying to clear all dues to the clubs.

Replying to a query, Shohag said, "We don't get enough money from the sponsors to run either the professional football league or other tournaments, so we have to make up the deficit budget of the league or tournaments from our own funds. That's why we can't clear all payments to the clubs timely."