

SPORTS

WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 6s HIT 173 | **TOTAL 4s HIT 561**

Most 6s by a player: 9, Tamim Iqbal Chittagong Vikings
Most 4s by players: 29, Tamim Iqbal and Tillakaratne Dilshan, Chittagong Vikings



Chittagong Vikings captain Tamim Iqbal hangs his head in despair after being dismissed against the Dhaka Dynamites yesterday. That dismissal not only caused Tamim's exit from the field, but it virtually sealed his side's exit from the Bangladesh Premier League.

'A shocking exit'

SPORTS REPORTER

Tamim Iqbal described the Chittagong Vikings' early exit from the Bangladesh Premier League as 'shocking'. Speaking to reporters after Chittagong's 45-run defeat to the Dhaka Dynamites -- which eliminated them from the competition -- yesterday, the disappointed left-hander said that his side hadn't done justice to the potential it had.

"It's definitely shocking. We were a very strong side on paper and this isn't the result we should have ended with. When your local players, even though I am sure they tried, don't perform then it becomes difficult.

"You can have [Chris] Gayle, [Kieron] Pollard or even [Andre] Russel in the same team, but if the local players don't perform then your chances of winning are less. Take Barisal as an example. They have two of the most dangerous openers in the competition -- Evin Lewis and Gayle -- but they still got bowled out for 58," said Tamim.

"The matches in which [Tillakaratne] Dilshan and I started well, we won. Apart from that I didn't see any other partnership throughout the tournament. That was very disappointing. Apart from us, I don't think any other player has scored more than 100 runs in our side.

"You can't just depend on two players. It's a team game and the local players needed to perform," he added.

The left-hander further said that 'nothing had gone right' for the Vikings throughout the BPL.

"If you look at our combination, we had good foreign players. But like I said we can buy players, but not performance. There is always that one team in a tournament, for whom nothing goes right; right from ball one to the last ball of the tournament.

"But I won't say that we didn't make mistakes. These are no excuses and we are the ones, all 20 players, who should be blamed. Hopefully, next year if I am with Chittagong, I will make sure I come back in a strong way," said Tamim.

Aside from speaking about his team's performance, Tamim also criticised the kind of wickets that the competition was taking place in.

While he felt that yesterday's wicket was a lot better than the ones employed in the past, on the whole he was disappointed.

"The main motive of this tournament is to provide the local players with confidence. But that hasn't happened in this tournament because the wickets were difficult. I have never seen such kind of wickets throughout my career," concluded Tamim.

Rangpur ride on Jahurul

SPORTS REPORTER

Jahurul Islam defied the trend set by a majority of Bangladeshi batsmen in the Bangladesh Premier League and scored a brilliant half-century to lead the Rangpur Riders to a 21-run win over the Comilla Victorians in Mirpur yesterday.

Courtesy of the win, Rangpur have finished the group stages with 14 points and are currently on top, while Comilla on 12 points from 9 matches. Third-placed Barisal Bulls have ten points from eight matches and they are yet to face Chittagong and Dhaka. That basically means that the top two spots are yet to be finalised.

Jahurul's 50-ball 62 yesterday was, in a sense, a lesson to the local players. The best part about his innings was that throughout the knock he looked to serve the team's interest first and in the process helped the batting order calm down.

It was a path that he had to follow since Rangpur didn't have the best of starts after being put into bat.

Soumya Sarkar and Lendl Simmons were sent back by the seventh over, after which Shakib Al Hasan was caught in the 12th. Thisara Perera fell an over later and by the 13th over, Rangpur were struggling at 89 for 4.

Jahurul was in need of a partner and Darren Sammy answered that call. The West Indian, in typical fashion, smacked a couple of boundaries upon his arrival and raced to a 20-ball 24. Jahurul joined in the fun as well and reached his half-century in the 17th over through a boundary off Abu Hider.

The shot of the match arrived in the 18th over, when Jahurul shuffled towards the leg-side and beautifully drove Andre Russel for a six straight past the bowler.

He responsibly anchored Rangpur's innings and helped them post a defiant 153.

This was the first time that a team managed to post a 150-plus total in nine matches in the BPL. It was bound to be difficult.

Comilla though didn't give up that easily. After the exchange, Imrul Kayes led the chase with a series of elegant drives. He drove, pulled and swept to precision and raced to 38 off 24 balls. He smacked six fours and a six and took Comilla to 48 for no loss in five overs.

However, the Victorians collapsed once Imrul was caught in the deep off Darren Sammy in the 13th over. Young Abu Hider provided some excitement towards the end by smacking a 5-ball 17, but even that wasn't enough as the Victorians were eventually bundled out for 132 in 19.5 overs.

POINTS TABLE

Teams	Mat	W	L	Pts	NRR
Rangpur Riders	10	7	3	14	+0.693
Comilla Victorians	9	6	3	12	+0.475
Barisal Bulls	8	5	3	10	-0.185
Dhaka Dynamites	8	4	4	8	+0.046
Sylhet Super Stars	8	2	6	4	-0.462
Chittagong Vikings	9	2	7	4	-0.663

Jahurul's fresh start

SPORTS REPORTER

Jahurul Islam's unbeaten 62 against the Comilla Victorians yesterday was more than just a match-winning knock. Sure enough, it did lead the Rangpur Riders to a very crucial victory, and that is quite a big achievement, but not bigger than the personal obstacle that he has managed to overcome.

Yesterday's half-century was Jahurul's first since December last year. Once an opener who knocked at the national doors, in 2015, he was almost invisible. A reason behind that was his daughter's illness, which didn't really allow him to play as frequently as he would have liked.

Yesterday's half-century and the series of consistent knocks that he played prior to that suggests that the lanky batsman is ready to start all over again.

"I don't recall the last time I scored a 50, and I didn't play too much cricket this year. I just tried to stay on the wicket. I knew there were many hitters," said Jahurul after the match.

When asked whether he targeted a place in the national T20 squad, the 28-year-old spoke like a veteran.

"I used to think about that when I was younger. I have gone through hard times in the last one year, and as of now I am happier than before. I want to enjoy the game and continue playing cricket," smiled Jahurul.

Vikings first to bite the dust

SPORTS REPORTER

Chittagong Vikings became the first team to exit the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) when they lost to the Dhaka Dynamites by 45 runs in Mirpur yesterday.

While Kumar Sangakkara and co eventually went on to complete a comfortable win yesterday, there were several nervous moments during the match for them. In fact, many would say that the Vikings squandered a golden opportunity yesterday.

Three wickets each from Mohammad Amir and Shafiuil Islam helped Chittagong restrict Dhaka to

just 121. Despite the constantly talked about devils in the wicket the score was still below par, which was something that Sangakkara pointed out after the match.

Except for the Sri Lankan, who scored 38 off 36, none of the other batsmen managed to make a meaningful contribution to the innings.

Oddly enough, Dhaka decided to open with Pakistan's Yasir Shah at the start of the innings and whatever the plan was, it didn't work as he was dismissed in the second over of the innings.

The specialist batsmen departed soon as well, with Saikat Ali, Nasir Hossain and Mohammad Hafeez walking back by the eighth over.

Sangakkara found some support from Mosaddek Hossain, with the duo taking Dhaka from 35 for 4 to 91. However, once Sangakkara was caught at point, the team faltered.

Mosaddek was dismissed by the very next ball, and it was only after Malcolm Waller smacked a 10-ball 17 that they managed to post 120.

It was a score that Chittagong could have overcome had they played with a bit of patience. However, that approach was nowhere to be seen after the exchange.

Tillakaratne Dilshan walked down the track first up and tried to smack Abul Hasan but the ball went past him and he was bowled.

Tamim Iqbal was a tad unlucky to

be given LBW in the next over. Chittagong's two highest run-getters were dismissed within the first three overs and that clearly put pressure on the Chittagong's remaining batsmen.

Their only hope rested with Umar Akmal, but he couldn't battle the pressure either. With the required run-rate mounting, he went down the track against Mosharraf Hossain in the 12th over and was stumped in the process.

Mosharraf had an excellent day with the ball, finishing with figures of 4 for 16. He got three wickets in the 14th over and in the process sent Chittagong to a point of no return. Chittagong were eventually bundled out for just 76 runs in 16.5 overs.

PREMIER cemeNT

FEDERATION CUP TT
Abahani, ANH clinch titles

SPORTS REPORTER

SCOREBOARDS

DYNAMITES V VIKINGS

DHAKA DYNAMITES	R/B	4/6
Shykat c Tamim b Shafiuil	3/13	0/0
Yasir st Anamul b Asif	10/9	2/0
Hafeez c Anamul b Amir	1/5	0/0
Sangakkara c U Akmal b Shafiuil	38/36	3/1
Nasir c Anamul b Bilawal	10/10	2/0
Mosaddek c U Akmal b Shafiuil	24/29	3/0
Waller c U Akmal b Amir	19/10	3/1
Hasan c Dilshan b Amir	4/6	0/0
Mosharraf not out	2/2	0/0
Nabil not out	0/0	0/0
Extras: (b-6, lb-2, w-2)	10	
Total: (For 8 wks in 20 overs)	121	
Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-20, 3-24, 4-35, 5-91, 6-91, 7-113, 8-119.		

Abahani clinched the women's team title of the Aarong Dairy Federation Cup Table Tennis tournament after a 3-0 sets win over Bangladesh Army in the final at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Earlier, Bangladesh Army beat Stride (Red) 3-1 in the semifinal to set up the final clash against Abahani, who handed a 3-0 sets defeat to Dhaka.

ANH, comprising Manash Chowdhury and Mohammad Javed, became champions in men's team event after handing Bangladesh Army a 3-0 sets defeat in the final.

CHITTAGONG VIKINGS

TAMIM IQBAL	R/B	4/6
Tamim lbw b Mustafizur	8/9	2/0
Dilshan b Hasan	4/5	1/0
Anamul c & b Yasir	9/18	0/0
Yasir run out	2/8	0/0
U Akmal st Sangakkara b Mosharraf	14/22	0/0
E Sunny lbw b Mosharraf	10/12	1/0
Bilawal c Shykat b Mustafizur	11/15	1/0
Amir c Shykat b Mosharraf	0/1	0/0
Shafiuil c Mustafizur b Mosharraf	0/3	0/0
Asif not out	4/9	0/0
Ziaur absent hurt	0	
Extras: (b-8, lb-1, w-4, nb-1)	14	
Total: (All out in 16.5 overs)	76	
Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-20, 3-24, 4-35, 5-49, 6-61, 7-61, 8-61, 9-76.		

RIDERS V VICTORIANS

RANGPUR RIDERS	R/B	4/6
Simmons lbw b Zaidi	13/18	2/0
Soumya c Shuvagata b Hider	5/6	1/0
Jahurul not out	62/50	7/2
Shakib c Zaidi b Rabbi	20/15	2/0
Perera c Russell b Malik	5/4	1/0
Sammy c Malik b Russell	24/20	2/1
Nabi c Malik b Hider	12/7	0/1
Mithun not out	1/1	0/0
Extras: (lb-1, lb-5, w-4, nb-1)	11	
Total: (For 6 wks in 20 overs)	153	
Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-39, 3-78, 4-89, 5-128, 6-149.		

Animosity today, friends tomorrow?

SPORTS REPORTER

Two balls after Mohammad Hafeez arrived at the crease, Tamim Iqbal decided to bring Mohammad Amir into the attack in the fifth over.

Due to the controversial comments Hafeez had publicly made against Amir a few weeks ago -- when the all-rounder said that he would never share the same dressing room as Amir -- there was plenty of excitement at that point in the match.

As it so happened, after three dot balls Amir finally got an edge and dismissed Hafeez and the celebration was worth the watch. He set off on a sprint, jumped in the air and unleashed a fist-pump. Such was the intensity of the celebration that Tamim Iqbal seemed to be trying to calm him down a bit.

However, speaking to reporters after the match Tamim revealed that while Amir was excited, the Pakistan bowler had handled that situation quite well.

"I don't think he was ever bothered



Chittagong Vikings pacer Mohammad Amir had a bit more than just a wicket to celebrate after dismissing Dhaka Dynamites' Mohammad Hafeez. PHOTO: STAR

about what happened in the media. It's not as though he went up to him and said something. He was very normal.

"Sometimes you expect a player to make a few comments after that kind of a wicket, but it was nice of Amir not to do anything of that sort. I am sure in the

coming months they will be playing in the same team together and all the issues will be ironed out in time," said Tamim.

"I brought him into the attack at that moment because I needed Hafeez's wicket and Amir was my strike bowler. That was my only reason," he added.

NAT'L MEN'S HANDBALL BGB, Police in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Bangladesh Police set up a final clash in the Exim Bank 25th National Men's Handball Championship yesterday.

BGB beat Chittagong DSA by 38-10 goals in the first semifinal yesterday before Bangladesh Police edged Bangladesh Ansar by 53-38 goals in the second semi, both at the Shaheed M Mansur Ali National Handball Stadium in Paltan. The final will be held at 3:00pm today.

IPL gets two new teams

AFP, New Delhi

Teams from the western cities of Pune and Rajkot won an auction Tuesday to compete in cricket's Indian Premier League, replacing two franchises that were banned over a corruption scandal.

The Twenty20 tournament's chairman Rajiv Shukla said that New Rising, a subsidiary of the Sanjeev Goenka group, bagged the Pune franchise, while Delhi-based Intex Mobiles picked up the Rajkot team in open bidding.

The auction followed the decision by India's cricket board to ban the Chennai Super Kings and the Rajasthan Royals from the glitzy tournament on the recommendation of a Supreme Court-appointed panel.

BFF unfazed by demands

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is seemingly intent on engaging in talks with Sheikh Jamal DC and Mohammedan SC through regarding the crisis over premier league's transfer window, but the game's governing body wants to strictly stick to rules and regulations in doing so.

This was the impression that came out yesterday after an 'informal meeting' of the members of BFF executive committee was held outside the BFF headquarters in presence of a few representatives from the Bangladesh Premier League clubs.

"Today [Tuesday] we sat for an informal meeting to discuss different issues of football. The bottom-line of the discussion was to keep football above everything else and let it roll in its own way," said BFF vice president Badal Roy.

Smith ponders SA comeback

CRICINFO, Johannesburg

Graeme Smith, the former South Africa captain who retired in March 2014, is considering a comeback to international cricket. He is getting ready for the Masters Champions League and reports suggest he might end up training with his old teammates again, as they prepare for full series against England in December.

"For me, I'm at the cusp of whether I should play international cricket again or not," he told the National. "I'm 34 now, retired at 33, there's always that question mark of whether I can play for another three-four years. I know I can."

"The clubs may have their demands, appeals and the grievances, and those could be solved through discussion," Roy said. "We hope we can solve the ongoing crisis soon and go forward with all stakeholders."

The BFF vice-president, however, warned that they would not bow to anyone and would not do anything outside the rules and regulations of the game's governing body.

Without naming any names, Roy said: "A club, which is a beloved one of mine, was on the focus of our discussion. An official of that club has involved himself in every turmoil in sports. If he thinks that they can put football into turmoil like they did in hockey, chess and table tennis; he will be making a big mistake."

"These days footballers don't take to the street in demand of league because we have regularised top-flight football. We will not let it go wrong," said the former national midfielder, indicating to Mohammedan SC's director-in-charge Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan.