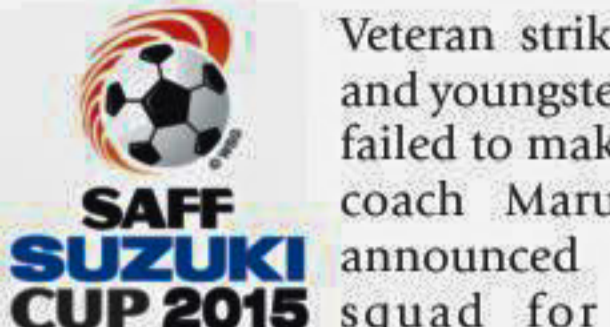


SPORT

Emily, Sajib miss out

Maruful names final 20 with only 2 centre-forwards

SPORTS REPORTER



Veteran striker Zahid Hasan Emily and youngster Aminur Rahman Sajib failed to make the cut as Bangladesh coach Maruful Haque yesterday announced his 20-member final squad for next week's SAFF Suzuki Cup with only two centre-forwards in the side.

Emily, who has been a constant fixture in the last five editions of the championship since debuting in the 2005 SAFF Championship in Pakistan, failed to recover from a meniscus injury on his right knee ahead of the final selection.

The exclusion of Emily and Sajib means Maruful had no other choice but to pick Shakhawat Hossain Rony and relatively inexperienced Nabib Newaj Jibon as his two centre-forwards while the 46-year-old coach has pinned his hope on old guns, who have been representing the national team for the last few years.

"I have tried a lot and waited till the end, but could not make it. The injury to my right knee is still hurting and I will need two more weeks to recover fully. Emily said over phone yesterday. "I hope that those who have been chosen for the final squad will do well in



EMILY



SAJIB

SQUAD
Goalkeepers: Shahidul Alam Sohel, Rasel Mahmud Liton, Ashraful Islam Rana
Defenders: Nasirul Islam, Yeasin Khan, Nasiruddin Chowdhury, Raihan Hasan, Yeamin Ahmed Chowdhury Munna, Tapu Barman, Atiqur Rahman Meshu, Wali Faisal.
Midfielders: Maminul Islam, Jamal Bhuiyan, Zahid Hossain, Hemanta Vincent Biswas, Sohel Rana, Monaem Khan Raju, Jewel Rana.
Strikers: Shakhawat Hossain Rony, Nabib Newaj Jibon.

the SAFF Championship." With a tough challenge ahead in the regional football extravaganza where Bangladesh were eliminated from the group stages in last two editions, Maruful will now have to bank on comparatively inexperienced Rony and Jibon upfront. Rony has been in and out of the side in the last couple of years while Jibon only made his debut in the match against Kyrgyzstan in the World Cup and Asian Cup qualifiers a few months ago.

The exclusion of Emily is certainly a big blow for Maruful, who however kept his hope on influential holding midfielder Jamal Bhuiyan, who has been toiling hard to regain his fitness after a bout of fever and stomach erosion recently.

Of the 28-member preliminary squad, midfielder Abdul Baten Komol and defender Kesto Kumar Bose had earlier left the camp due to injuries before Maruful yesterday dropped six more players - goalkeeper Mazharul Islam Himel, defender Rezaul Karim, midfielders Faisal Mahmud and Masuk Mia Jonny, strikers Sajib and Emily.

Of the 20-member final squad, nine players had played in the 2013 SAFF Championship in Kathmandu while the 11 remaining players will play the championship for the first time.



Bangladesh Army forward Pushkar Khisha Mimo dribbles past Bangladesh Police players during their match of the Victory Day hockey tournament at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Siddikur undone by double bogey

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman was left to rue a late double bogey as a good day's work was somewhat undone towards the latter stages of the second round of the rain-curtailed Philippine Open yesterday. The 31-year-old golfer had moved to three-under-par after trading four birdies for a bogey up to the 15th hole at the Luisita Golf & Country Club yesterday before the double-bogey on the 16th saw him finish the day with one-under-par (71) and at joint 38th position.

The two-time Asian Tour winner was five strokes off the pace, with Lindsay Reynolds of Canada taking the early lead at six-under-par (66). The Phuket-based Canadian fired six birdies to take a one-stroke lead at the season's last Asian Tour event, which was truncated to three rounds due to washout of the first round.

Baz breaks AB's record

AGENCIES, Hamilton

Just five days after he became the first player in Test match history to hit 100 sixes, New Zealand's Brendon McCullum added another feather to his cap. The Kiwi skipper broke AB de Villiers' record of most number of consecutive Tests since debut during the second Test in Hamilton on Friday. McCullum burst onto the scene at the very same venue against South African on March 10, 2004 and has not missed a single Test game since, playing 99 on the trot.

Late strikes rock SL

AFP, Hamilton

Trent Boult led a late New Zealand fight-back to leave Sri Lanka on 264-7 when rain ended play early on day one of the second Test in Hamilton on Friday.

Three wickets in two overs after tea rocked Sri Lanka just as captain Angelo Mathews and Milinda Siriwardana were looking solid with a record fifth-wicket partnership.

When rain halted play 23 overs short of the day's scheduled 90, Mathews was unbeaten on 63 with Dushmantha Chameera yet to score.

Siriwardana, in only his fourth Test, was out for 62 after joining Mathews for Sri Lanka's record fifth-wicket partnership against New Zealand of 138, eclipsing the 133 set by Mahela Jayawardene and Hashan Tillakaratne in 2003.

On a day in which fortunes ebbed and flowed, the valuable Mathews-Siriwardana pairing began when Sri Lanka were heading for trouble at 121-4.

Siriwardana was caught at first slip by Ross Taylor off the bowling of Boult, who claimed his second wicket three balls later when Kithuruwan Vithanage was caught by a diving Brendon McCullum at mid-off

without scoring. Just before the rain came down, Rangana Herath was run out for four by a fine throw from Kane Williamson in the gully.

With three wickets after tea, New Zealand enjoyed their most productive session after winning the toss and making Sri Lanka bat on a green pitch expected to be a bowler's paradise.

They could only manage two wickets in each of the first two sessions as Sri Lanka fought to atone for their 122-run loss in the first Test in Dunedin.

In part the tourists were helped by New Zealand's inconsistency with line and length, but they also played an aggressive game.

"I don't think we executed to our liking in the first couple of hours. Went past the bat a little bit but didn't create enough pressure in first session," quick Tim Southee said.

"They would probably be sitting pretty at lunchtime but the last couple of sessions we created pressure and last half hour swung back our way."

SCORES IN BRIEF
SRI LANKA: First innings 264 for 7 (Mendis 31, Chandimal 47, Mathews 63 not out, Siriwardana 62; Boult 2-43, Southee 2-51)



Trent Boult (R) may have only taken two wickets yesterday, but both of those came in his penultimate over of the day, which left Sri Lanka reeling at stumps on Day One of the second Test in Hamilton. PHOTO: AFP

'Fixer' approached Perera, Herath

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan authorities are investigating a bid to persuade members of the national cricket team to under-perform in a recent Test to ensure a surprise victory for the West Indies, the government said Friday.

Sports Minister Dayasiri Jayasekera said a man linked to a bookmaker had approached wicketkeeper Kusal Perera and star bowler Rangana Herath to engineer a Sri Lankan batting collapse at a Test in Galle in October, which the hosts went on to win emphatically.

"After Kusal turned down the offer, the man approached Herath who also rejected the offer and alerted the authorities," Jayasekera told AFP.

"We have started a police inquiry in addition to an anti-corruption probe by Sri Lanka Cricket," he added in reference to the national cricket board.

Sri Lanka beat the tourists by an innings and six runs after left-arm spinner Herath took 10 wickets in the match on the country's south coast.

Jayasekera also suggested that Perera's recent failure in a doping test may have been because he raised the alarm over the match-fixing attempt. "It is possible that something was

slipped into his food or his urine sample was tampered with to get this result," Jayasekera said.

"We are doing our best to defend him."

Ashley de Silva, the chief executive of Sri Lanka Cricket, said the board could not discuss the case in line with International Cricket Council (ICC) anti-corruption regulations.

"Because of the anti-corruption regulations, we cannot say anything," de Silva told AFP.

Air Force, Army run riot

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Air Force and Bangladesh Army got off to winning starts in the Victory Day Hockey Tournament at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh Air Force handed a massive 8-0 defeat to Narayanganj, thanks to six goals including a hat-trick from Prosenjit and one each from Jabbar Moni and Sagar.

In the day's other match, Bangladesh Army blanked Bangladesh Police 4-0, with national striker Pushkar Khisha Mimo, Mehdi Hasan, Rokonzaman and Mohammad Salam scoring one goal apiece.

Amir makes it to national camp

AFP, Karachi

Paceman Mohammad Amir promised to respect Pakistan's green cap and shirt after being named for a national camp on Friday, the first step toward regaining his place in country's team following a spot-fixing ban.

The 23-year-old has shown impressive form in domestic matches as well as in the Bangladesh Premier League since his five-year ban was relaxed in April this year then completely lifted three months ago.

On Friday cricket selectors cleared him for fitness training camp, which could pave the way for his inclusion in the national team. Amir said he will do his best to prove he is a changed man.

"I promise that I will do my best to respect the prestige of the green cap and Pakistan shirt," he told AFP.

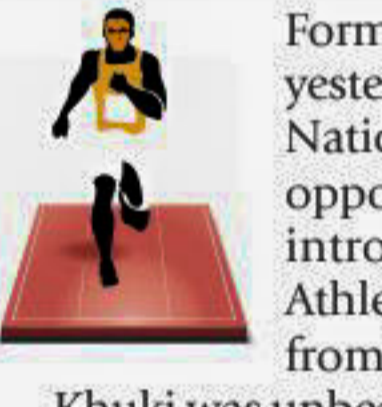
The 26 players included for the fitness camp will be eligible for team's limited over series in New Zealand starting from January 15.

"The main objective of the camp is to improve the overall physical fitness of all players and to prepare them for the upcoming international events," said a PCB press release.

Amir's return was opposed by some current players, but Amir said he hoped he could win them over "with my performances and with my acts".

Legends reunite

SPORTS REPORTER



Former national hurdler Rokeya Begum Khuki yesterday took to the track at the Bangabandhu National Stadium after 29 long years. The opportunity was made possible due to the introduction of the Bangladesh Masters Athletics Championship where retired athletes from Bangladesh and West Bengal took part.

Khuki was unbeatable in her prime when she won 13 gold medals - 10 in a row - in 100m hurdles of national athletics championships, but yesterday she was beaten by Hafiza Akter, who used to take part in shot put event during her playing career, in the 100m sprint of above 55-age category.

Like Khuki and Hafiza, many other athletes, aged between 35 and 60, took part in the inaugural edition of the championship.

"Though I am now 57, I could not refrain from taking part since retiring from athletics in 1986," said Khuki, who is working at the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation in Comilla as deputy general manager (audit).

The championship turned into a reunion of renowned athletes where SAF Games gold medallist sprinter Shah Alam, SAF Games silver medallist in 400m Milzar Hossain, 12-time national shot put champion Saidur Rob, Shamima Sattar Mimmo and many others gathered. Apart from the Bangladeshi athletes, 45 athletes led by Swapan Das came from West Bengal.

"It is a reunion of athletes from either side of the border. We are renewing our relationship with the people of Bangladesh," said Swapan, who had set Indian national record in pole vault at both junior and senior level and represented the country at international level in 1967-68.

Lebron knocks out Day's wife

Cleveland superstar Lebron James crashed into PGA Tour golfer Jason Day's wife while chasing a loose ball Thursday night, causing her to be taken from the floor by stretcher and to a local hospital, although she was released.

Ellie was sitting front-row when the incident occurred and King James apologised by tweeting: "Ellie Day I hope you're doing okay! My apologies! Hope you guys come back to another game soon."

Pre-wedding qualifier!

Arina Rodionova will be busier than most brides on her wedding day as she attempts to win a wildcard to the Australian Open. The 26-year-old will play a qualifying match in the morning before tying the knot in the afternoon.

She needs to win two matches to qualify. Rodionova had been due to play Storm Sanders on Saturday afternoon, which would have clashed with her wedding to Australian Rules football player Ty Vickery. But tournament organisers and her opponent agreed to move the match to the morning, so the bride will be able to finish her game and rush off to her wedding.



Compiled by Star Sport Desk

ICC U-19 World Cup Gohar to lead Pakistan

AGENCIES, Karachi

Gohar Hafeez has been named to lead a 15-member Pakistan squad in the ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup to be held in Bangladesh from January 22 to February 14, 2016, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced on Friday.

Team was named after approval of PCB head Shaharyar Muhammad Khan on the recommendation from Junior Selection committee headed by former Test batsman Basit Ali.

Squad: Gohar Hafeez (Captain), Muhammad Umar Burki, Zeeshan Malik, Hasan Mohsin, Muhammad Asad, Saif Badar, Hasan Khan, Salman Fayyaz, Shadab Khan, Umair Masood, Saif Ali Ghauri, Arfan Liaquat, Sameen Gul, Muhammad Ahsan, Muhammad Ahmad Shafiq.

Jadeja set for return

PTI, New Delhi

Back in form with an impressive performance against South Africa in the recently-concluded Test series, Ravindra Jadeja is likely to make a comeback when the national selectors meet on Saturday to pick the Indian squad for the upcoming limited-overs series in Australia.

India will play five ODIs and three T20Is in Australia with the first game starting on January 12.

Three other players, who could be under spotlight, are fit-again pacer Mohammed Shami, senior-most pacer Ishant Sharma and veteran batsman Murali Vijay.

The selectors will pick the squad, to be captained by Mahendra Singh Dhoni, keeping the ICC World T20 in mind.

Ishant Sharma, who has had a good season as the strike bowler in Test matches is likely to get the nod in limited overs after a gap of nearly one year. Ishant was being considered for the limited-overs series against South Africa but he pulled a hamstring during a Ranji match and was rested keeping in mind the Test series.

The other highlight of the meeting could be the selectors' take on whether to include Mohammed Shami