

SPORT



Victoria batsman Mohammad Al-Amin powerfully cuts a delivery on way to his maiden Dhaka Premier League century against the Legends of Rugganj at the BKSP yesterday, before Rugganj's Taijul Islam hit a last-ball six to produce the first tie of the season.

PHOTO: STAR

Rugganj conjure thrilling tie

Mushfiqur returns to form for MSC; Sheikh Jamal thump KCA

SPORTS REPORTER

The second day of the Dhaka Premier League witnessed an exciting encounter at the BKSP between Mominul Haque's Victoria Sporting Club and Mosharraf Hossain's Legends of Rugganj. The match ended in a tie after a last-ball six.

Batting first, Victoria, guided by Mohammad Al-Amin's debut century and opener Fazle Mahmud's 73, posted 314. Rugganj's Abu Hider finished with figures of five for 52 and was the pick of the bowlers. In fact, almost all of Rugganj's bowlers were expensive. The next best was Alauddin Babu, who finished with three for 76.

At the halfway mark, it did not seem as though Rugganj would be able to chase this total down and for the first 10 overs, that seemed to be the case as Rugganj lost four wickets. They were reduced to 53 for four in the first 10 overs and they had lost all their star batsmen: Soumya Sarkar, Jahurul Islam, Junaid Siddique and their foreign recruit Ashar Zaidi.

Just when you thought they were out, Rugganj began turning the game. Mosharraf Hossain and Nahidul Islam arrived at the crease and shared a 110-run stand for the seventh wicket. It took them from 127 for six to 236 for seven. Nahidul was sent back in the 40th over and then came Alauddin Babu. He smacked 22 off 16 and the duo put on 39 runs in seven overs.

In the last four overs they required 32 runs and were suddenly on the attack. However, Alauddin was dismissed in the 47th over and they required 28 off 18 balls. That came down to 13 off the last over with just one wicket in hand. Kamrul Islam Rabbi was given the ball and all he needed

to do was take a wicket and finish the game. Instead, he leaked six runs off the first five balls. Taijul Islam was on strike for the last ball and he needed to hit a six to draw the game and that is exactly what the slow left-arm did. He smacked Rabbi for a six straight down the ground to emphatically tie the game.

Rugganj skipper Mosharraf Hossain was ecstatic. "Honestly speaking, we didn't think about winning the game. All we wanted to do was just play till the end.

"Cricket's a funny game and anything can happen and fortunately for us, today the game went our way. We needed 30 odd runs in the last four overs and we should have gotten them. But my wicket made things more difficult at the end. Anyway, a tie is better than a loss," said Mosharraf.

When asked if he still believed that his side could come up when 13 were needed off the last over, he said: "Well, we knew that Abu Hider hit the ball well. But Taijul turned



A change in the format, from T20 to one-day, seems to be suiting Mushfiqur Rahman as the Mohammedan skipper scored a fierce 72 against Brothers Union at Mirpur to lead them to their first win.

PHOTO: STAR

SCORES IN BRIEF

MOHAMMEDAN: 285 for 6 (Mushfiqur 72, Tharanga 70, Nazmul 70 not out; Asif 2-44, Shahid 2-58)
BROTHERS UNION: 207 all out in 49.5 overs (Zakir 61, Nur 36; Shubashish 3-28, Habibur 2-22)
Result: Mohammedan Sporting Club won by 78 runs.
KALABAGAN CRICKET ACADEMY: 152 all out in 44.3 overs (Mehedi 25, Bishwanath 22; Muktar 4-19, Mahmudullah 2-20, Shohag 2-45)
SHEIKH JAMAL: 153 for 2 in 26.4 overs (Mahibubul 78, Marshall 31 not out, Mahmudullah 21 not out; Bishwanath 1-21)
Result: Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club won by eight wickets.
VICTORIA SPORTING CLUB: 314 for 9 (Al-Amin 102, Fazle 73; Abu Hider 5-52, Alauddin 3-76)
LEGENDS OF RUGGANJ: 314 for 9 (Mosharraf 88, Nahidul 57, Taijul 17; Anamul 3-52, Dollar 2-51)
Result: Match tied.

out to be the hitter at the end. That was great to watch."

Meanwhile, in the day's other game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, the Mushfiqur Rahim-led Mohammedan Sporting Club beat Shahriar Nafees's Brothers Union by 78 runs.

While Mushfiqur scored 72 off 80 balls with nine fours and a six, their foreign recruit Upul Tharanga smacked 70 off 81 with seven fours. Hard-hitting allrounder Nazmul Hossain Milon smacked a 41-ball 70 at number seven to take Mohammedan to 285. In reply, Brothers were bundled out for 207 in 49.5 overs.

At Fatullah, the Mahmudullah Riyad-led Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club eased past Kalabagan Cricket Academy (KCA) by eight wickets. Batting first, Kalabagan were bundled out for just 152. It was a target that Sheikh Jamal reached in just 26.4 overs courtesy of Mahbubul Karim's 78.

Club Cup to end 45-month hiatus

SPORTS REPORTER



The giants of hockey are set to return to the turf after a 45-month gap as the season's curtain-raising tournament, the Marcel Club Cup, gets underway today at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

All the big clubs including Abahani, Mohammedan SC, Usha KC and Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club had last played together in the 2012 Premier Hockey League before Mohammedan, Mariner Youngs, Wari Club and Bangladesh SC refrained from playing any tournament under the Khaza Rahmatullah-led committee which they had called 'illegal committee.'

During the stalemate, one season had rolled without those four clubs, but some positional changes brought about at the top level of Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) recently paved the way for those four clubs. As a result, some 12 clubs took part in the players' transfer, which was held after two years but under the introduction of the players' grade system.

The introduction of the grade system saw players' get less payment compared to the previous seasons and some obligations of the services teams' players and the BKSP students also left four giants to share strength among them. As most of the national players joined services teams, each of the clubs were allowed to sign up only three national players from services teams and a maximum of seven BKSP players.

With top clubs forming nearly equal strength squads, the signing of five foreign players has become a decisive factor for the title race. Mariner Youngs Club, in this respect, are ahead of others as they flew in three foreign players -- German striker Nikolai Heinz, Kenyan midfielder OKeyo Wills Ochieng and Kenyan goalkeeper Linus Kipkemboi -- after roping in five national players and some promising players while two Malaysian players -- Jiwa Mohan and Jivan Mohan -- are also expected to arrive on April 27.

Mohammedan, Abahani and holders Usha KC are however still waiting for the arrival of their foreign recruits. Mariner also flew in former Bangladesh coach Gerhard Peter Rach, and the German was introduced before the media at the club tent yesterday. The team's last biggest achievement was a runners-up finish in Club Cup in 2010.

Abahani, meanwhile, unveiled its jersey for the season and introduced Sailor as its sponsors yesterday.

On the opening day, Mohammedan will take on Bangladesh SC at 2:30pm before Abahani face Sonali Bank SRC at 4:15pm.



Coach Gerhard Peter Rach (L) holds the team jersey at a press conference at Mariner Youngs Club office yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Siddikur ends at 74th

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman finished tied for 74th in the Panasonic Open Golf Championship in Japan yesterday after managing a one-over-par (72) in the fourth and final round. The two-time Asian Tour winner exchanged three bogeys for two birdies at the Chiba Country Club yesterday for an aggregate score of six-over-par (290) to finish three strokes above the bottom-finisher.

Yuta Ikeda of Japan won the title at 13-under-par (271), bagging approximately 273,473 dollars in this event, co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour and the Japan Tour.

4 held for IPL online betting

PTI, Kozhikode

The Kerala police have arrested four persons who allegedly engaged in online betting during the IPL match between Hyderabad and Punjab on Saturday.

Harshad (42), Shamsu (45), Ifsul Rehman (34) and Mohammed Rasheed (31) were arrested from a rented building here, police said. Police seized six phones, computers and Rs. 5.02 lakh.

Sachin grants wishes on 43rd birthday

PTI, Mumbai

The iconic Sachin Tendulkar celebrated his 43rd birthday on Sunday by playing cricket with children from the 'Make-A-Wish India' organisation in the city, even as the fraternity wished him and waxed eloquence.

Tendulkar spent some time with the children, teaching them the basics of batting, bowling and fielding at the MIG Club. He posted the same on his official Facebook page.

Tendulkar retired from all forms of cricket in November 2013 during the Test match against West Indies at the Wankhede Stadium.

As he stepped into his 43rd year, wishes started to pour in on twitter.

"Many happy returns of the day champion @sachin_rt have a blessed year!" former India captain and longtime teammate Anil Kumble wrote on his twitter handle.

Suresh Raina said, "Happy birthday @sachin_rt the best man I know on and off the field. Wishing you health and success always."

Former Pakistan off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq also wished the batting maestro who has amassed 15921 runs in 200 Tests and 18426 runs in 463 ODIs.

"Have a wonderful day brother @sachin_rt . God bless you," Saqlain said.

Tendulkar is the leading run-scorer in Tests and ODIs. He is the only cricketer to have hit 100 international centuries, and the first to score a double century in ODIs.

Tendulkar received India's highest civilian award Bharat Ratna from the President Pranav Mukherjee in 2014. He is the youngest recipient to date and the first ever sportsperson



Shakib, Yadav lead Kolkata

AGENCIES, Pune



Shakib Al Hasan's bowling and Suryakumar Yadav's 49-ball 60 provided the foundation for the Kolkata Knight Riders' (KKR) two-wicket win against the Rising Pune Supergiants in a closely-fought Indian Premier League (IPL) encounter at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium on Sunday.

With the win, KKR go atop the points table with four wins from five matches. Yusuf Pathan (36) and Andre Russell (17) were the other major contributors for KKR, while Albie Morkel and Rajat Bhatia picked up two wickets each for the hosts.

Chasing a target of 161, KKR got off to a disastrous start as Robin Uthappa was adjudged leg-before-wicket off Albie's very first delivery of the innings.

But then skipper Gautam Gambhir and Suryakumar got together to put on a 31-run partnership off just 2.3 overs.

Unluckily for KKR, Gambhir was run out as he misjudged a double. His desperate dive to make the ground was not enough as Mahendra Singh Dhoni took the bails off in a flash.

But the visitors kept the scoreboard ticking at a rapid pace and with six overs gone, they were 59/2.

Shakib Al Hasan then played on a Rajat Bhatia delivery in the next over which helped Pune pull back things a little. KKR thereafter managed just 19 runs till the 10th over.

But then Suryakumar and Pathan, who finally found some rhythm in the

competition, put on a pacy 51-run partnership. Pathan hit two huge sixes en route to his 36 but then was trapped right in front of the stumps by Rajat.

Though it dented KKR a bit, West Indies all rounder Andre Russell once again brought down the asking rate by hitting Ankit Sharma for two sixes in the 17th over.

Although Russell holed out in the deep thereafter, KKR was within touching distance and they finally got home with Umesh Yadav hitting the winning runs.

Earlier, Shakib Al Hasan, Sunil Narine, Rajagopal Sathish and Umesh Yadav bagged a wicket each.

Pune got off to a brisk start with 11 runs coming off the third over. But with 24 runs on the board Faf du Plessis was cleaned up by left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan.

The wicket put the brakes on the scoring rate and the Supergiants only

managed to score 31 for 1 by the end of the powerplay.

A late cameo from Mahendra Singh Dhoni (23) and Ajinkya Rahane's 52-ball 67 helped Rising Pune Supergiants manage a challenging total.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PUNE V KOLKATA
PUNE: 160 for 5 in 20 overs (Rahane 67, Smith 31; Shakib 1-14)
Kolkata: 162 for 8 in 19.3 overs (Yadav 60, Pathan 36; Bhatia 2-19)
Result: Kolkata won by 2 wickets.
Player-of-the-match: S. Yadav.
BANGALORE V GUJARAT
BANGALORE: 180 for 2 in 20 overs (Kohli 100 not out, Rahul 51 not out; Kulkarni 1-39, Tambe 1-24)
GUJARAT: 182 for 4 in 19.3 overs (McCullum 42, Karthik 50 not out, Jadeja 12; Watson 1-31, Shamsi 1-21)
Result: Gujarat won by 6 wickets.
Player-of-the-match: Virat Kohli.



YOU'RE GONE: Kolkata all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan (L) celebrates after cleaning up Pune's Faf du Plessis' stumps during their IPL match in Pune yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

KP out of IPL 2016

AFP, New Delhi

Former England batsman Kevin Pietersen has been ruled out of the rest of the Indian Premier League after being carried off the field with calf injury.

Pietersen faced a single ball during his side Rising Pune Supergiants' fourth match on Friday before hurting his right calf while attempting a run.

"Over & out, India! Injuries are all part of the job! Horrible tear in my calf! Sad to be leaving a really great bunch of boys but looking forward to being back with my family! London bound for a summer off! Vacation till November! Bye for now! Lots of love, KP xxx," Pietersen wrote on his Instagram account.

The 35-year-old batsman had also posted a picture of himself in a wheelchair in the dressing room, with strapping on his calf, alongside the word "Urgh!" on Facebook soon after the match against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Pietersen had managed to score 73 runs from four innings for the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led side, who have struggled with three defeats in the cash-rich league.