

SPORTS



CAPTAIN'S KNOCK: Mahmudul Hasan lets out a roar after reaching his hundred at Fatullah yesterday. His century and three-wicket haul helped Kalabagan Cricket Academy shock Abahani in the seventh round of the Dhaka Premier League.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Massive leap for Siddikur

Golfer back in Olympic frame

SPORTS REPORTER



Siddikur Rahman might have missed out on a maiden European Tour victory on Sunday, but his second-place finish in the tri-sanctioned Mauritius Open has earned him reward in the form a massive jump in the world golf rankings as well as a return to the Olympic Games' qualifying list. The 31-year-old golfer, who was in 406th position last week, climbed 132 places to move up to 274th position, according to the latest rankings published yesterday.

The rise in rankings was also reflected in the Olympics' eligibility list, released later yesterday, as Siddikur moved back into 54th position after being out of the 60-man list in the last three weeks.

This massive jump in ranking owes to the status of the Mauritius Open as a tri-sanctioned event, and the hefty paycheck of 126,565 dollars which Siddikur earned from it. The Mauritius exploits also lifted the 31-year-old golfer to 10th position in the Asian Tour Order of Merit.

With only one Asian Tour event scheduled before the cut-off date for Olympics qualification on 11 July, it is highly unlikely that Siddikur would slip out of the 60-man list, unless he endures a disastrous outing in that event [Yeander Tournament Players Championship beginning June 30] and the others behind him come up with top-ten finishes there or in the European Tour events.

If that happens, Siddikur will be the first Bangladeshi sports person to qualify for the Olympic Games and not participate through wild cards. Usually Bangladeshi athletes participate in the quadrennial event through wild cards provided by the International Olympic Committee.



He batted like a king: Tamim

Hasan heroics stun Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



Mahmudul Hasan did not make as much impact as expected after his stint as captain of the Bangladesh Under-19 team. But he displayed his quality during his match-winning hundred against Abahani to give his side Kalabagan Cricket Academy their first win in seven matches in the Dhaka Premier League at Fatullah yesterday.

How good was his 111-ball 106-runs innings?

"I must say it was a superb knock. A matured innings indeed and he single handedly took away the match from us. He knew when he should take risks and he never seemed out of control during his knock. I don't know whether it would be an exaggeration, but he batted like a king," was the praise showered by none other than Abahani skipper Tamim Iqbal.

Few things could be sweeter for a captain than making a hundred after taking three wickets to lead his side to their first win, and that too against a team like Abahani. So understandably, the 25-year-old all-rounder from Gaibandha was ecstatic.

"I am very happy. I had a wonderful day with both bat and ball," said Mahmudul. But he was quick to give full credit to

his team like a true leader for their first win in the competition. "I must give credit to my team. Everybody performed their hundred per cent and that's why we finally won the match. It was not an easy job to bowl on this pitch but still our bowlers could restrict them to 282, so it was teamwork."

When Mahmudul was trapped in front by left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib in the 45th over, his team still needed 16 runs from 34 deliveries with three wickets in hand. But the Kalabagan Academy captain was hardly in any doubt over his team's victory. "We were sure about our win."

Mahmudul was not ready to consider their victory as an upset as he said that they won the match as the better team. "We had the confidence that we could overtake the total. It was a batting paradise and I told everybody that they should play positive cricket. There is no way one can say it was an upset because we played better cricket to win this match," said Mahmudul.

While their fourth defeat in seven matches put Abahani's chances of a Super League berth at risk, Kalabagan Cricket Academy's first victory gave them hopes of avoiding relegation.

"Our first target is to avoid relegation. If we can continue the performance we put in today then we definitely will be able to avoid relegation," he hoped.

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh's former under-19 captain Mahmudul Hasan put in a fabulous all-round performance to help Kalabagan Cricket Academy shock Abahani in the seventh round of the Dhaka Premier League in Fatullah yesterday.

The 25-year-old scalped three wickets and then scored a decisive century to help his side overcome Abahani's 282. This was Kalabagan's first win of the league and they are now placed in 11th position.

The defeat also means that Abahani now share the seventh spot with Brothers Union and Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club with all the three teams tied at six points each. Brothers and Sheikh Jamal however are favourites to hop past Abahani as they have a match in hand.

While Abahani seem to be in hot water at the moment, it did not seem like the match was destined for such

an ending at the start of the day.

Riding on their in-form openers, they cruised to 88 for no loss in 17 overs after electing to bat first. Tamim smashed two sixes and three fours during his 52-ball 48. He was dismissed by Mahmudul in the 18th over and the other opener Avishek



NURUL HASAN ... 108

Mitra took over from there. Mitra scored 63 off 82 balls. They received some good impetus from their middle order batsman. Their Indian recruit Manoj Tiwary scored 40 off 50, while Nazmul Hossain Shanto and Mosaddek Hossain smacked 37 and 42 respectively to help them go past the 280 mark.

After the exchange, Kalabagan lost early wickets with Abul Hasan removing both openers by the eighth over. They were struggling at 48 for two. However, a 77-run stand between Jatin Saxena and Mahmudul for the third wicket brought them back in the game.



IMTIAZ HOSSAIN ... 88

After Jatin's fall in the 20th over however, they suffered a mini collapse and from 125 for two crumbled to 163 for five. Mahmudul was stuck at one end and needed some support and that came from the number seven Taposh Ghosh who hit a useful 47 off 44 balls. Mahmudul, who hit three sixes and eight fours, reached

his century with a single in the 41st over and got to the mark off just 102 balls. By the time he got out in the 45th over Kalabagan just needed 16 runs to win and it was a target the lower order batsmen achieved quite easily.

The day's other games were more one-sided. Nurul Hasan scored his first List A century to lead Prime Bank Cricket Club to a 60-run win over the Legends of Rupganj at the BKSP.

Batting first, Prime Bank finished on 299 for 9. Nurul's 112-ball 108, which included two sixes and seven fours turned out to be the key for Prime Bank. He was well supported by Mehedi Maruf's 77-ball 75.

In reply, Rupganj were bundled out for 239 in 45.5 overs.

At the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, Mohammedan suffered a six-wicket defeat at the hands of Prime Doleshwar. Batting first, Mohammedan were bundled out for just 188. It was a target which Doleshwar, courtesy of a stroke-filled 88 from Imtiaz Hossain, reached in 41.3 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ABAHANI: 282 for 7 (Avishek Mitra 63, Tamim 48, Manoj Tiwary 40; Mahmudul 3-52, Noor 1-47)	Saqlain 1-44	Mosharraf 2-52	MOHAMMEDAN SC: 188 all out in 47.4 overs (Naeem 100; Farhad 3-26, Al-Amin 3-34, Reajul 2-24)
KALABAGAN CA: 286 for 7 in 46.5 overs (Mahmudul 106, Taposh 47, Jatin 43; Abul 3-47)	Result: Kalabagan Cricket Academy won by three wickets.	LEGENDS OF RUPGANJ: 239 all out in 45.5 overs (Jalaj 52, Asif 47, Mosharraf 25; Sachin Rana 4-37, Rubel 2-24, Nazmul 2-44)	PRIME DOLESHWAR SC: 192 for 4 in 41.3 overs (Imtiaz 88, Nasir 37 not out; Ariful 2-34, Enamul
	PRIME BANK CC: 299 for 9 (Nurul 108, Mehedi 75; Nahidul 2-38, Alauddin 2-45, Asif 2-49,	Result: Prime Bank Cricket Club won by 60 runs.	

All-clear for Usha's Pakistani players

SPORTS REPORTER



Usha Krira Chakra retreated from their plan of appeal to the league committee of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation to halt the ongoing Premier Division League after getting clearance from the Special Branch (SB) of Police for bringing five Pakistani players.

Having released the Malaysian players after the Club Cup tournament, joint defending champions Usha KC found themselves in trouble to field a playing eleven due to the suspension and injury problems of the local players coupled with the unavailability of the Pakistani players due to visa complications.

"There was uncertainty over the clearance of five Pakistani players from the SB till this noon despite our having met the SB officials. But they [SB] called us in the afternoon and gave the all-clear for the Pakistani players' entry into Bangladesh," informed Usha manager Rafiqul Islam Kamal.

Usha played their first match against Wari Club without their foreign recruits as the Pakistani players

were kept waiting for the visa last week and the club will have to play today's match against Bangladesh Railway without those players too.

Out of the five players, Aleem Bilal, Syed Kashif Shah and Ali Shan are part of Pakistan's national team while Asfaq Niwaz and buhammad Irfan Junior were recently called for the national team's camp. All the five players are expected to arrive here by Wednesday.

"Now the SB clearance will be sent to the Bangladesh High Commission in Pakistan through the foreign ministry and we are expecting that they will obtain the visa tomorrow [Tuesday] and arrive here by Wednesday," said Kamal.

A total of 20 foreign players including 15 Pakistanis are currently participating in the ongoing league for six different clubs. Abahani have five Pakistanis, Mohammedan SC and Shadharan Bima have four Pakistanis each while Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club and Bangladesh SC are fielding one Pakistani player each.

Meanwhile, in the matches played yesterday, Mohammedan thrashed Azad Sporting Club 12-0 while Dhaka Wanderers Club defeated Sonali Bank 7-4.

Kohli, AB crush KKR

STAR SPORTS DESK



A brilliant century partnership between superstars Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers stole the show yesterday at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata and led the Royal Challengers Bangalore to a comfortable nine wicket win over Gautam Gambhir's men.

Batting first, Kolkata finished on 183. Gambhir and Manish Pandey scored half-centuries and laid the foundation while Andre Russel smacked a 19-ball 39 towards the end to up the tempo. Shakib Al Hasan joined in the fun towards the death overs as well with an 11-ball 18 with one six and one four to help Kolkata cross the 180-mark.

While it initially seemed enough, some brilliant batting from both Kohli and De Villiers, meant that the game was out of Kolkata's hands.

After the exchange, Bangalore raced to 71 for no loss courtesy of Chris Gayle's 31-ball 49. He was however, trapped in front by Sunil Narine in the eighth. De Villiers joined Kohli and that was it for Kolkata. De Villiers though was a bit fortunate. Shakib managed to induce an edge of the South African in the eleventh over which

Gambhir dropped at point. It was a catch that should have been taken.

However, after that the momentum changed and the duo took it away from there. Kohli continued his brilliant run and hit 75 runs off 51 balls. He scored five fours and three sixes and the best part about it was that he remained unbeaten.

De Villiers, in similar fashion finished unbeaten on 59, which he scored off 31 balls. He too, like Kohli hit three sixes and five fours. The 115-run stand for the second wicket absolutely crushed Kolkata's hopes.

Kohli's knock took his overall tally to 752 runs and he is easily the highest run-getter of the tournament. He has scored that at an average of 83.55. The second highest is Kohli's teammate De Villiers who now has 597 runs to his name at an average of 59.70.

With these two players going great guns, every team in the IPL will want to avoid the Royal Challengers Bangalore.

SCORES IN BRIEF

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 183 for 5 (Gambhir 51, Pandey 50, Russel 39 not out, Shakib 18 not out; Aravind 2-41, Iqbal 1-22)
ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE: 186 for 1 (Kohli 75, AB de Villiers 59; Narine 1-34)
Result: Bangalore won by nine wickets.

De Kruif coming today

SPORTS REPORTER

Reappointed coach Lodewijk de Kruif is scheduled to arrive here this morning to take the charge of the Bangladesh national team ahead of next month's Asian Cup qualifying play-offs against Tajikistan.

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) had parted ways with the 46-year-old coach in September last year after Bangladesh's 5-0 drubbing at the hands of Australia in the World Cup Qualifiers, but the game's governing body decided to bring back the Dutchman, who guided Bangladesh to a 1-1 draw against Tajikistan earlier in the year at home.

Denmark-based midfielder Jamal Bhuiya will also arrive in the same flight to join the training camp, which got underway on May 11 under the guidance of Saiful Bari Titu.

Bangladesh team will leave for Dushanbe on May 29 to play their away fixture on June 2 before hosting Tajikistan on June 7.