

A Kalabagan choke & a CCS surprise

SPORTS REPORTER

In chase of a target of 263, Kalabagan Krira Chakra were on 238 for three, requiring another 25 runs from last five overs. There was no reason for the Mashrafe Bin Mortaza-led team to panic as Hamilton Masakadza was batting on a hundred-plus, along with the experienced Mehrab Hossain. However, Brothers Union still managed a nine-run victory to secure their fourth win in seven matches as the departure of Mehrab in the first ball of the 46th over saw the Kalabagan batting fall to pieces at BKSP yesterday.

Left-arm spinner Nabil Samad removed Mehrab and then in the next over Mashrafe, the hero of the last match when he hit the fastest hundred in the league, offered a return catch to Asif Hasan. Masakadza followed his skipper in the next over as he became the victim of a run-out but still one could not dismiss the Kalabagan's chances as still to come were the likes of Tanveer Haider, Sharifullah, Abdur Razzak and Dewan Sabbir, who have got the ability to contribute in the late order and the task at hand was not especially difficult.

In the end Masakadza's 105-ball 111 went in vain as Kalabagan were dismissed for 253 runs in 49.2 overs. His second hundred in the

ongoing league took the Zimbabwean batsman, who was scheduled to fly home last night, to the top of the batting chart but the sudden batting collapse ruined his party.

Earlier, a 126-run second wicket stand between Imrul Kayes and Tushar Imran helped Brothers to put up a challenging total of 262. Seasoned campaigner and Brothers skipper Tushar made 77 off 87 balls with the help of eight fours and a six while Imrul added 67 off 86 balls with five boundaries.

At Fatullah, braving all the off-field adversities, Cricket Coaching School won their first match by beating Victoria Sporting Club by 53 runs in a rain-affected match.

Riding on strong top order batting courtesy of Pinak Ghosh (42), Rajin Saleh (42), Saif Hassan (78) and Salman Hossain (41), CCS scored 259.

In reply Victoria were 72 for two in 10 overs before rain stopped the match and when play resumed Victoria suffered a batting collapse and were teetering at 96 for six before rain again came to halt proceedings. Finally when play restarted a new target of 253 in 35 overs was set as per the Duckworth-Lewis method and Victoria were finally dismissed for 199 runs in 31.1 overs.

18-year old left-arm spinner Saleh Ahmed Shawon was the pick of the CCS bowlers as he picked up four wickets for 15 runs in seven overs to be adjudged man of the match.



SHAWON ... 4 for 15

SCORES IN BRIEF

BROTHERS UNION: 262 all out in 49.3 overs (Imrul 67, Tushar 77; Sabbir 2-18, Sharifullah 2-28, Razzak 2-56, Masakadza 2-43)

KALABAGAN KC: 253 all out in 49.2 overs (Shadman 30, Masakadza 111, Tasamul 45; Sadiqur 2-23, Nabil 4-47)
Result: Brothers Union won by nine runs.

CCS: 259 all out in 49.4 overs (Pinak 42, Rajin 42, Saif 78, Salman 41, Rabbii 4-54, Silva 4-47, Shuvo 2-54)

VICTORIA: 199 all out in 31.1 overs (Mazid 39, Nadif 50; Shawon 4-15, Nasum 2-36)

Result: Cricket Coaching School won by 53 runs (D/L Method)

Massive win for Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Abahani posted a massive 10-3 win over Wari Club in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

Club Cup champions Abahani, who thrashed Bangladesh Railway 14-0 in the league opener, dominated the show and scored three of the first half goals within three minutes before adding five more in the second half. Mohammad Irfan, Shafqat Rasool and Shakil Abbasi struck a brace each while Biplob, Nannu, Khorshed and Kashif Ali scored one goal each for Abahani. Krisna, Mansur and Shihab scored one goal each for Wari Club.

In the day's other match, Dhaka Wanderers Club registered a hard-fought 3-2 win over Azad SC, with Sarwar Morshed scoring twice and Bishal scoring one goal for the winners. Parvez Hossain struck both goals for Azad SC.

CA reveals new 'twilight tickets'

PTI, Brisbane

Cricket Australia has revealed pricing for special 'Twilight Tickets' for the day-night Test at the Gabba. The 'Twilight Ticket', first introduced at the day-night Test in Adelaide last season, gives fans access to the Gabba for the last two sessions of play for days one to four of the first Test against Pakistan from December 15-19.

This ticket option has been introduced to ensure as many fans as possible attend the match and be a part of an unforgettable experience.

Increased FIFA fund to resolve a lot of issues?

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin is seeing a new horizon in football development after the 66th FIFA congress significantly increased financial assistance to its member countries.

As per the latest decision of world football's governing body, each member country will get 5 million dollars over four-year circle instead of the previous amount of one million dollars.

"Definitely the FIFA financial assistance will help us a lot in implementing plans. The biggest benefit of it will be that we can now make a proper plan regarding the national team as well as make an appropriate plan for youth development," Salahuddin said over phone yesterday afternoon after returning from Mexico.

"We knew that we would get a handsome amount as it was a commitment of the new president of FIFA. What will be the most beneficial for us is that the salary of the national team coach and the preparation of the national team will be easily covered by the FIFA fund unlike previously when we had to collect fund from different sources. Managing the fund for coaching staff was a big problem in the past," said Salahuddin.

Out of the annual 12.5 lakh dollars, the BFF will get 5 lakh dollars as direct financial assistance, subject to meeting 10 criteria which include holding men's and women's championships, youth championship for girls and boys, appointment of a paid general secretary, a technical director, conducting development programme, integrity towards football, etc. All of



KAZI SALAHUDDIN

these requirements are already met by the BFF.

As much as 2.5 lakh dollars will be used as a subsidy for the national teams' (men's, women's and age-group) travels outside the country and other things related to the national teams while the remaining 5 lakh dollars will be spent on the basis of capacity building and tailor-made programmes approved by the FIFA.

"Now I can also prepare a plan to hire a foreign technical director for youth development and I will sit with FIFA's development officer Shaji Prabhakaran tomorrow [Thursday] to discuss the issue," Salahuddin said, adding that he was also planning to revive school tournament using this fund.

Asked whether the fund would help BFF run district football smoothly, Salahuddin said: "I have pledged more to the District Football Associations as I have promised to allocate Tk 5 lakh each to the DFAs. I also want to provide financial assistance to clubs of the First, Second and Third Division, so I need Tk 8 to 9 crore every year for this purpose. The FIFA financial assistance will not cover it. I am trying to rope in sponsors to assist the DFAs."

BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag informed that FIFA, apart from providing yearly financial assistance, would help its member countries purchase accessories for the national team.

Shohag also informed that FIFA has also decided to provide fund to regional football associations such as South Asian Football Federation (SAFF), the amount of which could be one million dollars annually.

Kottan's 6-month ambitions

SPORTS REPORTER



George Kottan arrived here yesterday to take charge of Abahani with the target of guiding them to success in the upcoming Federation Cup and the Bangladesh Premier League.

The 69-year-old Austrian, however, said he has no idea about the current team which lost to Chittagong Abahani in the final of Independence Cup earlier this month.

"I have come to know about the current squad from [Satyajit Das] Rupu, who told me that this time the squad is better than the last season. I have six months in hand and I think I can give it to Abahani and

Bangladesh football," said Kottan before conducting his first training session at the club ground in Dhanmondi yesterday.

Under the guidance of the Austrian, Abahani finished fourth in the league last season. However, he left the country before the end of the league to join FIFA's Goal project. This time he hopes the Federation Cup and Bangladesh Premier League will be completed within six months.

"I love this country and whenever I am called, I don't want to miss the chance. Hopefully I will finish the league and other tournaments in six months as champions," said Kottan, who guided Bangladesh national team to triumph in the 2003 SAFF Championship.



AGE NO BARRIER: Gazi Group Cricketers' veteran pacer Mohammad Sharif is ecstatic after completing his hat-trick against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club in Mirpur yesterday. He finished with a four-wicket haul and was also involved in two run-outs.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'I am not finished yet'

SPORTS REPORTER



32-year-old pacer Mohammad Sharif has expressed his wish to return to the national side after taking a hat-trick against Mahmudullah Riyad-led Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club in the Dhaka Premier League yesterday.

Sharif, who is playing for the newly-promoted Gazi Group Cricketers, last played international cricket in July 2007, when Bangladesh toured Sri Lanka. Following the match yesterday, he criticised the selection culture in Bangladesh and indicated that players above 30 in the domestic circuit do not get as much attention from the selectors as the younger players, no matter how they perform.

"Actually the culture of our country is that when someone becomes 30, he is called old. In other countries people say that at 30 players become experienced. I am not finished yet. I feel that I have a lot more to give to the game and I wish to play for the national team and stay fit for

as long as I can," Sharif told reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium after the match was interrupted and eventually shifted to the reserve day due to incessant rainfall.

The umpires decided to stop the match after 16.1 overs were bowled in the afternoon. Before that, Sheikh Jamal were restricted to 168 for nine in 38 overs. The first innings was curtailed as well due to the sudden burst of rainfall in the morning.

While the rains painted a rather gloomy picture for most of yesterday in Mirpur, Sharif's hat-trick brightened the atmosphere. He came on in the 34th over and removed Mahmudullah Riyad with a slower delivery which the batsman, who seemed to be in search for quick runs after the number of overs were reduced, mistimed to deep mid-wicket in the third ball.

Sharif managed to conjure some swing and got Zabid Hossain bowled in the next delivery and then trapped Nazmus Sadat in front in the fifth ball of the over. The last ball also produced a run-out as Sheikh Jamal slumped from 129 for three to 149 for 6. He came back in the 38th over

to remove Shafiul Islam with a fuller delivery and finished with figures of four for 34 in eight overs.

According to Sharif, this was his second hat-trick in the Dhaka Premier League. He claims to have taken his first in the 2005-06 season.

"Two years ago I was the third highest wicket-taker in the national league and I also scored runs. After that I was told that I would tour with the A team but later I wasn't selected. When I asked if it was because I am over-age, they said no. There was some other reason which they did not want to disclose," he said.

"I want this culture [of considering players old after the age of 30] to stop in Bangladesh. If Misbah [Ul Haq] can play till 40, Bangladeshis can also do the same provided they are fit. Ashish Nehra has also come back for India and there are so many other examples," he added.

Gazi Group Cricketers were given a target of 196 in 38 overs as per the Duckworth-Lewis method. They were poised at 83 for three at the end of the day yesterday with Anamul Haque and Alok Kapali at the crease.

Cook's chance to make history

First Eng-SL Test begins today

AGENCIES, Leeds



Alastair Cook will have the opportunity to create history when England take on Sri Lanka in the first Test which begins today in Leeds.

The left-hander needs just 36 more runs to become the youngest batsman ever to reach the 10,000-run mark. He will also be the first Englishman to join the elite group, which has only 11 members.

Speaking about the milestone, Cook said: "It would mean a lot and hopefully I can get there sooner rather than later so we can talk about something else. It's a big milestone in terms of the people who have done it previously so it would be great to try and score these 36 runs.

Sri Lanka are still adjusting to life without star batsmen Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, but Kaushal Silva has urged his team to fill the void left by the pair when they return to the scene of that famous victory at Headingley on Thursday.

Two years ago, Yorkshire's headquarters ground was the stage where Sri Lanka clinched a dramatic victory off the penultimate ball to secure their first Test series win in England. Sri Lanka will again be captained by Angelo Mathews, with the all-rounder's excellent hundred paving the way for their success at Headingley two years ago.

Taylor engaged to Naylor

AFP, London

Former England batsman James Taylor has announced his engagement just weeks after being forced to retire at the age of 26 because of a serious heart condition.

Despite his career ending prematurely, Taylor is getting on with the rest of his life and proposed to girlfriend Josie Naylor last week.

"Luckily for Josie's sake, it wasn't just a knee jerk reaction [to his condition]. I'd had the ring for a few months, actually," Taylor told the Good Morning Britain television programme on Wednesday.

"We went for a nice picnic where we had our first picnic together, so it was pretty simple. I couldn't get my heart racing too much so I handed her the ring and kept it simple."

Ms Naylor added: "It is nice to have something to smile about after all of this."

Russell to miss KKR's crucial game

CRICINFO

Andre Russell will not play in Kolkata Knight Riders' crucial match against Gujarat Lions on May 19. The 28-year old all-rounder limped off the field midway through the match against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday with a suspected injury to his left leg; he did not travel with the squad that reached Kanpur on Tuesday evening.

Russell is the tournament's third highest wicket-taker with 15 scalps, and Knight Riders' fourth highest run-scorer with 188 runs.

The medical staff is monitoring his injury and a definitive prognosis is likely in the coming days.

Kohli 113 flattens Punjab

STAR SPORT DESK



Virat Kohli scored his fourth century of the season as Royal Challengers Bangalore thrashed bottom-placed Kings XI Punjab by 82 runs in Duckworth-Lewis method in a rain-truncated IPL clash yesterday.

Kohli smashed 113 off 50 balls to become the first batsman to score more than 800 runs in a single edition as RCB posted 211 for three in 15 overs. His tally stands at 865 runs from 13 matches. Kohli, who had sustained multiple stitches due to his split webbing on left hand during the last match against Kolkata Knight Riders, gestured at it once he reached the three-figure landmark in the

14th over.

Chris Gayle added 73 off 32 balls opening alongside Kohli in the 15-overs affair.

In reply, Kings XI Punjab reached 120 losing nine wickets in 14 overs when rain re-intervened to end the game. RCB's leg-break bowler Yuzvendra Chahal broke Punjab's backbone, taking four wickets for 25 runs. Wriddhiman Saha was the only notable scorer for Kings XI Punjab, with a 10-ball 24.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE: 211 for 3 in 15 overs (Kohli 113, Gayle 73; Sharma 1-29)

KINGS XI PUNJAB: 120 for 9 in 14 overs (Saha 24; Chahal 4-25, Watson 2-7)
Result: RCB won by 82 runs (D/L method)