

SPORT

Bowling coach nearly decided More wrongs than rights

No reason why sport should be stopped: Papon

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon said yesterday that they have completed all the background work about the new bowling coach for the national team.

"We have shortlisted two candidates, now we just have to decide who to take. We will decide that tomorrow or the day after," said the BCB boss while talking to reporters upon his return yesterday after attending the ICC meeting in Edinburgh.

Few names have already been in the air, ranging from Curtly Ambrose to Chaminda Vaas. But who will actually replace Heath Streak? The name of Sri Lankan pace bowler Chaminda Vaas already came in the media and it was earlier reported that the board has been negotiating with some candidates from India, Sri Lanka and West Indies. Finally the board may pull off a surprise for everybody. Whispers have also been doing the rounds about the strong possibility of an appointment of another West Indian bowling great.

Regarding the controversial proposed two-tier Test table, Papon said: "When the board meeting takes place, we will discuss it and I don't think it will be easy to pass this kind of thing. Even if Bangladesh stands alone, it is still not an easy thing to pass. It's a very complicated procedure. It's not so

simple that you can just decide to do it."

Papon also added that Bangladesh was the only country that objected to the proposal at the CEC meeting.

The BCB boss also responded to the question of the ECB's concern over their forthcoming tour of Bangladesh following terror attacks in Dhaka.

"The incident was a very unfortunate one for all of Bangladesh and it will also have an impact on cricket. From the part of the cricket board, we don't even have the words to offer condolences. That this kind of thing could happen in Bangladesh is unthinkable. I still can't accept it.

"Under the current circumstances I have seen the reaction from England. It's a very natural reaction. If the roles were reversed, we would have done the same thing. Still there are some very important issues here. Even after the terrorist attacks in Paris, sport did not stop there. I believe sport will continue in its own course. Another convenient thing is that the England series is still three months away. In this time, I'm sure that we will not have the same kind

of situation that we have now. And it's very hard to say which place is safe and which isn't. You can't even say that England will be safe three months from now. We don't know. Whatever the situation is, I have always said that our security has to be strengthened. We have to provide maximum security. However, I don't see any reason why sport should be stopped."



SPORTS REPORTER



The just-concluded Premier Division Hockey League, which has been hailed for bringing all the big names of domestic hockey together after a long gap of 45 months, produced a new champion and a few promising players, but the league also drew attention for quite a few wrong reasons.

The return of Mohammedan SC and eventual champions Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club is probably the most pleasing aspect of the league. But the way the game's governing body handled issues, especially confronting the indiscipline shown by players and club officials on a daily basis, left a lot to be pessimistic about.

"The big achievement is that clubs and players participated in the league after a long gap, however, there were a lot of mentionable loopholes," said Usha coach Mamunur Rashid, who guided his side to a second place finish behind champions Mariner Youngs Club.

"Impatience was common among club officials and players, yet we did not see any effective step taken by the

league committee against any official or player," added Mamunur, who is also a member of the BHF executive committee.

Players and officials arguing local or foreign umpires' decisions was a common occurrence during the league. It sometimes even got to a point where match officials or opposition players were assaulted. However, the league committee has hardly taken any steps as of yet to punish those players and officials involved. The performance of the foreign umpires was not satisfactory either as clubs won numerous reviews after going through the newly-introduced referral system.

"The federation wanted to complete the league in whatever way it could and overlooked incidents one after another. Such an approach inspired trouble-makers. The vandalism at the VIP box in the league's last match was the outcome of the federation's apathy," said Abahani coach Mahabub Harun, who also believes the attraction of the league and the standard of play was not that good.

"There was little attraction in the league, and the standard of the game did not increase despite the inclusion of five foreign players. Except for a few, the performance of most players was average," added Harun, who helped his

side finish third in the 12-team table.

"The league did not complete the way it should have. There were no security measures taken for coaching staff, players, officials and umpires during the matches. Fear always prevailed among all at all times and we did not even notice the presence of the league committee," said Mohammedan coach Jamal Haider, whose side finished fourth.

Mamunur Rashid, however, suggested that the game's governing body should first review the positive and negative sides and find out exactly where and how the committee failed to address the issues.

However, all three coaches admitted that there were some emerging players, who can be called up for the national team to make up for the failures of the senior players like Kamruzzaman Rana, Imran Hasan Pintoo, Ashim Gope, Krishna Kumar, Zahid Hossain, Hasan Jubair Niloy, Tapash Barman and others.

Arshad Hossain, Fazle Hossain Rabbi, Rezaul Karim Babu, Mahbub Hossain and Rocky are among those who staged good performances while current national players Sarwar Hossain, Rumman Sarker, Pushkor Khisha Mimo, Shitul Ahmed, Ashrafur Islam, national discards Abu Sayeed Nippon, Belal Hossain and Ajit Kumar

Siddikur's anxious wait

SPORTS REPORTER

After performing poorly in the Yeangder Tournament Players Championship, which concluded yesterday, Siddikur Rahman now faces an anxious period over the next week as he waits to know for sure or not whether he will participate in the Rio Olympics.

The 60-man eligibility list for the Olympics will be released on July 11, with the Bangladeshi golfer currently occupying the 55th position. The world rankings and the Olympic rankings are expected to be revised later today and then again on July 11 before the final selection list is prepared.

Even though it looks like Siddikur would make the elite list, he did little favour to his chances by finishing in 59th position of the Taipei event. The two-time Asian Tour winner exchanged three bogeys for a single birdie in the final round yesterday for an aggregate of two-over-par (290).

Shakib off to winning start

STAR SPORT DESK



Shakib Al Hasan started his Caribbean Premier League season on a victorious note as Jamaica Tallawahs won a closely fought match with St Kitts and Nevis Patriots by five runs at Warner Park in St Kitts yesterday.

The ace Bangladesh all-rounder could not contribute satisfactorily with the bat as he was dismissed for a 15-ball seven during Jamaica's first innings of 153 for seven in 20 overs. Superstar Chris Gayle led the way with a 36-ball 51 after Jamaica was asked to bat. A quickfire, unbeaten 34 off 20 balls by Andre Russell lower down the order carried the Tallawahs to a competitive total.

Shakib fared much better with the ball during the Patriots' chase, bowling four tight overs of left-arm spin for 25 runs and taking the crucial wicket of Jonathan Carter for an 18-ball 27. Carter's wicket, deceived by Shakib as he charged down the track only to see Kumar Sangakkara complete a stumping, came at the right time as the Patriots were coasting at 93 for two before, and lost their way after the 42-run third-wicket partnership was broken.

The main hand in the victory was played by pacer Kesrick Williams, who got rid of Thisara Perera and Brad Hodge in the 18th over, in which only four runs were scored. 30 runs were required off the last over bowled by Timroy Allen and Devon Thomas made a good fist of it, hitting three consecutive sixes, but the earlier loss of wickets proved too difficult to overcome.

SCORES IN BRIEF

JAMAICA: 153 for 7 (Gayle 51, Russell 34 not out, Sangakkara 26; Shamsi 2-17, Perera 2-22)
ST KITTIS AND NEVIS: 148 for 7 (Simmons 29, Du Plessis 27, Carter 27; Williams 3-23, Steyn 1-21, Shakib 1-25)
Result: Jamaica Tallawahs won by 5 runs



Tennis's bad boy Nick Kyrgios of Australia hammered down 27 aces, including some astonishingly powerful second serves, to complete a fabulous Wimbledon third round victory over Spain's Feliciano Lopez yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Djokovic vows to 'emerge stronger'

AFP, London



Novak Djokovic insists he will come back stronger than ever after Sam Querrey ended the world number one's bid for tennis immortality in one of Wimbledon's greatest upsets.

Djokovic arrived at the All England Club last week hoping to win a third successive Wimbledon title and move a step closer to winning the first calendar Grand Slam since 1969.

But instead Djokovic trudged off Court One humiliated after the big-serving Querrey's 7-6 (8/6), 6-1, 3-6, 7-6 (7/5) third round victory condemned the Serb to his earliest Wimbledon exit for eight years.

It was an astonishing result for the 29-year-old, who had won the last four majors and reached the quarter-finals of each of the previous 28 Grand Slams.

Yet rather than conduct a depressing post-mortem of his first defeat in 31 Grand Slam matches, Djokovic did his best to accentuate the positives of his incredible run, claiming he would be back to his best in time for the Olympics and then the US Open in August.

"I believe in positive things in life. I managed to win four Grand Slams in a row. I want to try to focus on that rather than on failure," he said.

"Certainly it's not the first time that I'm losing in a Grand Slam match, or any match for that matter. I know what to do.

"It's disappointing, of course. Losing at a Grand Slam hurts more than any other tournament. There is no doubt about that.

"I'm not happy to lose a match. But I'm going to move on from this hopefully as a stronger player."

Djokovic faced a barrage of questions about his strangely lethargic effort against Querrey and he hinted he had been suffering from mental and physical fatigue following the French Open.

Having beaten Andy Murray in Paris to win the last major title missing from his trophy cabinet, Djokovic conceded the fulfilment of a long-held ambition had made it harder to motivate himself at Wimbledon.

"It's an amazing feeling to be able to hold four Grand Slams at the same time. But coming into Wimbledon, I knew that mentally it's not going to be easy to kind of remotivate myself," he said.

"The importance of this tournament is so immense that you always find ways to try to give your best.

"Obviously my best wasn't enough this year."

Although the match played over two days due to a series of rain delays, Djokovic said the weather wasn't a factor.

However, he did admit he felt completely out of sorts making a rare appearance outside of Centre Court.

"It's really not necessary to talk about the rain interruptions and the conditions. It's the same for both of us," he said.

"I play 90 percent of the matches on the Centre Court, 10 percent on the other court. Obviously I'm going to feel better on the Centre Court.

"I don't want to take anything out of victory for my opponent. He played a terrific match. He served very well. That part of his

Mathews won't 'run away' from captaincy

AFP, Cardiff

Angelo Mathews said he had no intention of quitting as Sri Lanka captain after yet another crushing defeat by England.

Sri Lanka lost the fifth and final one-day international by 122 runs in Cardiff on Saturday as England took the series 3-0, with one tie and one no result, following their 2-0 success in the preceding three-Test campaign.

"There will be good times as well as bad," said Mathews, who became Test and one-day skipper in 2013 before taking on the T20 leadership just before this year's World Twenty20 in India.

"This is a tough time for me as a captain and for the whole unit but you can't run away from it," added the 29-year-old all-rounder.

"I'm pretty sure if we keep improving day-by-day we can come out of this hole," he insisted.

"For the past two months we've been having the same problems, either batting bowling or fielding has let us down in every single game."

Serena's 300th Slam win

Kyrgios sets up clash with Murray

AFP, London



Serena Williams needed just 51 minutes to clinch the 300th Grand Slam win of her career on Sunday as the defending champion made

the Wimbledon last 16.

The 34-year-old American brushed aside Germany's world number 43 Annika Beck 6-3, 6-0 on the back of 25 winners and seven aces and goes on to face long-time Russian rival Svetlana Kuznetsova.

"I thought it was good. I still want to get out to a little bit of a faster start but I was really focused and calm," said Williams, who is just six wins short of Martina Navratilova's Open Era record of 306 Slam wins.

Williams has now won 82 matches at Wimbledon as she remains on course to equal Steffi Graf's Open Era record of 22 Grand Slam titles with her seventh Wimbledon crown.

Williams took the starring role as play was held on the middle Sunday for only the fourth time in Wimbledon history, and the first time since 2004, as organisers tried to clear the backlog caused by days of rain.

Two-time Grand Slam champion Kuznetsova also reached the fourth round for the first time since 2008 despite becoming involved in a row with the umpire over coaching.

The 31-year-old 13th seed battled from 2-5 down in the final set to defeat US 18th seed Sloane Stephens 6-7 (1/7), 6-2, 8-6.

Nick Kyrgios booked a clash with Andy Murray for a place in the quarterfinals after downing Feliciano Lopez in the third round.

The Australian 15th seed won 6-3, 6-7 (2/7), 6-3, 6-4 on Court One in a match that

was tied at one set all when bad light stopped play on Saturday.

Kyrgios will face second seed and 2013 champion Murray in the fourth round on Monday. The British star is the top seed left in the draw after world number one Novak Djokovic was knocked out by Sam Querrey in a shock result Saturday.

But Kyrgios fancies his chances nonetheless.

"I definitely have the tools to do it, but saying that, he's probably one of the best players in the world and he's probably the favourite at the moment since Novak is out," the Australian said.

Jo-Wilfried Tsonga reached the Wimbledon last 16 on Sunday by downing US marathon man John Isner 6-7 (3/7), 3-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2, 19-17.

French 12th seed Tsonga, a semifinalist in 2011 and 2012, saved a match point in the 32nd game of the final set.

The last set alone lasted more than two hours. Isner, the 18th seed, famously won the longest tennis match ever played when he beat another Frenchman, Nicolas Mahut, 70-68 in the final set at Wimbledon in the first round in 2010.

The five-setter, stretched over three days, lasted 11 hours and five minutes.

Isner had led Tsonga by two sets to one when play was halted at sunset on Saturday. The American ended the four-hour, 25-minute tie with 38 aces, 101 winners and 53 unforced errors.

Czech 10th seed Tomas Berdych appreciated the history of the rare middle Sunday play at Wimbledon as much as he savoured his 6-4 6-4 4-6 6-1 victory over talented teenager Alexander Zverev.

Hamilton wins Austrian GP

AFP, Spielberg

Lewis Hamilton crashed with his Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg in a wild final lap on Sunday as he claimed a dramatic victory in a pulsating Austrian Grand Prix.

The defending three-time world champion, who started from pole position, attacked the championship leader who defended hard at Turn Two where the pair collided.

Rosberg forced Hamilton off the track, but the Briton rejoined, the pair touching briefly again, and pulled clear to win. Behind him, Rosberg suffered a damaged front wing and dropped back to finish fourth.

The collision concluded a titanic contest between the two Mercedes men after an incident-packed race.

Dutch teenager Max Verstappen claimed his second career podium finishing second for Red Bull ahead of third placed Finn Kimi Raikkonen for Ferrari.

Rosberg was fourth ahead of Australian Daniel Ricciardo in the second Red Bull, Briton Jenson Button of McLaren Honda, Frenchman Romain Grosjean of Haas and Spaniard Carlos Sainz of