

SPORT



Barisal Bulls batsmen Dawid Malan (L) and Shahriar Nafees put on a fabulous 150-run second-wicket stand to overhaul Chittagong Vikings' tricky 163-run total in their BPL fixture at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Nafees, Malan trump Vikings

SPORTS REPORTER



They say T20 cricket is all about momentum. If you are in good touch, then it does not matter how many big names you have got in your team, you are bound to succeed.

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's Comilla Victorians banked on momentum last year and ended up winning the tournament. This season, it seems that Barisal Bulls are the first team to have gained that much needed force, having completed their third consecutive win in Mirpur yesterday.

The way they dismissed the Chittagong Vikings by seven wickets yesterday showed just how confident they are. And make no mistake; a lot of it was gained during their brilliant win against the Rajshahi Kings on Sunday, which saw them survive a brutal onslaught from Sabbir Rahman.

Having managed to ace that game, they were ready for the worst against Chittagong yesterday. And so, even when the Vikings had raced to 116 without loss in 13 overs, Mushfiqur Rahim and Co did not seem too worried.

Tamim, for his part, was brilliant. He skipped down the track to disrupt the length of the bowlers, he knelt down and pulled deliveries instead of scooping them and even those went for boundaries. And there was, obviously, his trademark drive through the covers.

The highlight of his 51-ball 75, which saw him hit two sixes and 10 fours, came in the 12th over when he dismissed Rayad Emrit for 17 runs. After hitting him for two fours in the first three balls, a nervous Emrit tried to outfox Tamim with a slower outside the off stump, which was eventually smashed over long on for a six.

However, the game changed following Tamim's dismissal in the 14th over. He was bowled by a slower delivery from Kamrul Islam. In the next 41 balls the Vikings managed to add just 47 runs. His partner Jahurul Islam who had hit a 34-ball 36, was caught off Abu Hider in the 15th over.

Anamul Haque hit a 19-ball 27 but it still was not enough to help them post a score near 200. While 163 for three was a decent total, it was far less than what they could have reached and both the Barisal Bulls and the Vikings knew that.

With that in mind, the Bulls made a confident start after the exchange. While they did lose Josh Cobb early in the second over, Dawid Malan and the in-form Shahriar Nafees, who is also the tournament's highest run-getter, shared a 150-run stand for the second wicket -- the highest in the BPL for that wicket -- and aced the chase.

While Malan smashed 78 off 48 balls with seven sixes and three fours, Nafees played a more composed 59-ball 65. Both the batsmen initially knocked the ball around. At the 10-over mark they were poised at 66 for one and it did not seem too spectacular.

However, the pair's game plan changed from then. Malan, especially, unleashed himself with great vigour. He hit Imran Khan, Mohammad Nabi and Abdur Razzak for sixes in the next three overs. Shahriar Nafees joined in the fun with three fours during that period.

With 34 runs required in the last three overs, the 18th over was bound to be crucial and that was the over Malan went absolutely haywire. He smashed Dwayne Smith for three consecutive sixes down the ground in that over and brought the equation down to 14 from 12.

There was a bit of a stumble for Barisal though. They lost both Nafees and Thisara Perera in consecutive balls in the 19th over and needed seven runs from the last over.

Going by the nervy last over finishes this season, anything could have happened. However, skipper Mushfiqur Rahim ensured that there were no such repeats by hitting two fours and taking the Bulls home.

SCOREBOARDS

VIKINGS V BULLS

CHITTAGONG VIKINGS	R/B	4s/6s
Tamim Iqbal b		
Kamrul Islam Rabbi	75/51	10/2
Jahurul Islam c Perera		
Abu Hider	36/34	4/0
Anamul Haque not out	27/19	2/1
DR Smith c		
Nadif Chowdhury b Al-Amin	17/17	0/1
Extras: (b-5, lb-2, nb-1)		8
Total: (For 3 wks in 20 overs)		163
Did not bat: Zakir Hasan, Nazmul Hossain		
Milon, Mohammad Nabi, Imran Khan (1), Subashis Roy, Abdur Razzak, GD Elliott.		
Fall of wickets: 1-116, 2-122, 3-163.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tajjul Islam	3	1	16	0
Al-Amin Hossain	4	0	35	1
Abu Hider	4	0	31	1
RR Emrit	2	0	31	0
JJ Cobb	2	0	14	0
Kamrul Islam Rabbi	4	0	21	1
DJ Malan	1	0	8	0

BARISAL BULLS	R/B	4s/6s
JJ Cobb b Subashis Roy	6/9	1/0
DJ Malan not out	78/48	3/7
Shahriar Nafees b Imran Khan	63/44	4/4
NUT Perera c&b Imran Khan	0/1	0/0
Mushfiqur Rahim not out	10/4	2/0
Extras: (b-1, lb-4, nb-3)		8
Total: (For 3 wks in 19.4 overs)		167
Did not bat: RR Emrit, Nadif Chowdhury, Al-Amin Hossain, Tajjul Islam, Abu Hider, Kamrul Islam Rabbi.		
Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-157, 3-157.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Abdur Razzak	4	2	0	22
Subashis Roy	3.4	0	21	1
Mohammad Nabi	4	0	17	0
GD Elliott	3	0	29	0
DR Smith	3	0	40	0
Imran Khan	4	0	30	2

Result: Barisal Bulls won by 7 wickets.
Player-of-the-match: DJ Malan

DYNAMITES V VICTORIANS

DHAKA DYNAMITES	R/B	4s/6s
Mehedi c Doeschate		
b Rashid	60/39	4/3
Sangakkara st		
Jashimuddin b Al-Amin	20/12	2/1
Nasir c Shehzad		
b Doeschate	43/35	5/0
RS Bopara b Rashid Khan	8/10	1/0
Shakib c Al-Amin b Rashid	24/13	1/2
DJ Bravo not out	13/10	0/1
S Prasanna not out	6/4	1/0
Extras: (b-1, lb-5, w-11, nb-3)		20
Total: (For 5 wks in 20 overs)		194
Did not bat: Mosaddek Hossain, Mohammad Shahid, Alauddin Babu, Sunzamul Islam.		
Fall of wickets: 1-33, 2-117, 3-141, 4-142, 5-178.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mashrafe Mortaza	3	0	31	0
Sohail Tanvir	4	0	36	0
Al-Amin	1	0	7	1
Nabil Samad	3	0	32	0
Rashid Khan	4	0	28	3
Mohammad Saifuddin	1	0	18	0
RN ten Doeschate	4	0	36	1

COMILLA VICTORIANS	R/B	4s/6s
Imrul c Babu b Nasir	19/11	3/0
Jashimuddin c Mosaddek		
b Prasanna	10/14	1/0
Shehzad st Sangakkara		
b Mosaddek	15/9	0/2
Nazmul b Sunzamul	16/12	2/0
Doeschate b Prasanna	7/10	0/0
Tanvir c Sangakkara		
b Bopara	20/16	2/1
Rashid c Prasanna		
b Shahid	2/3	0/0
Al-Amin c Sangakkara		
b Shahid	0/1	0/0
Mashrafe b Shahid	47/35	2/5
Saifuddin not out	18/8	2/1
Nabil not out	1/1	0/0
Extras: (lb-1, w-5)		6
Total: (For 9 wks in 20 overs)		161
Fall of wickets: 1-30, 2-30, 3-47, 4-68, 5-70, 6-73, 7-74, 8-111, 9-146.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shakib	3	0	34	0
Nasir	2	0	20	1
Prasanna	4	0	15	2
Mosaddek	1	0	14	1
Sunzamul	2	0	13	1
Shahid	4	0	34	3
Bravo	2	0	17	0
Bopara	2	0	13	1

Result: Dhaka Dynamites won by 33 runs
Player-of-the-match: Mehedi Maruf

End-over failure angers Tamim

SPORTS REPORTER



Prior to yesterday the last time Tamim Iqbal addressed the media was following Chittagong Vikings' unexpected defeat at the hands of Khulna Titans.

Chittagong needed seven runs from six balls with two set batsmen at the crease and yet, somehow managed to lose that game. Following that match an angry Tamim had urged his batsmen to use their brains on the field.

The scenario yesterday seemed to be as frustrating for the left-hander. He scored a brilliant 75 and had taken the Vikings to 116 for no loss in 13 overs before he got dismissed. And yet, in the last seven overs, Chittagong managed to post just 47 runs. It was something that irritated the national opener.

"I think I am definitely frustrated and you [the audience] will also get frustrated by watching these kinds of games. There is no meaning in scoring just 40 runs in eight overs. You don't expect that from such a heavy batting lineup.

"Also, we gave away boundaries in almost every over with the ball. If we play like this, no matter how good a player or coach or captain you bring, it won't be possible to stop the losing streak," said Tamim after the match yesterday.

After four games, the Vikings are, like last season, languishing at the bottom of the table. Tamim reckons that they will have to vastly improve their game if they want to have any

chance of making it to the playoffs. "The disappointing thing is that we are very strong on pen and paper and it feels bad for the franchise owners. They have been fantastic since



Chittagong Vikings captain Tamim Iqbal ended up on the losing side despite scoring a fine 75 in the first innings against Barisal Bulls.

PHOTO: STAR

the last season and as players we haven't been able to give them anything. It feels bad.

"It's not that no one is trying. We are. But somehow we are not clicking. We still have eight matches to go. If we can somehow understand our problems and make a comeback... you never know," explained the Chittagong skipper.

Mushfiqur Rahim on the other hand was anything but disappointed. He completed 1,000 BPL runs yesterday and is currently the second-highest scorer this season.

His teammate Shahriar Nafees tops the list at the moment with 184 runs in four matches with an astounding average of 61.33. Both Mushfiqur and Tamim praised the former national cricketer.

"Dawid Malan played a brilliant knock and we got the powerful start we needed from the top. However, I feel that the team that has the best performing local players will end up winning the competition. And from that aspect, Shahriar Nafees's performance is very important for us.

"He is playing amazingly well. In the last four matches his performance was very suitable and he brought plenty of stability in our middle order," said Mushfiqur.

Tamim echoed Mushfiqur's sentiments. "I watched his game from the stadium in the last match and honestly speaking I am enjoying watching him. He has found a way to successfully score in each game. I think at this moment he is the best batsman of the league," said Tamim.

Aussie fight dampened by Warner's departure

AFP, Hobart



Luck deserted Australia in their desperate bid to salvage the second Test with South Africa snaring the vital wicket of David Warner in unfortunate circumstances in Hobart on Monday.

Warner, who was seeking redemption after his reckless dismissal in the opening over of the first innings, lost his wicket while at the forefront of Australia's fightback.

At stumps on the third day the home side were hanging in at 121 for two, still 120 runs behind the Proteas,

who have been in control of the Test since routing Australia for 85 on Saturday.

Usman Khawaja was unbeaten on 56 with skipper Steve Smith not out 18.

Warner flung his head back in despair when a ball from Kyle Abbott hit his hip and ricocheted off an elbow onto his stumps when he was on 45.

It gave the Proteas a huge fillip after Warner and Khawaja had recovered the innings with a 79-run stand after the loss of Joe Burns in the first over.

Burns was caught behind tickling at one wide down the leg-side from Abbott.

South Africa earlier extended their first innings lead to 241 before they were all out for 326 with Quinton de Kock plundering a century and Josh Hazlewood finishing with six for 89.

Hazlewood captured three of the last four wickets to fall after lunch for his second-best haul after his six for 70 against New Zealand in Adelaide last year to take his tally to 88 Test wickets.

Shortly after lunch, Tembo Bavuma was surprised by a rearing delivery to spoon an easy catch to Nathan Lyon at point and give Joe Mennie his first Test wicket for 74.

After Sunday's second day was washed out, the Australians chased early wickets but de Kock and Bavuma batted South Africa into a position of strength with a century stand.

The swashbuckling wicketkeeper was bowled by Hazlewood just before lunch for 104 off 143 balls with 17 boundaries.

His stand of 144 with Bavuma was the highest by a visiting team in Hobart for the sixth wicket.

De Kock became only the fourth South African to register 50 or more in five consecutive Tests after he swept spinner Nathan Lyon for four over wide mid-on.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: 85 (Smith 48; Philander 5-21) and 121-2 in 36 over (Warner 45, Khawaja 56 not out; Abbott 2-55)

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 326 (De Kock 104, Bavuma 74, Amla 47; Hazlewood 6-89, Starc 3-79)



Australia opener David Warner looks up to the heavens in despair after a ball from South Africa pacer Kyle Abbott ricocheted off his elbow onto the stumps late on the third day of the second Test in Hobart yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



Barisal Bulls captain Mushfiqur Rahim seems to have found the valve to his fortunes as his emotions as his fortunes with the bat has turned since the first Test against England last month.

PHOTO: STAR

Mushy gets back in touch with emotions

SPORTS REPORTER



In the last week Mushfiqur Rahim has thrown punches in the air, shown bowlers where he hit them in the middle of the game and also, oddly enough, celebrated like X-Pac from the WWE's D-Generation X with his hands crossed.

He has revelled in the Bangladesh Premier League with the bat and while he has never been afraid of expressing his emotions, he has however, been extremely calm on the field. These are traits that weren't too commonly seen prior to the England series when Mushfiqur was still looking to regain his form.

Speaking to reporters after yesterday's win over the Chittagong Vikings, Mushfiqur

admitted that he is enjoying this current run off his.

"You can say that yes, I am delighted to have come back to form. Also, I have tried to keep a steady expression for quite some time now and that did not seem to work. So, I told myself, why not try something different and let my emotions out a bit," smiled Mushfiqur during the post-match press conference at Mirpur yesterday.

"It's nothing too different, honestly speaking. We celebrate whenever we win. You know that all the teams are working quite hard. The owners have plenty of input and we need to give them something back.

"We have been successful so it feels good. We have been playing quite well in the last few matches. It's not easy to win in T20s because there's always a risk. So from that aspect it feels really good," he added.