

# SPORT

## 'Happy to perform'

SPORTS REPORTER from Chittagong

Chris Gayle, Shoaib Malik and Dwayne Smith. When the Chittagong Vikings announced the foreign members of their squad, these were the most highlighted players, while pace sensation Tymal Mills was talked about every now and then.

However, as it so happened, the impetus behind their only two wins in the Bangladesh Premier League so far was provided by someone else.

Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi had taken a four-wicket haul during Chittagong's win against the Comilla Victorians and was adjudged the player of the match, before leading Chittagong to another victory, this time with the help of his bat.

He hammered 87 off 37 balls and showed exactly why he is wanted in T20 leagues around the world. Apart from hitting six sixes and six fours, he also bowled well and finished with 1 for 24 in four overs.

At the post-match press conference Nabi said that he was very happy with his performance, adding that there were a number of other Afghan players who have the capability of doing well in T20 leagues around the world as well.

"I am very happy to get the two man of the match awards. I am very happy to perform in Bangladesh.

"You can see from the last few series against Zimbabwe, we beat them at home and away. We also did well in the T20 World Cup. We have the ability. We have some players who can play in the bigger leagues and play big cricket," said Nabi.

Having lost four consecutive matches, it was important for Chittagong to break the jinx and Nabi believes that yesterday's win will help the Vikings start afresh in the competition.

"It was very difficult to come back after losing four games in a row. The coach and the captain kept asking everyone to give their hundred per cent on the ground. We started well in the first six overs. We lost a couple of wickets but the runs were good.

"The pitch was very good for batting and we had a target of around 160 to 170. It's a kind of pitch where if you have wickets in hand, then you must hit every ball in the last three overs and that's what I did. We carried on with our shots," explained Nabi.

The win helped Chittagong move to fifth place with four points and pushed Rajshahi down to sixth with two points.

However, Rajshahi's Samit Patel believes that the Kings can still make it to the knock out stages.

"We lost, but we still got 170. We are doing some good stuff and then some really average stuff. We can still qualify and we know that. We have eight games left and I am sure we can get the momentum after one more win," said Patel.

"We haven't choked, but I think we just haven't been smart enough. We played some good cricket and lost matches by three or four runs. Theoretically we should be on six points and up there," he added.



Chittagong Vikings fast bowler Taskin Ahmed made an emphatic return by taking his first fifer in T20 cricket.

PHOTO: STAR



Chittagong Vikings all-rounder Mohammad Nabi hammers a delivery over cover during his barn-storming 37-ball 87 in the Bangladesh Premier League fixture against Rajshahi Kings at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

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### NATIONAL CHESS Rakib, Razib share the lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Masters Abdullah Al Rakib and Enamul Hossain Razib shared the lead at the end of the 10th round of the OMICON 42nd National Chess Championship yesterday.

Both Rakib and Razib have 8.5 points from 10 matches after Rakib beat FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Razib beat FM Mehdi Hasan Parag in their respective matches at the Auditorium Lounge of the National Sports Council Tower yesterday.

GM Ziaur Rahman was in second position with seven points after playing out a draw against FM Tabibur Rahman, who shared the third position along with IM Abu Sufian Shakil on 6.5 points each.

In the other matches, IM Shakil beat GM Niaz Murshed and holder IM Minhaz Uddin beat FM Rezaul Haque.

## Nabi steadies Vikings ship

NAIMUL KARIM from Chittagong

After four straight defeats, the Chittagong Vikings needed something special to revive themselves. They needed someone to stand up and show them the way home and that light at the end of the tunnel was shown by Mohammad Nabi at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday.

The Afghanistan all-rounder came in at number six and smashed the fastest half-century of this season to lead the Vikings to a 19-run win.

At the start of the game when the Vikings were put in to bat, it seemed as though Tamim Iqbal's men were headed for yet another defeat. They were struggling at 69 for four after 10 overs. The Chittagong dressing room seemed down and out and the home fans, who had gathered at the ZACS in numbers, were not making much noise.

However, the scenario changed from the 12th over. Anamul Haque and Nabi got together and decided to provide one last push for a win and ultimately hammered 121 runs in the last 10 overs.

The onslaught began with Anamul and Nabi hitting Samit Patel and Darren Sammy for sixes down the

ground in overs 12 and 13.

Milinda Siriwardana received similar treatment in the next over with Nabi hitting him for a powerful six over cover and gathering 14 runs from that over.

With three sixes in three overs, the wheels started turning and it never stopped.

Nabi smashed Sami for a six and a four in over number 16 and then punished Rajshahi's main death bowler, Abul Hasan, for 20 runs an over later. Abul was dispatched for three fours and a six. The six over long-on in the second ball of that over brought up Nabi's half-century off just 25 balls.

Nervous, the Rajshahi death bowlers kept bowling full-tosses towards the end and Nabi kept capitalising. Anamul joined in the fun by hitting Forhad Reza for a four towards the cow corner in the 19th over and brought up his half-century. While he was dismissed in the next ball, it did not matter, for Nabi was going to be there to see off the last over of the innings.

And he did that in style by plundering 16 runs, including two fours and a six to help them post their highest ever total in the BPL, 190 for five.

The Rajshahi Kings did not give up the chase. In fact, if anything, for most parts of the game they seemed right on

top of it. Mominul Haque set the tone by driving Mahmudul Hasan for four consecutive fours in the second over. Junaid Siddique joined in and clobbered Mahmudul for two sixes in the fourth over to take the Kings to 39 for no loss after four.

Mominul's ill-timed drive off Taskin Ahmed was caught at cover in the fifth but he was replaced by Sabbir Rahman and the runs continued to flow. Both Junaid and Sabbir pounded on Saqlain Sajib and smacked him for sixes to take the total to 78 for one in nine overs. Junaid was dismissed in the 10th and that led to the aggressive Umar Akmal's arrival and the runs, once again, continued to flow.

However, once Umar and Sabbir were dismissed by the 15th over the pressure started to tell on the Kings. Sabbir had played brilliantly for a 30-ball 46 and he was the key.

Imran Khan however dismissed him with a beautiful slower delivery in the 15th over. Sabbir misread that and edged it to cover. With 61 required from 30 balls, Taskin and Imran upped their game and took regular wickets to restrict the Kings to 171 for nine. Taskin dismissed Mehedi Hasan and Milinda Siriwardana in the 18th and Forhad Reza in the 20th to complete his first ever five-wicket haul. He finished with

### SCOREBOARDS

#### VIKINGS V KINGS

CHITTAGONG VIKINGS	R/B	4s/6s
Tamim Iqbal b Mehedi	5/6	1/0
Smith b Hasan	34/19	6/1
Anamul c Patel b Reza	50/40	4/2
Elliott st Nurul b Patel	8/10	0/0
Jahurul c Reza b Patel	2/7	0/0
Nabi not out	87/37	6/6
Nazmul not out	1/1	0/0
Extras: (lb-1, w-2)	3	
Total: (For 5 wks in 20 overs)	190	
Did not bat: Saqlain, Mahmudul, Imran, Taskin.		
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-41, 3-58, 4-68, 5-173.		

#### RAJSHAH KINGS

RAJSHAH KINGS	R/B	4s/6s
Mominul c Jahurul b Taskin	22/14	4/0
Junaid c Nabi b Elliott	38/28	1/3
Sabbir c Tamim b Imran	46/30	1/4
Akmal c Smith b Taskin	21/12	2/1
Patel st Anamul b Nabi	6/7	1/0
Sammy c Jahurul b Imran	14/7	0/2
Siriwardana c Nabi b Taskin	4/6	0/0
Mehedi b Taskin	2/3	0/0
Reza c Nabi b Taskin	9/5	0/1
Nurul not out	3/5	0/0
Hasan not out	5/3	1/0
Extras: (w-1)	1	
Total: (For 9 wks in 20 overs)	171	
Fall of wickets: 1-44, 2-78, 3-112, 4-128, 5-134, 6-151, 7-154, 8-154, 9-165.		

#### VIKINGS V KINGS

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Reza	4	0	44	1
Mehedi	2	0	18	1
Hasan	4	0	47	1
Patel	4	0	21	2
Siriwardana	3	0	29	0
Sammy	3	0	30	0

#### VIKINGS V KINGS

Result: Chittagong Vikings won by 19 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Mohammad Nabi.

#### VICTORIANS V RIDERS

COMILLA VICTORIANS	R/B	4s/6s
Liton run out	4/12	0/0
Imrul b w b Shohag	5/10	1/0
Shehzad c Afridi b Anwar	52/45	4/1
Samuels c Shahzad b Rubel	52/46	3/2
Nazmul not out	5/6	0/0
Tanvir c Shahzad b Rubel	0/1	0/0
Ziaur	1	0
Extras: (lb-1, w-3)	4	
Total: (For 5 wks in 20 overs)	122	
Did not bat: Rashid, Al-Amin, Mashrafe, Saifuddin, Nabil.		
Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-21, 3-85, 4-122, 5-122.		

#### RANGPUR RIDERS

RANGPUR RIDERS	R/B	4s/6s
Shahzad not out	51/49	2/3
Soumya c Rashid b Mashrafe	22/15	2/1
Mithun not out	45/39	1/3
Extras: (lb-4, w-3, nb-1)	8	
Total: (For 1 wkt in 17 overs)	126	
Did not bat: Dawson, Afridi, Ziaur, Anwar, Shohag, Arafat, Rubel, Naeem.		
Fall of wickets: 1-29.		

#### RANGPUR RIDERS

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Nabil	3	0	29	0
Al-Amin	1	0	11	0
Tanvir	3	0	7	0
Mashrafe	3	0	20	1
Rashid	4	0	32	0
Saifuddin	3	0	23	0

Result: Rangpur Riders won by 9 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Mohammad Shahzad.

## Ashwin gives India control

AFP, Visakhapatnam

Ravichandran Ashwin started with the bat and ball to put India on top in the second Test as England's batsmen struggled against spin in their first innings reply on day two in Visakhapatnam on Friday.

England were reeling at 103 for five at stumps in response to India's first innings score of 455. The visitors still trail by 352 runs.

Ashwin, who scored a gritty half-century to propel the Indian score after skipper Virat Kohli's 167, claimed two wickets in the final session to rattle the English top-order.

Pace spearhead Mohammed Shami struck early to shatter skipper Alastair Cook's off stump in an early blow as England began their first innings reply before tea.

Shami bowled an inspired first spell with the new ball as he cleaned up Cook for two in the third over of the innings.

Shami's sensational delivery pitched on a good length before moving in a shade to hit the top of Cook's off stump and break it in two, leaving England 4-1.

Haseeb Hameed, who impressed on debut with a well-made 82 in the second innings of the Rajkot Test, put on 47 runs with Joe Root (53) in his bid to steady the innings.

But Hameed's resistance did not last

long as he was run out for 13 after being sent back while attempting to take a second run.

Off-spinner Ashwin soon took charge to get Ben Duckett clean bowled for five and then got the big wicket of Root, who recorded his 24th Test half-century.

Root tried to counter the Indian spin attack during his 98-ball stay laced with six boundaries, but ran out

of patience after giving away a catch to long-off.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 455 (Pujara 119, Kohli 167, Rahane 23, Ashwin 58, Yadav 35; Anderson 3-62, Rashid 2-110, Moeen 3-98)

ENGLAND: First innings 103 for 5 (Root 53, Stokes 12 not out, Bairstow 12 not out; Ashwin 2-20)



England captain Alastair Cook is comprehensively beaten by a Mohammad Shami delivery which went past bat and pad to break off a piece of the off stump on the second day of the second Test against India in Visakhapatnam yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Grand debut for de Grandhomme

AFP, Christchurch

Late bloomer Colin de Grandhomme celebrated his first international call-up with record New Zealand debut bowling figures of 6-41 as

Pakistan crumbled in their first innings of the opening Test on Friday.

After the 30-year-old de Grandhomme engineered Pakistan's collapse to be all out for 133 at Hagley Oval in Christchurch, New Zealand's other debutant Jeet Raval put them in a strong position to be 104-3 in reply at stumps.

New Zealand made a rocky start to their reply when the experienced Tom Latham, Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor -- with 158 Tests between them -- could muster only 16 runs in total.

But the novice Raval (55 not out) and Henry Nicholls (not out 29 in his eighth Test) have added 64 for the fourth wicket to put New Zealand in charge.

On what was effectively the first day of a now four-day Test, after rain washed out the scheduled Thursday start, the honours lay with de Grandhomme.

The Harare-born, former Zimbabwe under-19 representative is more renowned as a big-hitting batsman but was picked for the all-rounder role ahead of the more experienced Jimmy Neesham in the swing-friendly conditions.



COLIN de GRANDHOMME... 6 for 41

Only seven other New Zealand bowlers have taken five or more wickets on debut, with the previous best figures belonging to Tim Southee at five for 55.

The previous best six-wicket haul was Alex Moir's six for 155 against England 65 years ago. Although conditions appeared ripe for bowling when Williamson won the toss his strike pair Southee and Trent Boult strayed too much to seriously trouble Pakistan openers Sami Aslam and Azhar Ali in the first hour.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: first innings 133 (Aslam 19, Azhar 15, Misbah 31, Shafiq 16; Southee 2-20, Boult 2-39, de Grandhomme 6-41)  
NEW ZEALAND: First innings 104 for 3 (Raval