

SPORTS



Khulna Titans pacer Shafiqul Islam notched career-best T20 figures of four for 17 his side defeated the Barisal Bulls and went to the top of the Bangladesh Premier League table yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Little logic in additions

SPORTS REPORTER



Will Mehedi Maruf travel to Australia with the squad for the preparation camp in Sydney, Australia and then tour New Zealand? The 28-year-old batsman's travelling papers are being prepared but it is not yet certain whether any additional player will be added to the squad that was earlier announced for the tour.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan Papon said three days back in Chittagong that one or two additional performers from the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) may be included in Bangladesh's preparatory squad for the New Zealand series.

Chief selector Minhajul Abedin however said yesterday that the selectors were yet to sit to discuss and decide on the inclusion of the additional player(s). "We are yet to discuss the matter. Hopefully we will be able to inform the media about this matter on November 24. I cannot say anything more regarding this issue," Minhajul told The Daily Star over phone last night.

Since the BCB boss made the surprising announcement, three performers' names in the ongoing BPL came to fore. Two of them -- left-handed opener Shahriar Nafees and all-rounder Nasir Hossain -- were already in the stand-by list, so their necessary travelling paperwork is being completed with the other selected players drafted in the 22-member preparatory squad.

First of all it, the wisdom of such an announcement without a special situation arising and after the squad has been announced is questionable. There have also been discussions and criticism about the rationale behind picking additional players for a seven-day camp. Besides that, there is hardly a compelling reason to add any one of the three players being discussed.

Many also believe that it would not be a wise decision to expose a player like Maruf in New Zealand; instead he can get the exposure in subcontinental conditions, such as the tour of Sri Lanka next year.

Moreover, it would make sense and perhaps be more beneficial to the players in question to allow them to play in the National Cricket League instead of being passengers on the tour of New Zealand. As things originally stood, Nafees and Nasir could only have been called up if an injury problem cropped up during the New Zealand tour.

Most importantly, a team has already been announced, presumably with a certain plan and it is not good practice that anybody other than the selectors becomes involved in the specialised task of squad selection.

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SCOREBOARD

TITANS V BULLS

KHULNA TITANS	R/B	4s/6s
Fletcher c Hider b Tajjul	4/10	0/0
Hasanuzzaman c Hider b Tajjul	19/19	3/0
Wessels b Emrit	40/29	4/1
Mahmudullah c Rumman b Tajjul	44/26	2/3
Shuvagata run out	0/0	0/0
Ariful not out	26/22	3/0
Cooper c Mushfiqur b Rumman	1/4	0/0
Talbur c Rumman b Perera	10/10	1/0
Extras: (lb-2, w-5)	7	
Total: (For 7 wks in 20 overs)	151	
Did not bat: Shafiqul Islam, Mosharrar Hossain, Junaid Khan.		
Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-24, 3-77, 4-78, 5-125, 6-129, 7-151.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tajjul	4	0	18	3
Rumman	4	0	32	1
Hider	3	0	24	0
Emrit	4	0	30	1
Mahmud	2	0	20	0
Perera	3	0	25	1

BARISAL BULLS

Mendis c Cooper b Shafiqul	R/B	4s/6s
Mahmud lbw b Junaid	21/16	4/0
Shamsur c Junaid	0/2	0/0
Mahmudullah	12/17	0/0
Nafees c Shuvagata b Mosharrar	28/35	2/0
Mushfiqur c Ariful b Shafiqul	35/23	4/0
Perera c Cooper b Mosharrar	0/1	0/0
Nadir c Ariful b Cooper	3/4	0/0
Emrit c Cooper b Junaid	14/10	1/1
Rumman b Shafiqul	9/7	1/0
Hider not out	2/1	0/0
Tajjul c Junaid b Shafiqul	2/2	0/0
Extras: (lb-1, w-1, nb-1)	3	
Total: (All out in 19.3 overs)	129	
Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-25, 3-45, 4-88, 5-91, 6-98, 7-113, 8-120, 9-127, 10-129.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mahmudullah	4	0	28	1
Junaid	4	0	29	2
Cooper	4	0	30	1
Shafiqul	3.3	0	17	4

5TH MEN'S AHF CUP Bangladesh take on Taipei today

SPORTS REPORTER



After smiting Hong Kong 4-2 in their opening match, defending champions Bangladesh could grab the pole position of Pool A with a win against Chinese Taipei in their 5th Men's AHF Cup fixture today.

Bangladesh and Taipei are tied on three points after playing one match apiece, hence a win today's encounter, which is set to kick off at 4:00pm Bangladesh time in Hong Kong's King's Park Stadium, would ensure the men in red and green the pole position.

The team's adviser coach, Peter Gerhard Rach hopes Bangladesh romp past the opposition even though there are sufficient opportunities to consider the group phase matches as a platform to fine-tune the side. "I'm very optimistic that we will overcome any difficulties we had in the first match. With the formation of the tournament, you can afford to lose all the three group matches because the tournament will start in earnest in the semifinals. So we can still try and find our way and we can try certain things," the former coach of the national team told reporters after a practice session at the match venue yesterday.

Midfielder Krishna Kumar, cited the lack of opportunities to practice on the match turf as a possible reason for the unconvincing nature behind the win against Hong Kong and expressed that they found it a bit difficult to adjust to the surface due to that.

"We could have got used to the turf had we had a practice here previously. But after today's practice, we have hopefully covered some ground. We will definitely win against Chinese Taipei and will improve day by day," Krishna said hopefully.

Kiwis outclass Pakistan

AFP, Christchurch

A Kane Williamson half century saw New Zealand snap a four-Test losing streak when they beat Pakistan by eight wickets Sunday in the first Test at Hagley Oval, Christchurch.

A low-scoring match was wrapped up inside eight sessions after the first day's washout, with Williamson's second innings 61 -- his 24th Test 50 -- the top score of the match.

Set 105 to win after Pakistan were all out for 171 in their second innings on the morning of the fourth day, Williamson lost his wicket with the scores level, leaving debutant Jeet Raval to seal victory with a boundary off Yasir Shah.

It was a much-needed confidence boost for the home side, coming off a 3-0 series whitewash in India and a comprehensive 204-run loss to South Africa.

"It was a nice toss to win," said Williamson who put Pakistan into bat on a seaming wicket and had them all out for 133 in their first innings.

"After a couple of really tough tours in South Africa and India, it was important we learned a lot but at the same time put some of that baggage away."

Azhar Ali, who will take over the Pakistan captaincy with Misbah-ul-Haq having to dash home after the match because of a family illness, said the tourists had no excuses.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: First innings 133

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 200

PAKISTAN: Second innings 171 (Azhar 31, Babar 29, Shafiq 17, Sohail 40; Boult 3-37, Southee 3-53, Wagner 3-34)

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings 108 for 2 (Raval 36 not out, Williamson 61; Amir 1-12, Azhar 1-6)

Result: New Zealand won by eight wickets. Player-of-the-match: Colin de Grandhomme.

Spinners jolt England's chase

AFP, Visakhapatnam



Late strikes by Indian spinners jolted England after skipper Alastair Cook's dogged half-century gave the visitors hope on the fourth day of the second Test in Visakhapatnam on Sunday.

Chasing a mammoth 405 for victory, England were precariously placed at 87 for two at stumps, with Joe Root batting on five as Cook's stubborn resistance came to an end with the close of play.

Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja trapped Cook lbw for 54 and even though the batsman reviewed the decision, the on-field umpires call was upheld.

Cook fought hard with fellow-

opener Haseeb Hameed (25) as the duo put on 75 runs in 50.2 overs before India's premier spinner Ravichandran Ashwin broke through.

Hameed, who impressed on his debut with a well-made 82 in the second innings of the Rajkot Test, batted with grit during his 144-ball stay before being trapped leg-before off Ashwin to a delivery that stayed low.

The batting effort came after Stuart Broad shrugged off a right foot injury to claim four wickets and help dismiss India for 204 in their second innings.

England have their backs to the wall with only four teams - West Indies, South Africa, India, Australia - getting more than 400 in the fourth innings to win a Test.

Cook, who was castled by

Mohammed Shami for two in England's first innings, showed tremendous application during his 188-ball stay.

Cook did survive a few DRS calls when India decided to review two lbw appeals from Jadeja and Ashwin, but the third umpire upheld the on-field calls on both occasions.

The visitors need to scale a mountain of runs or bat out three sessions for a draw.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 455

ENGLAND: First innings 255

INDIA: Second innings 204 (Kohli 81, Rahane 26, Yadav 27 not out, Shami 19; Broad 4-33, Rashid 4-82)

ENGLAND: Second innings 87 for 2 (Cook 54, Hameed 25; Ashwin 1-28, Jadeja 1-25)



England skipper Alastair Cook (2nd from L) fell in the last over of the day to Ravindra Jadeja (4th from R) yesterday, giving India the upper hand going into the fifth day of the second Test at Visakhapatnam.

PHOTO: AFP



New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson guided his team to victory on the fourth day of a low-scoring first Test against Pakistan at Christchurch yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Aus make six changes

AFP, Adelaide



Crisis-hit Australia included English-born opener Matt Renshaw among six changes to their revamped Test squad Sunday for this week's crucial third day-night Test against South Africa in Adelaide.

Selectors named the 20-year-old Queensland opener Renshaw alongside two other batting debutants, Peter Handscomb and Nic Maddinson, in a 12-man squad.

Pacemen Chadd Sayers and Jackson Bird return to the national side, and Matthew Wade comes in as wicketkeeper after Peter Nevill was axed.

Australia last made as many as six changes in 1984, when they faced the then

formidable West Indies.

Joe Burns, Adam Voges, Callum Ferguson, Nevill and Joe Mennie paid the price for Australia's wretched innings and 80-run defeat to South Africa in last week's second Hobart Test.

The dramatic team overhaul follows Australia's heavy defeat to the Proteas in Hobart to give the tourists an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series.

South Africa could inflict the first home series whitewash in Australia's history if they win final Test, starting on Thursday.

SQUAD: Steve Smith (capt), Jackson Bird, Peter Handscomb, Josh Hazlewood, Usman Khawaja, Nathan Lyon, Nic Maddinson, Matt Renshaw, Chadd Sayers, Mitchell Starc, Matthew Wade, David Warner.

Broad out of Mohali Test

AFP, Visakhapatnam

England fast bowler Stuart Broad Sunday all but ruled himself out of the third Test against India, saying a strained tendon will need a few weeks to recover.

"I think there are plans to move on once this Test match is finished to a try and offload the tendon a little bit for a few days," said Broad.

"You have got 17 days to Mumbai which is quite a long time, slightly less for Mohali, try and get fit for the next one but definitely be fit for Mumbai," said Broad.