



Rajshahi Kings off-spinner Afif Hossain made a long-lasting impression on his debut. The 17-year-old local scalped a fabulous five-for against the Chittagong Vikings during a Bangladesh Premier League encounter in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Another youth makes his grade

SPORTS REPORTER



The country's cricketing fraternity yesterday got to witness perhaps a fraction of the amount of talent stored in the national pipeline in the form of 17-year-old Afif Hossain.

The right-arm offbreak bowler, who plays for BKSP and is also vice-captain of the Bangladesh Under-19 team, played his first game at the top level of any format yesterday and ended up scalping five wickets, including that of Chris Gayle's.

He was lucky to get his first wicket, an LBW, as replays showed that Jahurul Islam had clearly edged the ball to his pad. However, the way he grabbed the next four suggested that this youngster has plenty of guts.

And that is because of the sheer amount of flight which he had bowled with. He provided the likes of Gayle, Shoaib Malik and Mohammad Nabi juicy, loopy deliveries in a T20 game and that is something that perhaps no bowler in the competition has had the guts to do on such a consistent basis so far.

Speak to Nazmul Abedhin Fahim, the national manager of the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) Game Development under whom the Under-19 team, including Afif, recently completed a camp and he will surprise you by saying: "He is actually a better batsman than a bowler."

"But of course that doesn't mean that the bowling has come all of a sudden or that it

was a fluke. He has bowled well on a regular basis but I thought he was fantastic in this game," he added.

Afif and co will be leaving for Sri Lanka on December 13 to take part in the Youth Asia Cup and he was given a chance to play for a franchise so that he could earn some valuable experience in high-pressure situations.

"We thought that he was strong enough and we wanted to see how he played. It was

BPL'S BEST FIGURES

PLAYER	OVERS	FIGURES	TEAM	OPP
Mohammad Sami	3.2	5-6	Rajshahi	Dhaka
KK Cooper	4.0	5-15	Bulls	Riders
Afif Hossain	4.0	5-21	Raj Kings	Vikings
NLTC Perera	4.0	5-26	Riders	Victorians
Abul Hasan	4.0	5-28	Raj Kings	Titans
Taskin Ahmed	4.0	5-31	Vikings	Raj Kings
Al-Amin Hossain	4.0	5-36	Bulls	SuperStars

good to see him perform," said Nazmul.

"It's too early to comment on his future, but the courage that he has shown was very encouraging. You need to be very brave to bowl flighted deliveries against such batsmen up front.

"There are many big players who get nervous on such a stage, but he wasn't nervous at all. He was focused and he looked to attack," said Nazmul.

Shahzad surprise

SPORTS REPORTER

Spectators at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur were slightly taken aback when Afghanistan's Mohammad Shahzad came out to open the innings for the Rangpur Riders yesterday.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) last month had announced that Shahzad would be banned for Rangpur's next two games as he had broken the code of conduct on the field during Rangpur's Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) game against the Rajshahi Kings by poking Sabbir with a bat after being dismissed.

Since he had missed Rangpur's last game, it was expected that he would be absent yesterday as well which led to some confusion when he came out to bat.

However, that confusion was cleared later in the evening when a second press release stated that Rangpur had lodged an appeal with the BPL Governing Council to reduce the playing ban on November 30.

As per the press release, the BPL governing council reduced Shahzad's ban to one match 'for the greater interest of the tournament' and he was subsequently available for selection yesterday.

CA fines Maxwell

AFP, Sydney

Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell was Saturday fined by his team for his "disrespectful" comments about teammate Matthew Wade on the eve of their opening one-day international with New Zealand in Sydney.

Maxwell said on Thursday he felt batting below Wade at No.6 for Victoria in the Sheffield Shield hurt his selection chances for Australia's third Test against South Africa last week. "Everyone was disappointed in his comments," Australia skipper Steve Smith told reporters Saturday. "I thought what he said was very disrespectful to a teammate and his Victorian captain. The leadership group got together and we decided to fine Glenn. We thought that was a sufficient punishment."

Riders saddle Bulls

SPORTS REPORTER



Amidst all the permutations and combinations in the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), Rangpur Riders's 29-run win yesterday against the Barisal Bulls confirmed one thing: Mushfiqur Rahim's Bulls and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's Comilla Victorians are officially out of this season's league.

While the Bulls and the Victorians struggled throughout the competition, they still had a ray of light prior to yesterday. However, that hope ended after an all-round performance from Rangpur at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Batting first, the Riders rode on a 76-run stand off 63 balls between Mohammad Shahzad and Mohammad Mithun to post 154.

While Shahzad scored a 40-ball 48, with four fours and a six, Mithun finished on 38 off 41 with one six and a four after Rangpur lost the out-of-form Soumya Sarkar early in the game when Kamrul Islam Rabbi dismissed him in the fourth over for a 12-ball 17.

Ziaur Rahman posted a 17-ball 23 towards the end, with two fours and a six, to help the Riders cross the 150-run mark.

Thisara Perera, who dismissed Mithun and Anwar Ali, was Barisal's best performer and finished with figures of 2 for 26.

In reply, the Bulls, who were looking to play very aggressively and seemingly wanted to finish the game with a number of overs in hand in order to boost their run-rate, were dismissed for 125 in 18.2 overs.

They began the chase well with a

revive things with Shahriar Nafees as the duo put on 34 runs. They were looking good until Perera was caught in the deep off Shahid Afridi for a 17-ball 24 before eventually folding for 125 in 18.2 overs.

Rangpur's bowling attack did well despite the absence of Arafat Sunny, who has been reported for his bowling action. Shohag Gazi, Liam Dawson, Rubel Hossain and Shahid Afridi took two wickets each while Anwar Ali and Naeem Islam took a scalp each.

In order to confirm Rangpur's place in the last four, they will need to win their last game against the Comilla Victorians.

Barisal opener Dawid Malan blamed the lack of collective team performance behind their early exit in the competition.

"It is disappointing, especially as we won three out of four in Dhaka in the first leg. We didn't have enough people chipping in for the rest of the team. It wasn't a collective team performance. If we had played well as a team we could have made the top four," said Malan.

He described the tournament as a mixed bag personally, but on a general note he said that the BPL could be one of the better franchisee tournaments in the near future if organised better.

POINTS TABLE					
Teams	M	W	L	Pts	RR
Dhaka Dynamites	11	8	3	16	+1.067
Chittagong Vikings	12	6	6	12	+0.233
Rajshahi Kings	12	6	6	12	+0.208
Rangpur Riders	11	6	5	12	-0.088
Khulna Titans	11	6	5	12	-0.293
Comilla Victorians	11	4	7	8	-0.413
Barisal Bulls	12	4	8	8	-0.688

number of boundaries flowing in. In fact, while losing Rayad Emrit, Mushfiqur Rahim and Jeevan Mendis early, they were still poised at 68 for 3 in 8.1 overs and they were going at a brilliant run-rate of 7.87.

However, once Fazle Mahmud and Dawid Malan were sent back for scores of 21 and 30 respectively, Barisal collapsed. Thisara Perera came towards the end and tried to

Tour coming home

SPORTS REPORTER



You have watched the Tour de France.

You have probably even watched the Giro d'Italia and the Vuelta a Espana. You have seen moments of glory, of human endurance and excellence; you have even seen amazing falls from grace. And you have felt the adrenaline pump through your veins when Alberto Contador or Chris Froome sprinted to victory to thousands of adoring spectators at the Champs Elysees. But you have only seen it on TV.

Not anymore. Now you can watch such hurt pumping moments live, on your roads, in Bangladesh. Yes. Thanks to the joint initiative of Bangladesh Edible Oil Limited (BEOL) and Bangladesh Cycling Federation (BCF), a cycling race styled after the world renowned Tour de France is coming to Bangladesh this month.

Titled Fortune Tour de Bangladesh, this cycling race will feature around 40 of the best cyclists from all over the country, all registered under the BCF, who will be competing for ten teams, including teams from districts, services and armed forces. A three-year venture initially, the first edition will be held on December 20, 21 and 23 and will cover an area



Cyclists hold trophies in a mock demonstration of Fortune Tour de Bangladesh at a hotel in the capital on Saturday night.

PHOTO: STAR

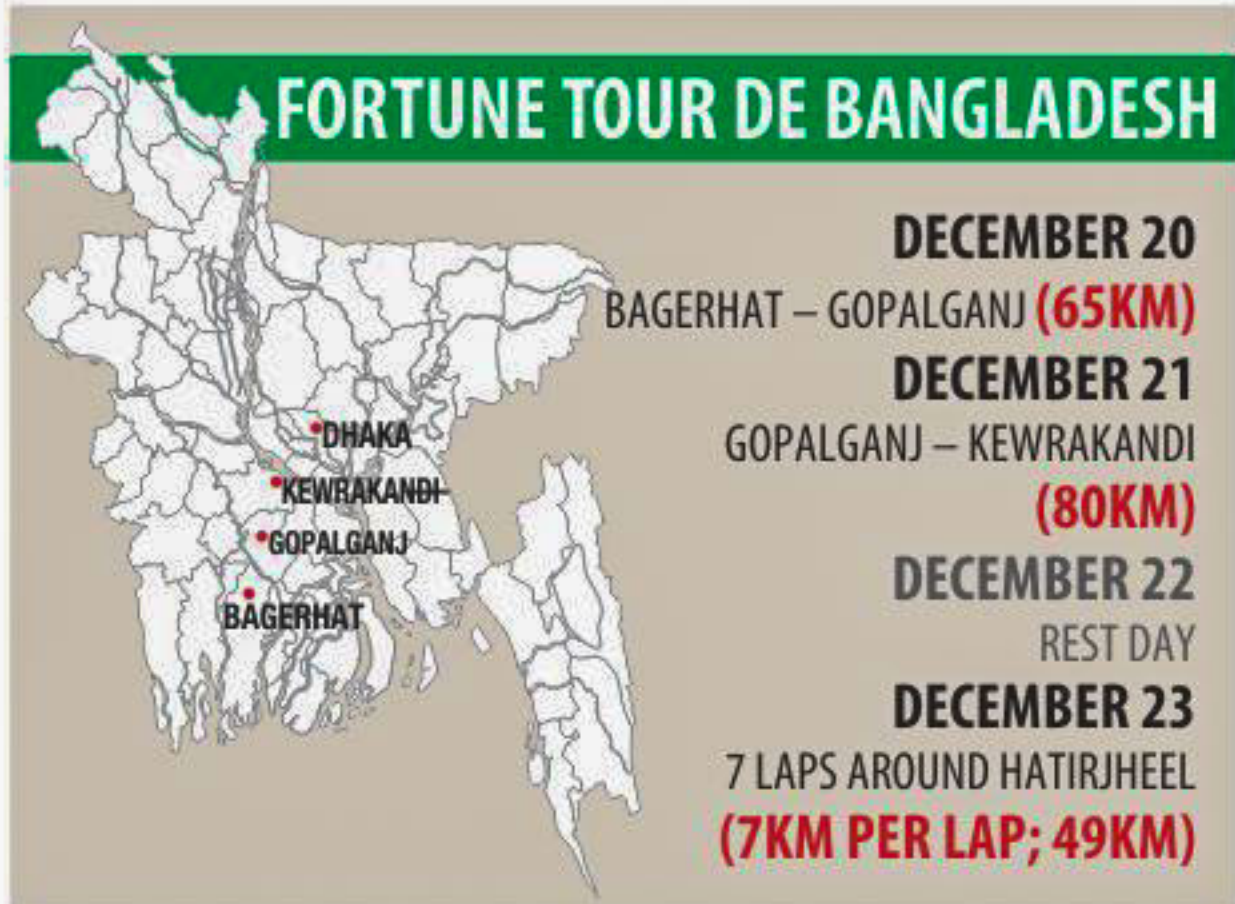
of approximately 194 kilometres.

Organisers disclosed these tidbits of information at a glitzy event where the logo of the event was unveiled, alongside a small cycling demonstration at a hotel in the capital last night. "We want to take the amateurish pursuit of cycling to a competitive level while at the same time highlighting tourism of the country. That is what drove us to organise the Fortune Tour de Bangladesh, which will be a unique sports event for our country," said Shoeb Mohammad Asaduzzaman, head of marketing and sales of sponsors BEOL, after a presentation on the event.

Organisers informed that the race would be held over three days and over three legs: the first leg starting

from Bagerhat and finishing in Gopalganj on December 20, followed by Gopalganj to Kewrakandi the following day. After a rest day, the final leg will be held at Hatirjheel in Dhaka. Even though the cyclists will represent teams, they will be awarded individual awards, with Tk 3,00,000, Tk 2,00,000 and Tk 1,00,000 for the top three finishers and Tk 25,000 each for the next seven finishers. There will also be monetary awards based on each day's performance, speakers informed.

While this year will be the launching of the event and will feature only national cyclists, the next two years, according to the organisers, will feature cyclists from



Tigresses hit the lowest ebb

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Women's team ended a forgettable Women's T20 Asia Cup campaign with a punishing seven-wicket defeat against their Sri Lankan counterparts in Bangkok yesterday.

Sent into bat, the Tigresses scored a below-par 93-3 in their share of 20 overs at the Asian Institute of Technology ground. Sanjida Islam scored the highest, 35 while Shaila Sharmin chipped in with an unbeaten 25. But a run-rate of just over 4.5 has never been defendable in the slam-bang T20 format and so the Lankans raced to 97-3 with six balls to spare with Chamira Jayangani finishing the chase in style, hitting an unbeaten 39 off 25 balls that contained three fours and two sixes.

Interestingly, it was Bangladesh's first defeat against the Islanders after two identical wins by three runs – the first one in the 2012 Asia Cup and the second in the Women's World T20 in 2014.

The defeat completed a listless showing by the Tigresses in an international T20 competition despite the fact that they are more experienced and have more resources at hand with all the facilities available to them. It was in this tournament their batting never came up to the mark. They were embarrassingly bowled out for 45 against Pakistan, which was their lowest T20 score, and crashed out to India for 54 runs a few days later.

They however won their two insignificant matches against lowly Nepal and hosts Thailand. But the revamped set up that included a high-profile English coach and a new captain even failed to match the standard set by a team that was not even in the board's payroll a couple of years ago.

The Bangladesh women's team, who are in their fourth year since making their T20 debut with a spectacular victory against Ireland in 2012, can easily consider this Asia Cup as their worst in every aspect.

PCB won't boycott India

PTI, Karachi

Pakistan Cricket Board Chairman Shaharyar Khan has refused to follow in the footsteps of Pakistan Hockey Federation which announced this week that it would boycott future international events in India.

He said that such actions would only lead to both boards being 'hurt'. "Look, we will not take any such decision because it will be unfair to millions of people who want to watch Indo-Pak matches. Secondly, whenever we play against each other it means big financial benefits for both sides and any boycott will only hurt us," said Khan.

SCOREBOARDS

RIDERS V BULLS

RANGPUR RIDERS	R/B	45/6s
Shahzad lbw b Emrit	48/40	4/1
Soumya c Shahriar b Kamrul	17/12	1/1
Mithun c Tajul b Perera	38/41	0/1
Afridi c Shahriar b Kamrul	7/3	0/1
Ziaur not out	23/17	2/1
Anwar c Mushfiqur b Perera	7/5	1/0
Dawson not out	7/2	0/1
Extras (b-1, lb-1, w-5)	7	
Total (For 5 wickets in 20 overs)	154	
Did not bat: Sohag Gazi, Naeem Islam, Arafat Sunny, Rubel Hossain.		
Fall of wickets: 1-29, 2-105, 3-116, 4-118, 5-138.		

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Tajul	4	0	27	0
Emrit	4	0	32	1
Monir	4	0	28	0
Kamrul	4	0	39	2
Perera	4	0	26	2

BARISAL BULLS

Emrit c Mithun b Sohag	R/B	45/6s
Malan c Shahzad b Anwar	30/23	6/0
Mushfiqur c Soumya b Sohag	1/3	0/0
Mendis lbw b Naeem	12/6	0/2
Fazle c Shahzad b Afridi	21/16	2/1
Nafees c Sunny b Dawson	14/24	0/0
Perera c Naeem b Afridi	24/17	2/1
Enamul not out	7/5	1/0
Tajul lbw b Dawson	9/9	0/0
Monir b Rubel	1/2	0/0
Kamrul b Rubel	0/1	0/0
Extras (lb-2, w-3)	5	
Total (all out in 18.2 overs)	125	
Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-16, 3-29, 4-68, 5-68, 6-104, 7-109, 8-124, 9-125, 10-125.		

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Sohag	4	0	12	2
Anwar	3	0	25	1
Naeem	1	0	14	1
Ziaur	1	0	16	0
Rubel	3.2	0	21	2
Afridi	4	0	24	2
Dawson	2	0	11	2

Result: Rangpur Riders won by 29 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Mohammad Shahzad

VIKINGS V KINGS

CHITTAGONG VIKINGS	R/B	45/6s
Tamim b Williams	0/1	0/0
Gayle b Afif Hossain	5/15	0/0
Anamul b Miraz	8/8	2/0
Jahurul lbw b Afif	13/10	3/0
Shoaib not out	67/54	6/3
Zakir c Sabbir b Afif	3/8	0/0
Nabist Nurul b Nazmul	12/7	0/1
Saqain lbw b Afif	1/2	0/0
Imran c Nurul b Afif	0/4	0/0
Taskin c Franklin b Williams	2/11	0/0
Subashis not out	0/0	0/0
Extras	0	
Total (For 9 wickets in 20 overs)	111	
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-9, 3-24, 4-29, 5-67, 6-69, 7-70, 8-70, 9-100.		

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Williams	4	0	11	2
Miraz	3	0	15	1
Afif	4	1	21	5
Farhad	4	0	36	0
Nazmul	4	0	23	1
Patel	1	0	5	0

RAJSHAH KINGS

Nurul b Saqlain	R/B	45/6s
Mominul b Saqlain	21/28	3/0
Sabbir lbw b Imran	8/9	1/0
Franklin not out	63/27	5/4
Sammy c Shoaib b Imran	3/3	0/0
Patel not out	3/4	0/0
Extras (w-2)	2	
Total (For 4 wickets in 13.5 overs)	112	
Did not bat: Afif Hossain, Farhad Reza, Mehedi Hasan Miraz, Nazmul Islam, KOK Williams.		
Fall of wickets: 1-32, 2-37, 3-77, 4-93.		

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Mohammad Nabil	4	0	30	0
Shoaib Malik	1	0	9	0
Saqain Sajib	3	0	9	2
Imran Khan	3	0	30	2
Taskin Ahmed	2.5	0	34	0

Result: Rajshahi Kings won by 6 wickets

Player-of-the-match: Afif Hossain

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