

SPORT

Abahani win the match, Rakibul steals the show

SPORTS REPORTER

An Abahani-Mohammedan clash may no longer have the appeal it once had in domestic cricket but what transpired in the tranquil surroundings of BKSP yesterday was a contest of epic proportions. A high-scoring match that saw three hundreds and a five-wicket haul by a left-arm spinner is one way to describe the battle, but the real beauty of the match was that a batsman overshadowed the opposition's victory by playing a record-breaking knock.

Abahani defended their total of 366 for five to win the match against arch-rivals Mohammedan by 27 runs but it was out-of-favour Rakibul Hasan who won the hearts during this gigantic 190-run innings, becoming the highest scorer in List A competition by eclipsing Chamara Kapugedera's 161 during the 2014-15 season.

Rakibul's 138-ball swashbuckling knock, which contained 17 fours and 10 sixes, took selector Habibul Bashar down memory lane to when Sri Lankan Athula Samarasekera played a devastating knock 25 years ago in the same rivals' rumble at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

"The centuries from Liton (Das) and Nazmul Hossain were also nice

to watch but Rakibul was simply incredible. Rakibul's knock reminded me of that magnificent knock from Samarasekera some 25 years ago. Believe me, I have hardly seen such clean hitting from any Bangladesh batsman in domestic cricket," said the excited former Bangladesh captain.

When most were anticipating a one-sided affair after Liton smashed a 103-ball 135, Nazmul hit a run-a-ball hundred and Shuvagata Hom smashed an unbeaten 48 off 27, Rakibul took charge of Mohammedan's chase to nullify all forecasts.

From Rakibul's perspective, it

would have been even better if his master class helped win the game or if he scored 10 more runs to become Bangladesh's first List A double-centurion, but the batsman believed that he showed he has got the ability to play in any format of the game.

"Of course it was my natural game. I believe I have got the ability to play any format of the game. Just look back -- you will see many such innings from me, so I am not a longer-version cricketer at all," said Rakibul, who is the only batsman to make a triple-hundred in domestic longer-version cricket, after the match.

"True, nothing could have been better than winning the match and that's why there is some dissatisfaction. Still, this big knock gave me a lot of pleasure. I was not looking for a double-hundred at any stage; I was focusing on the team victory and I just thought about playing some more big shots," he continued, adding that he was not too concerned about a national call-up.

Manan Sharma, a left-arm spinner from Delhi, contributed with the ball for Abahani after hundreds from Liton and Nazmul as he claimed five wickets for 47 runs in the run-fest, but it was not a day for anybody to hog the spotlight except Rakibul.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ABAHANI: 366-5 in 50 overs (Liton 135, Nazmul Hossain 110, Shuvagata 48 not out; Tajjul 3-57, Shamsur Rahman 1-45, Kamrul 1-78)
MOHAMMEDAN: 339-9 in 50 overs (Rakibul 190, Asalanka 63, Nazmul Milon 22; Manan Sharma 5-47, Kazi Anik 2-72, Saqlain Sajib 1-45)
Result: Abahani won by 27 runs.
Player-of-the-match: Rakibul Hasan.



Abahani's centurions Liton Das (L) and Nazmul Hossain run between the wickets to lead the Sky Blues to a 27-run win over Mohammedan Sporting Club at the BKSP yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Mohammedan batsman Rakibul Hasan scored 190 runs -- the highest List A score in Bangladesh cricket -- against arch-rivals Abahani in a Dhaka Premier League encounter at the BKSP yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Nadal to start late in Madrid

REUTERS, Madrid

Rafael Nadal has asked to begin his participation in the Madrid Open a day later than planned due to an ear infection, meaning he will face Italian Fabio Fognini on Wednesday.

"On Friday I woke up at three in the morning with pain, a discomfort I had never felt before," the 14-times grand slam winner said on Monday.

"I went to the doctor and he told me I had an ear infection. It's nothing important but it is bothering me, it has caused me headaches and I've been feeling dizzy.

"Today I felt better and was able to train well for two hours. My aim and the tournament's was to start on Tuesday but after this it's better to wait a day and start on Wednesday."

Tigers practise in full force

STAR SPORT DESK



For the first time on the tour of Ireland and England, the full Bangladesh ODI squad took part in a practice session yesterday at the Stormont Cricket Ground in Belfast.

The Tigers had first travelled to Sussex, England in late April for a 10-day preparatory camp ahead of the tri-series in Ireland, starting with the first game against the hosts on May 12 in Dublin, and next month's Champions Trophy in England.

From the 18 named for the tri-series -- which also involves New Zealand -- Shakib Al Hasan, Mustafizur Rahman and skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza were not present till yesterday. While Mustafizur and Shakib were engaged in the Indian Premier League and reached England on Saturday, Mashrafe had travelled back to Dhaka to be with his ailing wife and rejoined the team on Sunday in Belfast.

The team underwent a full practice session from 2:00pm to 5:00pm local time, and the good news was that opener Tamim Iqbal, who sat out the two warm-up games in Sussex because of back pain, had a net session and seemed to be batting comfortably.

The tri-series in Ireland will be played in a league system without a final. The team at the top of the table at the end of two rounds will be named champions.

Mazid, Sunny star for Doleshwar

Rupganj's team effort edges out Khelaghar

SPORTS REPORTER



While a high-scoring thriller was taking place at the BKSP-4 ground, Abdul

Mazid made a mark at another BKSP venue as his scintillating hundred helped Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club outclass the winless Victoria Sporting Club by 119 runs. Left-arm spinner Arafat Sunny also deserved credit for his career-best bowling figures in a massive win for Doleshwar that increased their chances of playing the Super League.

Opting to bat first, Prime Doleshwar posted 339 for six in 50 overs thanks to Mazid, who scored 116 off 114 balls with the help of seven fours and five sixes.

Sri Lankan Chaturanga de Silva however punished the Victoria bowlers most during his 25-ball 64 that featured six fours and four sixes.

In reply, Victoria were bowled out for 220 in 45.5 overs. Having lost

their first four wickets for 39 runs, Victoria were never in contention. The wrecker-in-chief was Sunny, who took six wickets for 56 runs.

At the Fatullah Cricket Stadium,

Legends of Rupganj also took a step towards a Super League spot with their fifth win in eight matches. Rupganj beat Khelaghar Samaj Kallyan Samiti by 28 runs.

Rupganj were all out for 239 in 49.5 overs, with Yasir Ali top-scoring with 59.

In reply, Khelaghar were bowled out for 211 in 48.1 overs.



ABDUL MAZID ... 116



ARAFAT SUNNY ... 6 for 56

SCORES IN BRIEF

PRIME DOLESHWAR: 339-6 in 50 overs (Abdul Mazid 116, Chaturanga 64, Sharif Ullah 39 not out, Arafat 2-48, Mahbubul 2-58, Salehin 1-58)
VICTORIA: 220 all out in 45.5 overs (Shafiq 66, Moimul 64, Arafat 2-48, Arafat Sunny 6-56, Marshal 1-21, Anamul 1-32)
Result: Prime Doleshwar won by 119 runs.
Player-of-the-match: Abdul Mazid.
LEGENDS OF RUPGANJ: 239 all out in 49.5 overs (Yasir 59, Raza Ali 46, Hasanuzzaman 36; Tanvir Islam 3-54, Dollar 2-35, Masum 1-15)
KHELAGHAR SKS: 211 all out in 48.1 overs (Nazimuddin 59, Nazmus 52, Salahuddin 38; Naeem 2-16, Mosharraf 2-7, Sharif 1-47)
Result: Legends of Rupganj won by 28 runs.



The full Bangladesh ODI squad chalk up plans of action for the upcoming tri-series during a practice session at the Stormont Cricket Ground in Belfast yesterday.

PHOTO: BCB

Clinical win for Hyderabad

STAR SPORT DESK



Defending champions Sunrisers Hyderabad moved a step closer to the Indian Premier League playoffs as they notched their seventh win of the season by beating table-toppers Mumbai Indians by seven wickets in Hyderabad last night.

Chasing a below-par 138 for seven, Hyderabad's chase was rocked early when fast bowler Mitchell McClenaghan trapped Hyderabad skipper David Warner in front in the second over for six.

But Shikhar Dhawan (62 not out off 46) and Moises Henriques (44 off 35) put on 91 for the second wicket, and although Henriques and Yuvraj Singh departed in the 13th and 15th overs respectively, Dhawan and Vijay Shankar took them home with 10 balls to spare.

Earlier Mumbai were held back from a challenging total by a good bowling performance from Hyderabad, predictably spearheaded by Bhuvneshwar Kumar (2-29) and Siddharth Kaul (3-24).

Mumbai skipper Rohit Sharma was the only batsman who stood out with a 45-ball 67.

Nawaz called up in PSL fixing case

APP, Karachi

The Pakistan cricket board's anti-corruption unit on Monday said it had summoned Mohammad Nawaz in connection with a spot-fixing scandal during the country's Twenty20 league earlier this year.

Nawaz, 23, is the sixth player named in the spot-fixing scandal that rocked the Pakistan Super League held in the UAE.

Fast bowler Mohammad Irfan confessed to receiving offers and not reporting them to Pakistan Cricket Board's anti-corruption unit and was banned for one year, with six months suspended, and a fine of one million rupees in March. Openers Sharjeel Khan, Khalid Latif, Shahzaib Hasan and Nasir Jamshed are also provisionally suspended on various charges being investigated by a tribunal.

Nawaz, a left-arm spinning all-rounder, has been part of the Pakistan team in all three formats since last year. If proven guilty the players face a minimum ban of five years, with a potential lifetime ban.

India call back Shami, Sharma

APP, New Delhi



India recalled fit-again fast bowler Mohammed Shami on Monday as they belatedly unveiled a squad to defend their Champions Trophy title after a row over sharing out world cricket's revenues.

Pace spearhead Shami and batsman Rohit Sharma are the only two changes from the team that played England in a three-match one-day series in India this year.

Shami takes the place of leg-spinner Amit Mishra while Sharma replaces Lokesh Rahul, who is recuperating from shoulder surgery.

"It is a balanced team, an experienced team and I think we have picked the best possible side," chief selector MSK Prasad told reporters.

India's participation in the 50-over tournament, to be played in England and Wales from June 1, had been in doubt after its powerful cricket board fought the International Cricket Council (ICC) over revenue-sharing.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) missed the April 25 deadline to announce a squad and threatened a boycott over the dispute.

But the BCCI, the world's wealthiest cricket board, held a special general meeting

on Sunday where members unanimously decided to take part in the Champions Trophy.

The BCCI is furious over the ICC's decision last month to amend rules so that less money and power is held by cricket's major powers: India, England and Australia.

The BCCI stands to lose \$277 million in revenue over the next eight years under the sweeping changes.

The BCCI's use of the Champions Trophy as a bargaining chip was strongly criticised and Indian cricketers including Sachin Tendulkar urged the country to compete.

The BCCI has said it was still keeping its legal options open, indicating the row with ICC is not yet over.

The three-member selection panel avoided any major surprises, offering little joy to youngsters like wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant despite his fine performances in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

But Pant, 19, was named among five players kept on standby, along with Suresh Raina, Kuldeep Yadav, Shardul Thakur and Dinesh Karthik.

"We have not just taken IPL performances but last year's performances were also considered. And experience becomes of paramount importance in such a big tournament like this," said Prasad.

SQUAD

Virat Kohli (capt), Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, Ajinkya Rahane, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Yuvraj Singh, Kedar Jadhav, Hardik Pandya, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Mohammed Shami, Umesh Yadav, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jasprit

NATIONAL HOCKEY Champions Faridpur out

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Faridpur were eliminated from the group stages of the ATN Bangla National Hockey Championship after suffering a 3-1 defeat -- their second defeat in three matches -- against Chittagong at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Faridpur had started the campaign with a shocking defeat to Dhaka Educational Board (DEB) before bouncing back in the second match with a win against Narayanganj. But yesterday's defeat against Chittagong meant they finished third in the four-team group. DEB advanced to the quarterfinals from the same group with a 6-1 win over Narayanganj.

Meanwhile, Mymensingh emerged as Group E champions with a 6-2 win over Kurigram to move into the quarterfinals while Thakurgaon finished third despite a 5-1 win over Satkhira in the same group.