

SPORTS

Mash plays down Subhashish spat

SPORTS REPORTER

"Nothing serious... it can happen, especially in a crucial moment of a match." That was the immediate first reaction from Bangladesh ODI skipper and Rangpur Riders captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza during the post-match briefing when his attention was drawn to the incident involving Subhashish Roy and himself at a decisive point of yesterday's afternoon Bangladesh Premier League match at the Sylhet International Stadium.

"I think I should say sorry to him (Subhashish). I believe that it's a part of cricket. This kind of incident can happen. He was right from his perspective. He wanted to win and I also wanted to win. I don't know what would have been best for him but he is younger than me, so I could have kept calm."

Chittagong Vikings won the match by 11 runs against the Riders but in the end it was the incident that was most discussed as everyone was curious to know how it was possible for a junior cricketer like Subhashish to react in such a way against a player like Mashrafe who is universally loved and respected in the Bangladesh cricket fraternity. Also, whether there was any reason for Subhashish to react in the way that he did was a point of speculation after the match. The incident also got enough attention in the social media, where especially Subhashish was vilified for the incident.

Subhashish was brought into the attack in

the 17th over with Rangpur needing 43 off 24. It all started with a yorker on middle stump in the fourth ball, which Mashrafe dug out to the bowler, who shaped to throw at the stumps. Mashrafe gestured to the bowler to get back and apparently seemed to say something. Subhashish charged at Mashrafe and came face to face and the Chittagong fielders, especially Sikandar Raza, raced in to try and pull the men away from each other and calm things down.

Mashrafe however tried to soothe the atmosphere during the press conference, and later in the night posted a Facebook video message urging and imploring fans not to vilify Subhashish, saying that Mashrafe was the one who started it and that things should not be taken too far against a fellow Bangladeshi cricketer whom he considered a 'younger brother'.

The gloom however faded in the press conference on his attention was drawn to the date of November 8 - the day 16 years ago when Mashrafe made his international debut against Zimbabwe in a Test in Dhaka.

"16 years... it's tough to tell the whole story but there has been much joy as well as pain and hard work. To last 16 years I had to go through difficult times. Still, I am happy to continue to play. I thank those who pray for me. Honestly speaking, I was not aware of the fact till this morning that I was going to complete 16 years of cricket. I later saw on social media. Feeling good, now let us see how far I can go from here," said the 34-year-old Mashrafe.



Pacer Tasnim Ahmed's match-turning three-wicket over including the run-out of Ravi Bopara (L), engineered by the bowler, delivered an 11-run win for Chittagong Vikings over Rangpur Riders in their BPL match at the Sylhet International Stadium yesterday.



ধুলো ময়লার দ্বি শেষ!



Vikings halt Riders

SPORTS REPORTER *from Sylhet*

Powered by a blistering knock from Luke Ronchi and a three-wicket over from fast bowler Tasnim Ahmed, Chittagong Vikings sealed their first success of the Bangladesh Premier League, fifth edition with an 11-run win over Rangpur Riders at the Sylhet International Stadium yesterday.

Riders were hurting from the target of 167, needing another 65 from 48 balls with seven wickets in hand until Tasnim picked up the well-set Shahrin Nafees on 26 off 23 balls with a fast yorker and followed that by removing Samiullah Sheniari off the next ball.

On the batter's delivery Tasnim was able to get his foot onto a straight drive from Shihara Pereira and the ball crashed into the stumps at the bowler's end with Ravi Bopara out of his crease. The fast bowler had a performed poorly in the recently concluded South Africa tour and will surely gain some

confidence from figures of three for 31 from his four overs. English medium pacer Luke Reece also bowled his slowers with great effect and picked up two for 26 from his four overs.

Bopara's 38 off 32 balls with three fours and a six was the highest score while Mohammad Mithun added 23.

Lasith Malinga and Sohag Gazi kept the Riders in the game but fast bowler Subhashish Roy made sure the Vikings register the win, giving away just four runs when Rangpur needed 16 in the final over.

Riders had started poorly as they lost Johnson Charles (1) who was tagged leg before by left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam in the first over, while Zaur Rahman was dismissed after scoring 11.

But the moment of the day was perhaps the fight between Rangpur skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Subhashish in the 17th over as both cricketers engaged in a verbal clash after the bowler motioned as if to throw the ball back at the batsman and Mashrafe reacted by gesturing towards

Subhashish to go back to his mark.

Earlier, Ronchi once again provided a flying start for Chittagong after being asked to bat. He struck two sixes in the very first over off Mashrafe. He reserved his harshest punishment for left arm spinner Nazmul Islam, whose first over contained three sixes off Ronchi's bat and cost 23 as Chittagong reached fifty in the very first over off Mashrafe. He reserved his harshest punishment for left arm spinner Nazmul Islam, whose first over contained three sixes off Ronchi's bat and cost 23 as Chittagong reached fifty in the very first over off Mashrafe. He reserved his harshest punishment for left arm spinner Nazmul Islam, whose first over contained three sixes off Ronchi's bat and cost 23 as Chittagong reached fifty in the very first over off Mashrafe.

Ronchi reached his fifty in just 19 balls and continued to dominate until he was undone by slower delivery from Bopara after scoring a 35-ball 78 studded with seven sixes and as many fours.

But Chittagong, cruising on 100 for two in the ninth over when Ronchi left, were unable to cash in on the platform and added just 66 runs in the next 11.1 overs.

Skipper Misbah-ul-Haq's 31 not out off 32 balls and Dilshan Munaweera's 17-ball 21 were the other notable performances.

SCOREBOARD				
CHITTAGONG VIKINGS	R/B 46/65			
Ronchi, Zaur Bopara	7/15 7/7			
Soumya Saurav Mashrafe	7/7 1/0			
Munaweera Bopara	20/19 1/1			
Misbah not out	31/2 1/0			
Reece	26/16 0/0			
Ansari not out	17/14 0/0			
Extras: (LB-1, W-1)	3			
Total: (For wickets 20 overs)	166			
Did not bat: Raza, Tamim, Sunzamul, Subhashish, Tasnim				
Chatterjee-Bow Sunzamul	2/22 0/0			
Zaur Bopara	31/27 1/1			
Mithun	38/31 2/1			
Bopara run out	38/32 3/1			
Malinga	4/0 26/ 2			
Shenari	2/0 23/ 0			
Bopara	3/0 14/ 2			
Pereira	2/0 16/ 1			
RANGPUR RIDERS	R/B 46/65			
Charles-Bow Sunzamul	0/0 1/2 0/0			
Zaur Bopara	31/27 1/1			
Mithun	38/31 2/1			
Bopara run out	38/32 3/1			
Malinga	4/0 26/ 2			
Shenari	2/0 23/ 0			
Misbah	31/27 1/0			
Shahid not out	14/10 1/1			
Extras: (LB-2, W-5)	7			
Total: (For wickets 20 overs)	155			
Did not bat: Nazmul				
Fall of wickets: 1-2, 20-3, 56-4, 105-5, 105-6, 105-7, 105-8, 114-9				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Sunzamul	2	0	1	1
Charles	4	0	31	0
Tasnim	4	0	31	0
Ronchi	4	0	26	2
Raza	2	0	16	0
Tamim	4	0	24	0
Result: Chittagong Vikings won by 11 runs.				
Player of the match: Tasnim Ahmed				

Chittagong Vikings pacer Subhashish Roy gets into a heated argument with rival Rangpur Riders skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza during their BPL match at the Sylhet International Stadium yesterday.

WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 95 **TOTAL 177**

66 HIT **46 HIT**

Most 66 hit by a player: 10, Luke Ronchi, Chittagong Vikings

Most 46 hit by a player: 10, Upul Tharanga, Sylhet Sixers

Passionate fans, not so passionate organisers

MAZHAR UDDIN and DWIOHA CHOWDHURY *from Sylhet*

After a captivating five days of Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) cricket, fans in Sylhet will learn to their usual mundane lives without the slightest knowledge of another sporting festival for the foreseeable future.

The sport-loving fans in the eastern headquarters of the country made it quite an occasion when the glamorous dot-com display on the streets of the city for the first time. They turned up in droves to every game and cheered their home team Sylhet Sixers, who also made memorable a debut in the fifth edition of the slam-bang T20 competition.

The banners and posters of the seven participating teams, in the past but the lack of domestic competitions has virtually stopped the flow of young talents.

Players only played three matches in the league which is not sufficient for them. The league must be arranged with enough time and in a proper way for the betterment of the game," lamented Rezaur Karim Nishon, president of the Sylhet Cricketers Association.

He also said that the age-level cricket of Sylhet is

dependent on the academics, owing to which the player selection has been centralised when it needs to be open for all players.

According to former Bangladesh captain Rajin Saleh, who is also a local boy, efforts from the local organisers are few and far between to groom the grassroots players.

"I think it's the cricketing activities, not the infrastructure, that needs to improve in Sylhet and I think there is hardly any drive from the authorities to make that happen," Rajin told The Daily Star yesterday.

When contacted, Mahi Uddin Ahmed Selim, general secretary of Sylhet District Sports Association, said that having only one stadium meant that they could not arrange leagues for any sport.

"There is only one stadium in Sylhet where we arrange cricket, football, hockey and all other sports which is creating a huge pressure to arrange the leagues be it cricket or football," Selim said.

"We arranged school cricket last year at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium. If the authority allows us to arrange the cricket league in the district stadium, we can arrange football at the divisional stadium," he added.

"I took a day off from work to watch the BPL game today as we hardly have any sporting events here in Sylhet. We don't even have any domestic games in Sylhet which is frustrating," said Abul Kalam, a car mechanic by profession.

Khulna end Sylhet streak

SPORTS REPORTER

Sylhet Sixers' pursuit for a perfect home leg in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) suffered a decisive blow when lost against Khulna Titans by six wickets in the last match of the first leg at the Sylhet International Stadium yesterday.

The home side, with three wins from as many games, walked into the match with the hope of keeping their dream winning run on track intact. But they collapsed against some intelligent and at times fiery bowling from Khulna, only managing to post 135 for 5, before never in hunt for a good total once they lost the wicket with a nasty bounce the previous over and Andre Fletcher were dismissed cheaply.

After hitting three consecutive fifties, left-hander Tharanga was out for 26. His opening partner Fletcher scored only four after being part of century stands in the last three games. One-down Sabir Rahman continued to disappoint with the bat, scoring a six-ball duck. The right-hander charged down the wicket against a 148k delivery from firebrand West Indian pacer Jofra Archer - who struck his compatriot Fletcher on the helmet with a nasty bounce the previous over - but ended up offering a simple catch at mid-off.

Sri Lankan Danushka Gunathilaka tried to rebuild the innings with a 25-ball 26 but his departure left Sylhet reeling at 4-67 in 118 overs.

Sylhet captain Nasir Hossain, who hardly got the opportunity to bat in the last three games, salvaged his side a fighting total with a gusty unbeaten 47 off 35 balls. Nasir also shared 54 runs for the fifth wicket with big-hitting English batsman Ross Whiteley, who hit a 25-ball 27 that contained six sixes and a four.

Khulna skipper Mahmudullah was the most successful bowler with 2-12 in his three overs. But it was the tall Archer who really hit the deck on a slow wicket and finished with 2-25 in his four allotted overs.

Despite a couple of early blows, an unbeaten 47 off 36 deliveries from Michael Klinger propelled the Khulna Titans to the target in 188 overs, with six wickets in hand, earning Khulna their first win in their second match. Mahmudullah scored 27 and was adjudged player-of-the-match for all-round performance.

SCOREBOARD				
SYLHET V KHULNA	R/B 46/65			
Tharanga	47/35 0/0			
Fletcher	4/0 25/ 0			
Sabbir	4/0 20/ 1			
Gunathilaka	0/0 0/0			
Whiteley	27/23 1/1			
Archer	2/25 0/0			
Extras: (LB-1)	1			
Total: (For wickets in 20 overs)	135			
Did not bat: K Sarwanke, Abul Hasan, Tajul Islam				
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 20-31, 45-14, 67-24, 105-6, 105-7, 105-8, 114-9				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mohammad	1	0	13	0
Archer	4	0	25	2
Shafiq	4	0	20	1
Jayed	4	0	40	0
Mahmudullah	3	12	2	2
Whiteley	4	24	0	0
KHULNATIANS	R/B 46/65			
Nazmul Tajul	7/9 1/0			
Whiteley	17/11 1/1			
Wangmendra	2/22 0/0			
Rosoveen	2/16 0/0			
Mahmudullah	19/17 3/0			
Mahmudullah	19/17 3/0			
Whiteley	23/16 2/0			
Extras: (LB-3)	3			
Total: (For wickets in 20 overs)	138			
Did not bat: K Sarwanke, Arifullah, Mohammad Sarwanke				
Fall of wickets: 1-18, 20-31, 43-4, 63-9				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tajul	4	0	19	3
Whiteley	4	0	24	0
Sarwanke	2	0	16	0
Gunathilaka	1	0	8	0
Abul	3	0	39	0
Whiteley	4	0	24	0
Whiteley	2	0	10	1
Result: Khulna Titans won by 11 runs.				
Player of the match: Mahmudullah				

MARRIED AND LOVING IT

Newlywed fast bowler Tasnim Ahmed was on fire for Chittagong Vikings. Starting his second spell in the 13th over during Rangpur's chase, he bowled a fast and well-directed yorker to set Shahrin Nafees, who was not prepared for the gem and was to swing across as the ball crashed into middle stump. The speedster picked another wicket in the very next ball when Samiullah Sheniari flicked a length delivery straight down the throat of Misbahul Haq at midwicket. Tasnim was on a hat-trick, and although he did not take the wicket it was all him as he ran out Bopara with some deft footwork off the very next delivery, deflecting Shihara Pereira's straight drive with his right foot onto the non-striker's stumps, with Bopara out of his ground. It seems that marriage has given him a new outlook after a tortur of South Africa.