

SPORT



Defending champions Khulna Division were in the process of running away with the NCL sixth-round match against Dhaka Division after Mahadi Hasan (L) and Anamul Haque (R) hit unbeaten tons on the second day at BKSP-3 yesterday.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

Booters finally get matches

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh national football team will finally step back onto the pitch after close to 18 months when they take on Cambodia and Brunei in international friendlies during the FIFA friendly window in March next year.

The men in red and green have not played a single match since their shock 3-1 defeat to Bhutan in the Asia Cup Qualifiers Play-off in October 2016.

"We are going to play a friendly against Cambodia on March 22 or 23 in Cambodia and then host Brunei on March 27," Andrew Ord told reporters during the interval of the SAFF U-15 Women's Championship encounter between Bangladesh and India in

Kamalapur yesterday.

"I think Cambodia will be very difficult. They made it to the Asia Cup Qualifying stage and played six real international matches. It's going to be very a difficult game but it's a game where we have to prove ourselves," continued Ord, who was appointed as head coach in May this year but has not had a chance to take charge of the side even once. However, Ord did remain engaged with age-group teams.

"I will start the [training] camp a few days before the Cambodia game because the clubs have AFC Cup commitments and the Independence Cup apart from the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League. I will start the FIFA window hopefully three or four days before to give three or four extra sessions. That's the plan," concluded the 38-year-old.



ANDREW ORD

Twin tons put Khulna in total control

SPORTS REPORTER

Anamul Haque and young Mahadi Hasan shone in the sunshine on the second day after off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz cashed in on the soft pitch and overcast condition on the opening day as Khulna Division tightened their grip on Dhaka Division at BKSP in their quest to retain the title of the National Cricket League (NCL).

Anamul and Mahadi both hit hundreds and remained unbeaten during their unbroken 281-run second-wicket partnership as Khulna finished the second day comfortably in the driving seat. They were 370 for one at stumps in reply to Dhaka's 113.

It was a timely effort from Anamul, who

opted to play the last round of the league despite being granted a break by the Bangladesh Cricket Board as the next home series against Sri Lanka approaches and his teammate Soumya Sarkar continues to struggle for big scores, being dismissed for just 30 after resuming on 11.

The right-hander remained not out on 167 and smote 18 fours and four sixes during a nearly six-hour vigil while Mahadi was more aggressive as the young all-rounder, who had hogged the spotlight with his spin bowling during the BPL, smashed 20 fours and two sixes during his 151-ball 168.

Nasir Hossain was the other star performer on the second day as the national all-rounder struck an unbeaten 101 to help Rangpur finish the day on 264 for four in reply to Barisal's 335 runs in the other Tier-1

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY 2

Mahadi brings BPL flavour in blistering ton against Dhaka

Anamul puts teammate Soumya under pressure with timely century against Dhaka

Songster Iftekhar makes Sylhet sing his tune with five-wicket haul



NASIR... 101 not out

match at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

After coming together at three for 81, Nasir and Naeem Islam put on 104 runs for the fourth wicket to steady the Rangpur ship. Nasir remained unbeaten on 101 off 167 balls that contained twelve fours and two sixes.

In a Tier-2 match at the Sylhet International Stadium, off-spinner Iftekhar Sajjad Rony put Chittagong on strong position as his five-wicket haul destroyed Sylhet's first innings for 137 runs and helped his side take an 89-run first innings lead. Iftekhar, who is also a good singer and has featured in a Piran Khan number, claimed five wickets for 43 runs.

Chittagong had already taken a 267-run lead as they scored 189 for five in their second innings, thanks to a 92-run opening stand between Sadiqur Rahman (54) and Jasim (56).

In the other Tier-2 game, left-arm spinner Tajul Islam took two more wickets on the second day to finish with a five-wicket haul as Dhaka Metro were all out for 328 runs after resuming on 210 for four against Rajshahi.

Rajshahi finished the day on a happy note as they scored 95 without any damage with Nazmul Hossain (43) and Mizanur Rahman (47) at the crease.

All of the matches had the start delayed or ended early because of fog or bad light.

Sadia, Akter get the gold

SPORTS REPORTER



Sadia Akter and Akter Hossain hogged the limelight on the fourth day of the Bangladesh Youth Games as the two grabbed a total of seven gold medals in athletics at the Kaji Hedayet Hossain Stadium in Rajbari yesterday.

Sadia, hailing from Rajbari's Sadar upazila, displayed her formidable talents to win gold in the 100m, 200m and 400m sprint and high-jump events. The class IX student also became second in the long-jump event.

Similar to how Sadia shone in the girl's competitions Akter, a local of Pangsha Upazila in the same district, drew attention by winning the boy's 100m, 200m and 400m sprints. Akter, a class X student, also won a bronze medal in long-jump.

"Both Sadia and Akter are champion athletes in inter-school athletics championships at district and divisional levels but they never participated in junior national meets," said Rajbari's District Sports Association general secretary Shafiqul Islam over the phone.

Islam believes that if Sadia and Akter are afforded proper training, they could become good athletes in the future.

Like Sadia and Akter, Mohammad Tareq also shone brightly yesterday as he bagged three gold medals in swimming while Shah Alam and Farzana Akter became the fastest boy and girl in Barisal.

At Sylhet, Biswanath upazila's swimmer Tareq claimed the gold in three events -- 50m and 100m breaststroke and 200m freestyle.

Shah Alam of Barisal's Sadar upazila became of the champion 100m and 200m sprints while Farzana Akter followed Alam's footsteps to win gold in the girl's 100m and 200m sprints.

MSC still can't crack Russel

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russel KC kept their seven-and-a-half-year unbeaten record intact in the professional football league as they played out a goalless draw against the Black and Whites in their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Ever since their 2-1 defeat at the hands of the then football giant Mohammedan in May 2010, Sheikh Russel have never lost to the Motijheel outfit in the four subsequent editions, which includes the ongoing one. And despite having six straight victories over the superior opponent, Sheikh Russel were confined to two draws during the current edition.

Out of the last 21 league encounters between the two sides in the last 10

MOHAMMEDAN 0 - 0 SK RUSSEL
SAIF SC 2 - 0 TEAM BJMC
SHERINGHAM-16, JEWEL RANA-80

years, Sheikh Russel won eight matches, lost six and drew seven. Yesterday's stalemate though left Mohammedan and Sheikh Russel glued to their respective fifth and sixth positions on the 12-team table with 25 and 24 points from 18 matches.

In the match, Mohammedan played comparatively better than their opposition and created a few good scoring chances but failed to cash in on any of those. Mohammedan came close to breaking the deadlock in the 22nd minute when Augustin Walson availed a lob from defender Nasirul Islam and attempted a nice drive from inside the box but Sheikh Russel goalkeeper Biplob Bhattacharjee rescued the side at the cost of a corner. Later,

Mohammedan defender Asaduzzaman Bablu wasted a golden opportunity to give his team ahead when he failed to connect to a Faisal Mahmud cross inside the six-yard box, with only goalkeeper Biplob to beat, in the dying moments of the first half.

After resumption, Mohammedan pressed hard for the breakthrough but despite having the better ball possession, they barely ever exposed the Sheikh Russel backline and therefore had to be content with their overall fourth draw in 18 matches.

In the day's second match, newcomers Saif Sporting Club returned to winning ways by inflicting a 2-0 defeat on Team BJMC. The victory raised Saif SC's points tally 34 from 18 matches whereas BJMC remain at seventh position on 17 points.

Saif SC, who were held to a goalless draw by Brothers Union and suffered a 3-0 loss to Mohammedan SC in their previous two matches, got their noses in front in the 16th minute when English striker Charlie Sheringham shot the ball into the far post for his third league goal after Martin Mia placed the ball to him with a header inside the danger zone.

Saif SC midfielder Mohammad Shadhin then wasted an opportunity to widen the margin when he floated the ball over the crosspiece with only the goalkeeper to beat in the 30th minute. Saif SC could have lost the lead though when defender Imran Hasan Rimon almost struck his own net while trying to clear a regular cross from a BJMC player at the start of the second half. Luckily for Saif SC, that shot bounced off the crossbar.

Man-of-the-match Jewel Rana probably enjoyed the outing as he sealed the win, and his league fifth goal, when he poked a well judged cross from Mohammad Ibrahim home from inside the box ten minutes from

Where even Sachin can't speak

IANS, Delhi

Cricket maestro Sachin Tendulkar on Thursday could not make his maiden speech in the Rajya Sabha amid uproar by Congress members over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks against his predecessor Manmohan Singh and over the 2G spectrum case.

Minutes later, Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu adjourned the House for the day. Naidu also ordered the live telecast of the proceedings stopped before he adjourned the House.

Soon after the House met at 2 pm, Tendulkar rose to speak on the right to play and future of sports in India as part of a short duration discussion. But he could not speak amid noisy protests by the Congress members.

Naidu urged the Congress members to allow Tendulkar to speak as he was to give his maiden speech in the Upper House.

"An honorable member, who has been awarded Bharat Ratna, wants to speak on an important issue like sports. Let him speak. All focus should be on Sachinji," Naidu said.

But the Congress members continued with their sloganeering.

"This does not suit you... nothing is going to happen... You don't have sportsman spirit," Naidu said.



A participant throws a shot put in the track and field event during the Bangladesh Youth Games at the Kaji Hedayet Hossain Stadium in Rajbari yesterday.

India look to seal series

Second T20I against SL today

PTI, Indore



A dominant Indian team is expected to maintain their stranglehold on a miserable Sri Lanka and wrap up the three-match series when the two mismatched teams face off in the second Twenty20 International on Friday.

There seems no end to the woes of the visitors, who slumped to a heavy 93-run defeat in the series-opener in Cuttack.

While the Indian youngsters have put their hands up to deliver the goods, the Lankans are going through a terrible phase of transition during which they are badly in need of reliable performers.

The result has been a lack of contest and one-sided results, prompting many to ques-

tion the very logic of India playing such a weak side again and again.

This series has hardly proved to be a good preparation for the challenging South Africa tour that awaits India next month, considering the home team's domination in the absence of a good opposition in favourable conditions.

The Indian batsmen have made merry against a toothless attack. Runs and wickets always give confidence to the players but there is a question mark over how much these performances will count in the South African conditions.

Absence of regular skipper Virat Kohli and Shikhar Dhawan and a transformed Bhuvneshwar Kumar has not given any respite to the Sri Lankans, who overtly rely on seniors such as Angelo Mathews.



Saif SC striker Charlie Sheringham pumps his fist after his opening goal against Team BJMC during their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR