

SPORT



Bangladesh hockey players celebrate their 2-1 victory against arch-rivals Oman in their Asian Games Pool B opening match at the GBK hockey field in Jakarta yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Hockey team exact revenge on Oman

SPORTS REPORTER from Palembang



18th ASIAN GAMES
Jakarta
Palembang
2018

The Bangladesh hockey team followed the footsteps of their footballing compatriots to make an inspiring start to their Asian Games campaign in Jakarta yesterday.

With the football team's first ever knockout round berth still the talk of the Bangladesh contingent, which had precious little else to look for inspiration, the hockey team added more cheer with a 2-1 win against now-archrivals Oman in their opening match at the Gelora Bung Karno Stadium hockey field.

This was a sweet revenge for the men in red and green, who had lost the seventh place deciding match against the same opposition in Incheon four years ago. This was the game Gobinathan Krishnamurthy's men had targeted and the win will definitely help them achieve their target of finishing within the top six teams, barring a major upset against any weaker opposition in the group.

The men in red and green will take on Kazakhstan next, with games against Malaysia, Thailand and Pakistan slated for later dates.

"It's always good to start a tournament with a victory," the Malaysian coach said in

his post-match reaction. "This victory will help our journey in the tournament. I am happy with the win, but not satisfied with the result."

The dissatisfaction was regarding the last quarter, when Bangladesh were really under pressure and had to dig deep. "We gave away too many penalty corners in the final quarter. They could have scored an equaliser there," Gobinathan explained.

Team's most influential player, Rasel Mahmud Jimmy, admitted the importance of this victory. "We needed to beat Oman to carry our campaign forward in this tournament. Now this win will give us confidence," the ace forward said.

Bangladesh was the more dominant of the two teams in yesterday's match and they duly took the lead in the 14th minute through a field goal from Arshad Hossain. However Oman, who are currently ranked two places below Bangladesh (31) in world rankings, hit back nine minutes later through a penalty corner (PC), converted by Ammaar Jumma Al-Shaibi. Bangladesh regained the lead five minutes later through Ashrafur Islam's PC conversion, and they held on to the slender lead for the next two quarters, despite coming under heavy pressure from the opposition towards the end, to seal victory.

Women's kabaddi team bid adieu

SPORTS REPORTER from Jakarta

The Bangladesh women's kabaddi team bade farewell to their hopes of defending the bronze medal after losing to Iran by 47-21 points.

Having suffered a shock 42-27 point defeat against Chinese Taipei in the opening game, the Bangladeshi women failed to dust themselves off against a superior Iran and all they can hope for now is just to salvage some pride in today's final group game against South Korea, a team Bangladesh had beaten in the 2014 Incheon Asian Games.

The women's team had first gotten a bronze medal in the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, and followed it up with their success in the next edition in Incheon. This time however, they will return with no more than a wooden spoon.

However, the men's team bounced back from their heavy defeat against India with a 34-22 point win against Thailand. The men's team, who last won a medal in the Asian Games back in 2006, will have to beat Sri Lanka today and South Korea, the bronze medallists from last edition, tomorrow to keep their chances of a medal alive.

Senior booters inspired by juniors

SPORTS REPORTER from Jakarta



18th ASIAN GAMES
Jakarta
Palembang
2018

A part of the football team exchanged greetings with the hockey team and later watched their match against Oman after finishing a practice session at a venue adjacent to the Asian Games' hockey field. The other part, the ones who featured in the match against Qatar on Sunday night, only took part in a swimming session at the team hotel.

Everyone in the squad, including the senior players who are training with the under-23 team as a part of their preparations for next month's SAFF Championship, are basking in the glory.

Nasiruddin Chowdhury, a veteran of the senior national team, said the success of the juniors will inspire the seniors in the upcoming assignments. "When they play on the field, we stay tensed out in the gallery. The juniors have given an Asian success to the nation, now its our responsibility to do something good in the SAFF Championship."

Coach Jamie Day, who achieved something which many of his more illustrious predecessors had failed, admitted it is one of the best moments of his coaching career. "I'm not a veteran in coaching, but this success is definitely one of the best of my career. It is a matter of great pride," the 38-year-old coach said.

Bangladesh will play their Round of 16 match on August 24 against North Korea, who beat Saudi Arabia to grab second position in Group F. The runners-up of the last edition started the event pretty poorly, drawing against Myanmar before losing against Iran, only to go through following the last-game win against the Saudis.

However, the Bangladesh team are not concerned about their opposition, rather they just want to play their own game and make these Games a memorable one.

Baki misses the mark

ATIQUE ANAM from Palembang



18th ASIAN GAMES
Jakarta
Palembang
2018

As soon as Abdullah Hel Baki pulled his trigger on the 51st shot, he knew he had done quite a bit of damage to his chances of qualifying. He looked back with an air of resignation at where his coach was standing, to which the coach's reply was a shrug of the shoulders. The coach then looked towards where the Bangladesh contingent was sitting, and the same expression was relayed back.

The whole team was expecting that something good might come from this event. It was Baki's pet event of 10m air rifle, one which had earned him two Commonwealth Games silver medals. But the Jakabaring Shooting Range in Palembang yesterday morning was not a Commonwealth Games venue -- it belonged to the Asian Games where competition is much stiffer. And it took just one single wayward shot to see all that hope come crashing.

Baki made a slow start, scoring 103 points in his first 10 shots, he picked up in the next two batches of 10 shots each and even lifted himself inside the qualification zone. But the 51st shot, yielding a bare 8.6 points against an average of 10+ scores, not only brought down his aggregate score but also killed off his confidence.

"I tried to stay on track, but it didn't happen. I'm upset about that shot and the performance," the 29-year-old former BKSP student said.

"I have been scoring 625 and more in practice regularly, so even though I scored more than my Commonwealth Games score, it's not satisfying. If I could score my practice score, I would have got into the final round."

The last 10 shots earned him only 100.1 points for an aggregate of

618.4 points as he missed the qualification mark by 6.1 points.

Baki's coach Klavs Christensen, who has been with the Bangladesh team for more than two years now, was admittedly disappointed. "This score may be a bit of an improvement in score, but I expected much better than this. I did not expect



Bangladesh's ace shooter Abdullah Hel Baki packs his bags after failing to meet expectations in the 10m air rifle event at the Jakabaring Shooting Range in Palembang yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

medals, but I would have been satisfied with a top-12 finish. But that 51st shot really ended his morale and his chances.

"When you make a bad shot like this, it's hard to recover because you keep thinking of that shot and can't concentrate. So, the rest of the shots are also affected," he added.

Both the coach and shooter blamed a lack of participation in international competitions for the disappointing performance. While Baki claimed that he scored more than 625 points regularly in practice, he also felt competition is a completely different matter than practice.

"I haven't played in any international competition since the Commonwealth Games while all the other competitors are participating in many World Cup and World Championship events," Baki said.

The other Bangladeshi participant in this event, Risalatul Islam, finished 29th with a score of 614.3 points.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's two female shooters -- Umme Zakia Sultana and Sharmin Akter Ratna finished 24th and 33rd respectively among 46 competitors in women's 10m air rifle event later in the morning. Zakia scored 612.6 points while Ratna shot 609.7 points.

The Bangladesh shooting contingent will be hoping that Shakil Ahmed, another silver medallist from the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, will turn the team's fortune with a good performance in the 10m air pistol event today.



SIZE DOESN'T MATTER

At just four feet 11 inches, North Korea's Om Yun Chol in normal attire may seem more like a schoolgoer than an elite athlete. But put him in weightlifting tights, as he was in Jakarta yesterday, and he wins gold in the 56-kg category at the Asian Games, proving emphatically that size really does not matter.

PHOTO: AFP

Kohli lifts India to virtual invincibility

AFP, Nottingham



India captain Virat Kohli succeeded where he had narrowly failed in the first innings by scoring a century to underline his side's dominant position on the third day of the third Test against England at Trent Bridge on Monday.

Kohli, who made 97 in India's first-innings 329, was still on his tea score of 93 not out when his edged drive off an outswinger from James Anderson, armed with the new ball, burst through Keaton Jennings's hands in the gully.

It was the latest dropped catch in the cordon by England this match and Anderson, whose duels with star batsman Kohli have been a feature of this series, put his head to his hands in evident despair after the ball went for four.

Next ball, Kohli edged Anderson, England's all-time leading Test wicket-taker, just short of Alastair Cook at first slip.

There was to be no denying Kohli his century and an edged boundary off Chris Woakes, his 10th four from 191 balls faced in nearly five hours at the crease, saw him to a 23rd Test hundred.

It was also his second in three matches after making 149 -- his maiden Test century in England -- in the series-opener at Edgbaston.

But having got to the landmark,

Kohli was out shortly afterwards when he missed a legside flick against all-rounder Woakes and was lbw for 103.

His exit left India 261 for four in their second innings, with a colossal lead of 449 runs as they sought a victory that would reduce England's

lead in the five-match contest to 2-1.

England needed to set a new all-time record if they were to achieve an improbable triumph as the most any side have made in the fourth innings to win a Test is West Indies' 418 for seven against Australia at St John's, Antigua, in 2003.

India resumed Monday on 124 for two, already 292 runs in front, with Cheteshwar Pujara 33 not out and Kohli unbeaten on eight.

With three days still left to play, India

could dictate the course of the game after skittling England out for 161, with Hardik Pandya taking a stunning five for 28 in six overs on Sunday.

While conditions offered a degree of assistance to swing bowlers on Sunday, they could not explain England's latest in a long line of batting collapses.

Having been 54 for none, they lost nine wickets for 74 runs and only avoided the follow-on thanks to Jos Buttler's 39.

England lost all 10 of their wickets inside a session -- the third time that had happened since 2016.

And a score of 86 for four meant that in their past 61 Test innings, England had lost their fourth wicket having scored 100 runs or fewer on 30 occasions.

Another longstanding problem for England has been their slip catching and they floored their fifth chance in the cordon this match when Buttler, a wicket-keeper by trade, moved late at second slip before grassing a low, left-handed chance after Pujara, on 40, edged Anderson.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 329

ENGLAND: First innings 161

INDIA: Second innings 270 for 3 (Dhawan 44, Rahul 36, Pujara 72, Kohli 93 not out, Rahane 17 not out; Stokes 2-53, Rashid 1-69)



India skipper Virat Kohli turned the screws on England with a century that helped swell their lead past 450 half an hour after tea on the third day of the third Test in Trent Bridge yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS