

SPORT



No complications for Mominul

SPORTS REPORTER



The laid back nature of life in a coastal town is common knowledge but even his harshest critics will not say that Mominul Haque, the man from Cox's Bazar, displays any measure of complacency when it comes to working hard on the field of cricket.

This however may not be the case when the little man talks to the media. He is always relaxed in response to any query, regardless of how much of a mindbender it is. The 27-year-old southpaw batsman was also unaffected by every question asked during a press meet at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Mominul was not ready to be excited about anything that happened in the past and neither was he willing to think about what may happen in the future. Instead he said: "I think like that... I always try not to make things complicated, unlike how you guys complicate things."

"Bhai, you cannot say anything in advance in cricket. I don't understand how helpful [the pitch for Mirpur Test will be for the batsman] and if you talk about planning, then every batsman has the desire to play long innings... to play session by session," was his answer regarding how much help the batsmen would get from the Mirpur pitch after a difficult outing at Chattogram during the first Test.

Mominul was very philosophical when asked about pressure in cricket.

"When I first came to the national team, it got to my brain that if I want to play cricket, I have to face pressure... I have to absorb it. I think that I can play good cricket if there is pressure... I can focus on the game and I can do something for the team. I always try to overcome pressure."

The one thing he was sure about was that the Tigers will go into the second Test to make it 2-0.

Top-order batsman Mominul Haque, who scored two tons in Bangladesh's last two Tests, juggles with white and red cherries during a training session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOT: FIROZ AHMED



Injury, khichuri and Mr. MP

MAZHAR UDDIN



There was serious business, an injury scare, fun and a lot of chatter on a lively first day of official training for Bangladesh in Mirpur yesterday, ahead of the second and final Test against the West Indies at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

The day however started off in alarming fashion as Bangladesh's wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim, just a match removed from compiling the country's highest Test score of 219, sustained a blow to his right hand thumb while batting in the nets when a ball suddenly kicked off the surface after it was thrown by a ball boy with the sidearm.

The experience cricketer immediately went for an X-ray and to the relief of the whole team, although he was experiencing a lot of pain, the report revealed that there was no fracture.

Meanwhile, a camera crew was waiting for the training to end in order to do a video shoot for a social awareness TV commercial with Tigers' Test and T20I skipper Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal, Mahmudullah Riyad and Mehedi Hasan Miraz.

Mahmudullah, known as one of the biggest pranksters in the national team, cracked a joke in the middle of the shoot and that was the cue for everyone to break character and start laughing in the middle of the shoot.

Tamim -- recovering from a side strain

and eyeing a return in the upcoming OD series against the West Indies -- then engaged in conversation with reporters and expressed his disappointment at missing out on four Tests and nine ODIs since suffering a left knuckle fracture in the Asia Cup.

Tamim then changed the topic to a lighter one -- his Bangladesh teammates' love of food. He was full of praise for Mushfiqur's wife's delicious shahi tukra, and also revealed Shakib's fascination with paya and Mushfiqur's fondness for khichuri.

Tamim however was quick to point out the strict dietary restrictions that the cricketers had to follow, but he did reveal that pacer Rubel Hossain and young Mehedi were unparalleled in their ability to pig out.

The day seemed to have everything, almost -- after all, a day in Mirpur does not seem complete without running into the Tigers' ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, and that is exactly what happened when this reporter met the beloved cricketer at the stadium gates after the rest of the cricketers had left.

Mashrafe's nomination form was submitted to the returning officer by the party officials at his hometown in Narail yesterday, but the cricketer appeared for training unnoticed for the first time since his decision to contest the upcoming general elections.

"How are you Mr. MP?", a few of his fans thus greeted him in jest.

The inspirational skipper, with a smile on his face asked about the other reporters were before saying: "I have to go to the gym," as he walked inside the gymnasium.

Ebadat makes hay on the green

SPORTS REPORTER



North Zone fast bowler Ebadat Hossain ran riot on a green wicket as he took six wickets for 51 runs -- his best bowling figures in first-class cricket -- against Central Zone yesterday on the first day of the second round of the Bangladesh Cricket League.

At the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogura, it was no surprise that North Zone elected to field on a pitch with a light-green shade -- the type of surface on which every quick bowler would like to operate. Ebadat also felt the same as he said that the bowlers exploited the green surface to their benefit. The Central Zone batsmen's struggle was evident from the very beginning as they lost four quick wickets with just 24 runs on the board at the end of the 12th over.

However, Abdul Majid and Shuvagata Hom steadied the rocking ship with a 91-run partnership for the fifth wicket before Shuvagata fell prey to the star of the day, Ebadat. After that it was the same old story for Central Zone as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals and were finally



The pitch had green grass on it which helped the bowlers [pacers]. It was a bowling wicket and I tried to do my best for the team.

EBADAT HOSSAIN

Mijanur Rahman and Farhad Hossain remained unbeaten on 34 and 31 runs respectively, taking the score to 72 for one at the close.

A hundred kilometres southeast, the other match between East Zone and South Zone at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi was a completely different one as East Zone ended the day on 314 for four. Opener Shamsur Rahman was the star of the show with 153 off 228 balls. South Zone skipper Abdur Razaak did manage to pick three wickets, but it was a day and a pitch on which batsmen ruled the roost.

SCORES IN BRIEF

CENTRAL ZONE V NORTH ZONE

CENTRAL ZONE: 220 all out in 62.5 overs (Majid 76, Shuvagata 48, Mosharraf 34; Ebadat 6-51, Ziaur 2-35)

NORTH ZONE: 72 for 1 in 15.1 overs (Mizanur 34 not out, Farhad 31 not out; Shahidul 1-24)

EAST ZONE V SOUTH ZONE

EAST ZONE: 314 for four in 90 overs (Shamsur 153, Rony 53, Tasamul 47 not out; Razzak 3-111, Fazle 1-10)

bundled out for 220 in 62.5 overs.

In reply, North Zone experienced an early jolt as opener Junaid Siddique saw his stumps rattled by a Shahidul Islam delivery with the score on 14. Despite the shaky start, North Zone ended the day just as they had started it -- on top -- as



(L-R) Mahmudullah Riyad, Tamim Iqbal, Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Shakib Al Hasan share a light moment during a video shoot for a social awareness TV commercial in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Heavy ban on rowdy 4 It's a must-win for us: Warrican

SPORTS REPORTER



West Indies left arm spinner Jomel Warrican has played a crucial part with both bat and ball against Bangladesh in the first Test in Chattogram, which ended with the visitors losing by 64 runs to trail the two-match series 1-0.

The 26-year-old Warrican took four wickets in the first innings and two in the second, before scoring 41 runs, giving the hosts a scare as he added 63 for the ninth wicket with Sunil Ambris in chase of 204 runs to win.

West Indies suffered their first ever Test defeat

in Bangladesh with the hosts opting for spin-heavy strategy in Chattogram to undo the visitors. Warrican was expecting the same at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur for the second and series-deciding Test starting from November 30.

"Obviously, the Mirpur wicket will spin again. So we have to exert control with spin. We have to be positive; we have a game plan and we have to execute the batting better on the wicket," Warrican told reporters ahead of their training session yesterday.

He however informed that his side were aware of the ability of the home side's batsmen to negotiate the spinners, and said that the visi-

tors are eyeing a comeback in the second Test to level the series.

"It's the matter of having belief in ourselves as a unit to win a game. It's a must-win situation for us. Ending the series with a win and returning home... as a unit we are confident. Maybe we lost the first Test but we are looking forward together to winning the [second] game," he said.

Warrican admitted that the loss of fast bowler Shannon Gabriel for the second Test, due to his suspension for a collision with Imrul Kayes in the first Test, may prove to be a key factor, but he was confident that someone else will step up in his place.



Shushanta Tripura
8-match ban, Tk 1 lakh fine



Tawhidul Alam Sabuj
6-match ban, Tk 50,000 fine

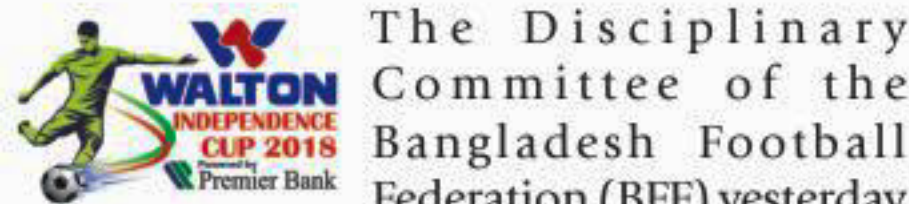


Mamun Mia
6-match ban, Tk 50,000 fine



Nabib Newaz Jibon
2-match ban

SPORTS REPORTER



The Disciplinary Committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday camp up with heavy punishment on four players of Abahani and Bashundhara Kings who were involved in a brawl before being sent off during the Walton Federation Cup final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The scuffle broke out during the stoppage time of the game on November 23 as Bashundhara Kings' defender Shushanta Tripura and Abahani striker Nabib Newaz Jibon engaged in a fight over possession of the ball, resulting in a full-blown brawl and two players of each side getting marching orders.

Sushanta was handed eight-match ban along with Tk one lakh fine while his Bashundhara Kings teammate Towhidul

Alam Sabuj was given six-match ban and Tk 50,000 fine.

Abahani defender Mamun Mia was handed six-match ban and Tk 50,000 fine while his teammate Jibon was given two-match ban. All the bans will come into effect from upcoming Independence Cup beginning from December 1.

Apart from these measures, Arambagh KS official AKM Rashedul Haque Sumon has been banned for one year and fined Tk 50,000 for assaulting assistant referee Harun-ur-Rashid after the club lost against Abahani 3-2 in the quarterfinal. Two ball boys of the club were also banned for life while Arambagh KS were fined Tk 5 lakh.

"The punishments on the players were given in line with disciplinary code 44 and 46," BFF's competition manager Jaber Bin Ansari said. "However, the players and the clubs will have the right to appeal against the punishments."



Ahead of the second Test against Bangladesh starting in Mirpur tomorrow, West Indies players were discussing how to bounce back and take a share of the two-Test series during training yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR