

## SPORT



# Zazai hounds Rajshahi Kings

SPORTS REPORTER

After the Bangladesh Premier League's sixth edition started with a low-scoring encounter between Rangpur Riders and Chittagong Vikings, yesterday's second match started in highly contrasting fashion as Dhaka Dynamites opener Hazratullah Zazai unleashed the beast and helped his side to a whopping 83-run win over Rajshahi Kings at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

However, both opening day matches shared a similarity as two foreign players -- Chittagong's Robbie Frylinck and Dhaka's Zazai -- shone on the day. While South



the secret of his power hitting.

"I always believe in myself. Whenever I practice, I practise to hit sixes. Even though the wicket is tough as I am in form I was able to hit sixes," said Zazai.

Rajshahi pulled things back in the middle as they picked up three quick wickets within the span of six overs that cost just 12 runs. It looked like Rajshahi could get back in the game but some sloppy fielding let Dhaka end on a high note. Rajshahi's young skipper Mehedi Hasan Miraz also marked the missed opportunities on the field as reasons for their downfall.

"The way they [Dhaka Dynamites] started it became tough for us at the beginning as they scored a lot of runs at the top. But I think if we had not missed chances then we could have conceded 10 or 20 runs less," said Mehedi at the post-match press conference.

Coming in to chase a challenging total, Rajshahi suffered a batting collapse as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals before finally being bundled. Opener Mohammad Hafeez remained the top scorer for Rajshahi as he scored 29 runs off 28 balls while only three other batsmen managed double-figure scores. Dhaka's Rubel Hossain was the pick of their bowlers, ending with magnificent figures of three for seven runs in his three-over spell.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

## DHAKA DYNAMITES v RAJSHAHI KINGS

**DHAKA:** 189 for 5 (Zazai 78, Shuvagata 38, Narine 38; Arafat 2-23, Hafeez 1-15)

**RAJSHAHI:** 106 (Hafeez 29, Arafat 18; Rubel 3-7, Mohor 2-24, Russell 1-12)

**Result:** Dhaka won by 83 runs.

**Player-of-the-match:** Hazratullah Zazai.

## WHACK-OMETER

TOTAL 6s HIT 18

TOTAL 4s HIT 37

Most 6s hit by a player: 7, Hazratullah Zazai, Dhaka Dynamites  
Most 4s hit by a player: 5, Shuvagata Hom, Dhaka Dynamites



South Africa fast bowler Dale Steyn (L) celebrates the dismissal of Pakistan batsman Imam-ul-Haq (not in the picture) during the third day of the second Test in Cape Town yesterday. Steyn took four wickets as Pakistan were bowled out for 294. PHOTO: AFP

## Proteas need 41 runs

AFP, Cape Town

Half-centuries by Shan Masood, Asad Shafiq and Babar Azam enabled Pakistan to avoid an innings defeat and take the second Test against South Africa at Newlands into a fourth day.

Pakistan were bowled out in the last over of the third day for 294 on Saturday, leaving South Africa 41 runs to win.

A provision for an extra half hour was not used because only 20 minutes or five overs of play would have been possible.

Masood hit a composed 61 and Shafiq and Azam both played aggressively to score 88 and 72 respectively.

Dale Steyn and Kagiso Rabada both took four wickets to get South Africa to the brink of victory.

Steyn drew level with Richard Hadlee of New Zealand in tenth place on 431 wickets on the all-time Test wicket-takers list.

Masood and Shafiq shared the most enterprising partnership of the match when they put on 132 in 132 minutes off 168 balls for the third wicket.

Steyn broke the stand when Masood was caught behind by wicketkeeper

Quinton de Kock and Philander followed up having Shafiq caught behind after a sparkling innings in which he hit 12 fours and a six in facing 118 balls.

Shafiq had looked set to make his second century in successive appearances at Newlands after he made 111 in the 2012/13 fixture between the two countries.

A mini-collapse followed but Azam batted well with the tail in scoring 72 off 87 balls.

Azam was ninth out, caught at first slip off Rabada when Pakistan were only 16 runs ahead 15 minutes before the scheduled close.

A second successive win for South Africa inside three days seemed likely when Mohammad Abbas was caught off Philander seven minutes and eight runs later when the extra half hour would have been enough to finish the match.

But after checking a replay, Philander was no-balled and Abbas and last man Shaheen Afridi took the game into a fourth day.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

**PAKISTAN:** First innings 177 all out

**SOUTH AFRICA:** First innings 431 all out

(Du Plessis 103, Markram 78, Bavuma 75, De Kock 59; Shaheen 4-123, Amir 4-88)

**PAKISTAN:** Second innings 294 all out (Masood 61, Shafiq 88, Babar 72; Steyn 4-85, Rabada 4-61)



Captain Mushfiqur Rahim commends teammate Robbie Frylinck after the South African all-rounder put in a man-of-the-match performance to help Chittagong Vikings secure a three-wicket win against Rangpur Riders in the BPL opener in Mirpur yesterday. (Inset) Dhaka Dynamites opener Hazratullah Zazai struck a team high 78 to power his side to an 83-run win against Rajshahi Kings in the day's second fixture. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Vikings prevail in slow start

SPORTS REPORTER



It was a rather dull start to the sixth edition of the Bangladesh Premier League both on and off the field with no flashy opening ceremony and fewer supporters at the ground in a low-scoring encounter. Chittagong Vikings eventually managed to register a three-wicket win over defending champions Rangpur Riders in the day's first game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The following are some noteworthy moments of the game:

## BATTING WOES

It was a poor batting display from both sides, but Chittagong were somehow able to remain on top, but not by much. After being sent to bat Rangpur were in all sorts of trouble and at one point were reeling on 35 for seven before Ravi Bopara and Shohag Gazi avoided humiliation.

The pair added 49 runs for the eighth wicket and they were the only two to reach double figures. Bopara top-scored with 44 while Gazi

## SCORES IN BRIEF

## RANGPUR RIDERS v CHITTAGONG VIKINGS

**RANGPUR:** 98 (Bopara 44, Sohag 21; Frylinck 4-14, Nayeem 2-10, Jayed 2-30)

**CHITTAGONG:** 101 for 7 (Shahzad 27, Mushfiqur 25, Frylinck 12 not out; Mashrafe 2-24, Farhad 1-10)

**Result:** Chittagong won by 3 wickets.

**Player-of-the-match:** Robbie Frylinck.

added 21 as Rangpur were all out for 98 in 20 overs.

Chittagong followed the same path -- Afghanistan's Mohammad Shahzad top-scored with 27 while skipper Mushfiqur Rahim added 25 runs and when Shahzad's departure made the score 51 for three, the batting side pressed the panic button. Chittagong however managed to chase the target in the last over, losing seven wickets.

## FRYLINCK'S FANTASTIC BPL DEBUT

A relatively unknown tall and rotund fast bowler from South Africa, Robbie Frylinck was the surprise package for Chittagong against Rangpur

yesterday. The 34-year-old, who incidentally played the first of his three T20Is against Bangladesh in late 2017, kept things simple and left the rest to the slow Mirpur pitch. He dismissed Alex Hales (0), Mohammad Mithun (0) and Mehedi Maruf (1) and came back to dismiss Gazi at the end, finishing with figures of four for 14 from four overs. Frylinck was also handy with the bat and remained unbeaten on 10 to help his side chase the small target.

"I don't think it was a 99 wicket, neither was it a 140 wicket. I think 120-125 would have been a good score. I think they may have gone a bit hard up front," he said.

## ASHRAFUL'S DISAPPOINTING RETURN

All eyes were on Mohammad Ashraful making a return to the BPL for Chittagong since completing his five-year ban from international cricket for his part in the match and spot fixing scandals of 2013. The stage was set for the right-hander but Ashraful failed to utilise the opportunity, coming in at number three. He was eventually dismissed on three from five deliveries when he was caught at third man off a top edge while trying to play a flick to Shafiu Islam.

## Smith, Warner raring to go

SPORTS REPORTER



The fans will not have to wait for long to witness the most eagerly anticipated battle of the sixth edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) as the second day of the tournament pits Sylhet Sixers' David Warner against Comilla Victorians' Steven Smith in the first game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.



DAVID WARNER

In the other match of the day, Mahmudullah Riyad's Khulna Titans will take on Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's Rangpur Riders.

The debut appearance of the two Australians, who have been serving 12-month bans due to Australia's ball tampering incident in Newlands last year, has already created a lot of hype in Bangladesh cricket.

Smith, who arrived on Friday, spent some busy time at the BCB academy premises yesterday after joining training session with his Victorians teammates.

Having completed a 20-minute batting session in the nets, Smith worked further with throw-down before wrapping things up with a fielding session.

When asked about his maiden BPL appearance for Comilla, the former Australia captain said, "It was a fantastic day and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Naturally I want to win the tournament

for Victorians."

Comilla faced a big blow before the campaign, missing out on five of their top players including Afghan spin master Rashid Khan and hard-hitting English batsman Jos Buttler due to the Big Bash League coinciding with the BPL.

However, the inclusion of Smith, after a lot of drama, will surely strengthen the side that already boasts Bangladesh's best batsman in the form of Tamim Iqbal at the top of the order.

Comilla also has an array of explosive all-rounders in the form of Pakistan's Shahid Afridi, Sri Lanka's Thisara Perera and promising Bangladeshi all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin. The bowling department is pretty healthy too, with Liam Dawson, Abu Hider, Mosharraf Hossain and Mahedi Hasan the key figures.

"Smith was very comfortable with us and it seemed like he knew us for long time despite coming to Bangladesh just a day ago. Hopefully there will be no problem with him. He is a professional player, I think, he could adjust with all. We all will help him as much as possible

for our team's betterment," top-order batsman Imrul Kayes told reporters.

Sylhet, on the other hand, will be eyeing top-four spot this time around under skipper Warner, with the likes of Andre Fletcher, Nicholas Pooran and Gulbadin Naib among the foreigners.

The presence of Liton Das, Sabbir Rahman, Afif Hossain and Nasir Hossain makes their local assemblage a healthy one as well.

Taskin Ahmed will lead the pace bowling department with Ebadat Hossain while the bowling department has the experience of Sohail Tanvir, Mohammad Irfan, Imran Tahir alongside the youthful exuberance of Sandeep Lamichhane.

"To me it is about making sure that we, as a whole including the support staff and management, can get the best out of the players. We have to establish our best eleven when we get to the park and make sure we do the right things in training. I have to make sure I am doing my job right, which is scoring runs and leading the guys on the park," Warner told reporters during his introduction on Thursday.



Sylhet Sixers might have a full plate on their hands when they take on Comilla Victorians in a BPL encounter in Mirpur today seeing as the latter will boast the services of Steve Smith (R) and Shahid Afridi among others. PHOTO: STAR

## TALK ON



Wickets in Bangladesh are very different to the rest of the world.

Sometimes you need a lot of time to get prepared for the competition. If you come unprepared, it is a very difficult place to play especially as a batsman.

Wickets in the nets are not the same as the middle. It is always difficult to get the idea. Especially in Mirpur, the wicket is unpredictable. We know that scores will be higher in Chittagong [Chattogram] and Sylhet. You can score 170 to 200. But if you can get 150 here, it is always difficult for the opposition.

## RAVI BOPARA

RANGPUR RIDERS ALL-ROUNDER