



PHOTO: AFP

Brazil players celebrate with the Copa America trophy after beating Peru 3-1 in the final at the Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday.

Brazil end 12-year wait

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Ten-man Brazil held on to win the Copa America on home soil despite Gabriel Jesus's dismissal with a 3-1 victory over Peru on Sunday.

Jesus scored the decisive goal after a penalty from Peru captain Paolo Guerrero cancelled out Everton's opener for hosts Brazil at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium.

A last-minute penalty from substitute Richarlison sealed a win for Brazil which handed the South American giants their ninth Copa triumph and first since 2007.

Jesus's evening went sour 20 minutes from time as he was sent off for a second booking.

The Manchester City striker was in tears as he left the field, making obscene hand gestures, angrily kicking a water bottle and almost knocking over the VAR booth.

Brazil's players rallied after the dismissal however to claim a battling victory.

Brazil started to stroke the ball around commandingly, and as they did that, they

looked dangerous.

Their opening goal came from a piece of individual brilliance by Jesus, whose drag back fooled two defenders, creating space for him to cross for the unmarked Everton to drill home at the back post on the quarter hour.

Brazil were in control and playing like champions elect as Roberto Firmino found space on the left and crossed for Philippe Coutinho to stab wide.

Left-winger Everton was clever with his movement in dragging the athletic right-back Luis Advincola out of position and Brazil's left-back Alex Sandro found acres of space to put in a deep cross that Firmino headed over.

Just as it looked as if Brazil would stroll to victory, Peru went on the attack and a Christian Cueva cross hit the arm of a sliding Thiago Silva, giving Peru a penalty that was confirmed after a VAR review.

Guerrero sent goalkeeper Alisson the wrong way from 12 yards and Peru were back in it just before half-time.

But they paid for their lack of guile and experience with almost the last kick of the half

as Arthur was allowed to drive at the defence from midfield following a slip from Renato Tapia that left him space to attack.

Centre-back Carlos Zambano also slipped, allowing Arthur to feed Jesus in the middle of the area and the Manchester City striker made no mistake, finding the bottom corner.

After some wing trickery from Everton, Alex Sandro crossed but Firmino headed wide.

Brazil were in complete control at this stage, but the dynamic changed 20 minutes from time as Jesus was given his marching orders for a second yellow card after a late challenge on Cueva.

The onus was now on Peru to attack and Miguel Trauco brought a near post save out of Alisson while Edison Flores fizzed a volley from outside the area just wide.

But the steam went out of Peru's efforts and they were unable to exert any sustained pressure on the hosts.

Any hopes they had were extinguished when Zambrano was adjudged to have barged over Everton in the penalty area and substitute Richarlison drilled home the spot-kick into the bottom corner.

Tite tells Messi to show respect

AFP, Rio de Janeiro



Brazil coach Tite told Lionel Messi to show some respect following claims from the Argentina captain that the Copa America had been "fixed" so the hosts would win.

Brazil clinched the Copa by defeating Peru 3-1 at the Maracana on Sunday but Tite felt that his side had been hard done by in some refereeing decisions and said Messi's words had weighed on the officials.

"He has to show some respect, he must understand and accept when he's defeated," said Tite, whose side beat Argentina 2-0 in a controversial semifinal.

"We've been affected in many matches, even in the World Cup, so be very careful. He put a lot of pressure on because of how great a player he is. Everyone has their own problems and you have to be respectful."

Messi had hit out at South American football's governing body CONMEBOL, accusing them of "corruption" after he was sent off in Saturday's third place play-off in which Argentina beat Chile 2-1.

He'd also claimed after Argentina's semifinal defeat that the tournament hosts were "managing a lot in CONMEBOL



these days."

Argentina had been angered that VAR wasn't used on two occasions to check the validity of their claims for a penalty that hadn't been seen by the referee.

Messi was then harshly sent off against Chile following a tangle with Gary Medel in which he seemed to do nothing wrong.

The Barcelona star claimed afterwards he had paid for his previous criticisms.

"My words had repercussions, but you must always be sincere," he said.

Tite agreed with that, claiming that Peru's penalty in the final -- converted by their captain Paolo Guerrero -- should never have been given.

"Today it wasn't a penalty. You have to be careful and show respect, as we respect others," said Tite.

Club councillors demand immediate BFF AGM

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Football Clubs Association (BFCA), a platform of clubs from Bangladesh Premier League, Bangladesh Championship League and Senior, Second and Third Division Leagues, yesterday made a demand to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to hold much-awaited Annual General Meeting (AGM) and send three-year financial audit report to its councillors immediately.

The decisions were taken at BFCA's discussion and coordination meeting at a hotel in the capital where representatives of different clubs and former national footballers attended to discuss the 'poor state' of the country's football.

"First, club councillors, will write to the federation to hold its AGM in line with our prescribed date as well as send the audit report to us before AGM," said BFCA president and Saif SC owner Tarafdar

Mohammad Ruhul Amin after the meeting.

"Bangladesh Divisional and District Football Association (BDDFA) also made the same decision to ask the federation to hold the AGM immediately," said Amin, who is also secretary general of BDDFA.

Amin added that they will work in next two weeks according to the BFF constitution and send separate letters to BFF to hold the AGM.

If two-thirds of the councillors want AGM, then BFF must hold it in line with the constitution, added Amin.

The meeting also took the decision of not taking part in the upcoming players' transfers for Bangladesh Championship League until the promised participation money is paid to the clubs.

BFCA general secretary and Arambagh KS president Mominul Haque Shaheed opposed BFF's move to start the next season in August citing that the decision was taken without discussing with the Bangladesh Premier League clubs.

Abahani win a 8-goal thriller

SPORTS REPORTER



Abahani survived a late score against Brothers Union in a thrilling 5-3 win in their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

With the 16th victory, the Sky Blues raised their points tally to 48 from 19 matches, four behind leaders Bashundhara Kings, who however played a match less than Abahani's 19. Brothers remained in relegation zone with 13 points in 18 matches.

Abahani, who handed a 4-0 defeat to Brothers in their first meeting, took a comfortable 3-0 lead within the first 21 minutes on a rain-soaked pitch as the Gopibagh-based outfit only watched the domination from the six-time champions.

Abahani hit the back of the net in the very first minute when Nabib Newaj Jibon tapped in a low-cross from Jewel Rana, who then scored twice in the 13th and 21st minutes. Abahani continued

pressing hard and Sunday surprisingly sent the ball over the crosspiece with goalkeeper Sujan Chowdhury to beat in the 41st minute.

After resumption, Abahani looked in a relaxed mood as if they had already ensured the victory and they had to pay for their sluggish approach, with James Moga headed home a corner from Shafiqul Islam Shafi.

Six minutes later, Mannaf Rabbi reduced the margin by driving home a cross from substitute Minhazul Abedin Ballu to bring some excitement, but Abahani's Nigerian striker Sunday Chizoba restored the two-goal cushion by tapping in cutback from Rubel Mia in the 86th minute.

Two minutes later, substitute Ballu made the scoreline 4-3 for Brothers to threaten Abahani, but top-scorer Sunday wrapped up Abahani's victory scoring his 17th goal of the campaign deep into stoppage time.

In the other match of the day at the Shaheed Bulu Stadium in Noakhali, visitors Arambagh KS beat NoFeL SC 2-1.

Bangladesh A lose against Afghanistan A

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh A team suffered a seven-wicket defeat against their Afghan counterparts in the first four-day game at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday.

Following a second-innings batting debacle from the hosts, an unbeaten 102-run fourth-wicket partnership between Ibrahim Zadrán and Nasir Jamal helped the visitors reach the 172-run target in 58.2 overs. Zadrán scored 76 while Jamal scored 59 runs for the visitors.

Earlier, resuming the day on 170 for nine, the home team were bundled out for 175 in their second innings.

Bangladesh had scored 253 runs in their first innings while Afghanistan made 257 in their first essay.

The two teams will now travel to Chattogram, where the second four-day match is set to be held from July 12 to 15 at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium.

The same venue will also host the first three one-day matches on July 21, July 23 and July 24.

The fourth and fifth one-dayers will take place at the BKSP on July 27 and July 29 respectively.

WHAT TO WATCH

GTV, BTV & MAASRANGA
ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP
FIRST SEMIFINAL
INDIA V NEW ZEALAND
LIVE FROM 3:30PM



Spain's Rafael Nadal celebrates his win against Portugal's Joao Sousa during the fourth round of Wimbledon at the All England Lawn Tennis Club on Monday. The Spanish master will face Sam Querrey of the United States in the quarterfinals on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Asian Cities Chess starts tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) is ready to host Asian Cities Chess Team Championship with the hope of regaining the title which Bangladesh in 1990.

Some 14 teams from 11 countries including three teams from Bangladesh will take part in the nine-day championship beginning tomorrow at the Fars Hotel and Resorts in Paltan.

Among the participants, only Iran sent a strong team comprising three Grand Masters while teams from India, Afghanistan, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Chines Taipei and Mongolia are comparatively weaker comprising mostly of International Masters and FIDE Masters.

Hosts Bangladesh have formed three teams, namely Gopalgnaj, Dhaka and Chattogram, with

Gopalgnaj featuring four GMs -- Ziaur Rahman, Abdullah Al Rakib, Enamul Hossain Razib, Reefat Bin Sattar -- and FM Fahad Rahman. Dhaka team features IM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, IM Abu Sufian Shakil, FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed, FM Khandokar Aminul Islam and CM Subrota Biswas while Chattogram team consists of promising players like FM Taibur Rahman, FM Mehdi Hasan Parag, FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman, FM Abdul Malek and Tahsin Tajwar Zia.

"We have a chance of becoming champions even though it depends on the current state of the players. Iran is a strong side too as the Iranian players are doing well in recent times. I think there will be a good competition between Bangladesh and Iran and we will fight for the championship," said Zia, a winning member of the 1990 championship.

"We will take part to become champions even though Iran is a strong opponent," BCF general secretary Syed

Shahab Uddin Shamin said, adding that their main target of hosting this tournament is to make chess popular among the next generation.

"We believe the future of Bangladesh's chess lies in hosting a number of international competitions and sending players aboard as much as we can. To strengthen the country's chess we are hosting Asian Cities Chess Team Championship" Shamim said, adding that they have an estimated budget of Tk 80 lakh which will be met by title sponsors KN-Harbour Consortium Ltd, co-sponsors Saif Powertec Ltd, Max Group, Rupayan Group, Abdul Khair Group, Standard Bank Ltd, Mercantile Bank Ltd and the federation.

Tournament committee chairman and RAB-3 commanding officer Lt Colonel Emranul Hasan believes this tournament will encourage the young generation to be involved with chess, which will help them stay away from drugs, terrorism and militancy.



Abahani winger Jewel Rana celebrates one of his two goals against Brothers Union during their high-scoring Bangladesh Premier League fixture at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED