



The Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League has seen a marked improvement in broadcast quality, with many new features included in the ongoing edition. However, the cricket on the field has not so far matched the quality of the pictures being beamed across the world.

Packaging there, cricket not quite

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The first Dhaka leg of the Bangladesh Premier League (BBPL) ended on Saturday after four days of double-headers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur and the show moves to Chattogram from tomorrow. The cricket in the Dhaka phase was distinctly underwhelming and of a standard lower than seen in previous editions, but there was a positive in that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) did manage to raise broadcasting standards.

None of the eight matches so far have been edge-of-the-seat thrillers, which is the biggest selling point of the T20 format. Most matches, except the ones on Friday, were played in front of sparse crowds in Mirpur and that perhaps has a lot to do with the lack of star power in this edition, which the BCB chose to hold on their own steam without the involvement of the franchises seen in previous editions due to a dispute with the latter. While previous editions boasted players like Steve Smith, David Warner, AB de Villiers and Evin Lewis, the biggest foreign names in this edition so far are Andre Russell and Mohammad Amir. Added to that have been low scores on good batting pitches and the common epidemic of dropped catches.

But the marked improvement has been in the

broadcast. There had been much dissatisfaction about poor broadcasting in previous seasons -- whether it was picture quality, graphics and stats errors and even the lack of state-of-the-art through by which other major T20 leagues have attracted audiences.

Real Impact, who are running the show, is using 32 cameras for the special edition to mark the 100th anniversary of father of the nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. There are around 80 people working in the team from Australia, UK, Canada, Sri Lanka, India and also from Bangladesh.

Two cameras are placed in the dugout that can take all the video in and around the dugout of both sides as it is wireless and can capture the emotions of the people sitting in the dugout at any time.

Stump cameras, both rear and front, have ultra-wide lenses so the broadcasters can capture the wicketkeeper in full and can also show the bowlers running in. There is a spider-cam and drone in operation during the live game, providing a bird's eye view for spectators.

In the last edition, surprisingly, there were no hotspot, snickometer or even ultra-edge -- which was included well into the tournament -- to support the Decision Review System, creating a lot of confusion regarding decision referrals.

But Real Impact this time is equipped with all the support system for the DRS and they also using two hawk-eyes with different

speedometers -- one installed in Dhaka permanently while the other is currently in Chittagong and will later be shifted to Sylhet for the BBPL.

"Last time there were some shortcomings but this time we are well prepared. And you can see the graphics colour also, so we changed the graphics look totally. It has been appreciated by anyone who is watching the match. We have worked on it.

"This time the drone is not sitting in a particular position, he is moving with an RF (radio frequency). That means he can go to the city; he can go to the road with his route. So, the drone can roam around. This production quality is similar to the Indian Premier League broadcasting," Real Impact managing director Rajiv Sabharwal told The Daily Star.

The interactive screen has been the latest inclusion for the first time in Bangladesh where the commentators can communicate and ask questions to cricketers.

Tim Finlay, who is the director in charge of broadcasting in the BBPL, is vastly experienced in cricket broadcasting, informed how technology has changed the face of cricket broadcasting worldwide including Bangladesh.

A lot of effort seems to have gone into producing a cricket spectacle, but it now remains to be seen whether the cricket can match the package.

PHOTO: FEROZ AHMED

Hetmyer, Hope script WI win

AFP, Chennai

Superb centuries from Shimron Hetmyer and Shai Hope drove West Indies to a rousing eight-wicket win over hosts India in the first ODI at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai yesterday.

West Indies made short shrift of India's 287 for eight, winning the match with 13 balls to spare.

The chase was built around a 218-run second-wicket partnership between West Indies' two rising stars. The partnership came from just 34.3 overs after West Indies opener Sunil Ambris was dismissed by Deepak Chahar with the score on 11.

Hetmyer was the aggressor in the partnership, hitting 139 from just 106 balls with 11 fours and seven fours. But it was Hope who took the team home with an unbeaten 101 off 150 balls.

Earlier, gritty half-centuries from Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant lifted India to 287 for eight after they lost early wickets.

Iyer (70) and Pant (71) put on 114 runs for the fourth wicket for a fighting total at the start of the three-match series in Chennai. The hosts were struggling at 80 for three after being put into bat.

Pace spearhead Sheldon Cottrell struck twice in one over, including nabbing skipper Virat Kohli for four with a slower delivery that the star batsman inside edged on to his stumps.

Opener Rohit Sharma fell for 36 to paceman Alzarri Joseph after he pulled the ball straight to mid-wicket where skipper

Kieron Pollard took a simple catch.

The right-left batting pair of Iyer and Pant then got down to the grind to thwart West Indies bowling attack with the right dose of caution and aggression.

Iyer completed his third successive ODI fifty while Pant -- a wicketkeeper-batsman who is often criticised for throwing away his wicket -- raised his first during a 69-ball knock laced with seven fours and one six.

Joseph broke the partnership after sending Iyer trudging back to the pavilion and Pant, who was dropped on 56, soon fell to Pollard's medium-pace bowling.

Kedar Jadhav then played a useful cameo of 40 during his 59-run sixth-wicket stand with Ravindra Jadeja, who made 21, to boost India's scoring in the final few overs.

Keemo Paul broke through with the wicket of Jadhav, and there was drama on the very next ball with Jadeja run out after a delayed umpire call.

Roston Chase hit the stumps at the bowler's end where Jadeja was running and South African umpire Shaun George did not call for the third umpire.

But replays suggested Jadeja was short of his crease, prompting the on-field official to refer it to the TV umpire who then gave it out, as an angry Kohli shook his head in disapproval in the dressing room.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: 287 for 8 (Iyer 70, Pant 71, Jadhav 40, Sharma 36; Cottrell 2-46, Paul 2-40)

WEST INDIES: 291 for 2 (Hetmyer 139, Hope 102 not out; Chahar 1-48)

Result: West Indies won by eight wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Shimron Hetmyer



West Indies batsman Shimron Hetmyer blazed a century to help take the tourists to a stirring win over India in the first ODI at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan opener Abid Ali became the only batsman to score hundreds on both Test and ODI debuts as the country's first home Test since the 2009 attack on the visiting Sri Lanka team ended in a tame draw against the same opponents Sunday. The 32-year-old raised his hands in jubilation before kneeling on the ground to offer a prayer of gratitude. "I don't have words to thank the Almighty," said Abid of his feat.



PHOTO: AFP

Kiwis succumb to Starc fire

AFP, Perth

Australian captain Tim Paine praised his undermanned attack after the home side recorded one of their biggest wins over New Zealand on the fourth day of the first Test at Perth Stadium on Sunday.

Having trailed by 250 runs on the first innings, the Kiwis were set a mammoth 468 to win -- which would have been a record chase in Test cricket -- on a deteriorating pitch after Australia declared at 217 for nine in their second innings.

The visitors were never in contention after losing their first wicket with just six runs on the board and were unable to push the match into a fifth day after Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins cleaned up the Kiwi tail under lights in Perth's first-ever day-night Test.

New Zealand were dismissed for 171 and were beaten by 296 runs, the last five wickets falling in a hurry for just 17 runs. It was just one run shy of their biggest losing margin to Australia -- in runs -- in a match where both teams batted twice.

Australia's biggest win, other than innings victories, was by 297 runs in Auckland in 1974.

Starc (4-45), who claimed nine wickets for the match, and Cummins (2-31) used the pink ball to good effect to bring the match to a quick conclusion after none of the recognised Kiwi batsmen offered significant resistance.

In match that Paine said had a Bodyline feel at times as the Kiwis used short balls regularly, he applauded a massive effort by the bowlers given the loss of opening bowler Josh Hazlewood early in the match.

"It was a particularly solid performance given we were a bowler down for two innings," he said.

"That was an awesome effort. I am

really happy with the way we played."

Kiwi captain Kane Williamson dismissed suggestions a lack of pink ball preparation had played a part in the loss and played down suggestions the scene had been set for a bumper barrage in the series by his team's tactics with the ball.

"On this pitch when the bounce became a little bit variable it proved to be effective, but it's not for everywhere," he said of the short-pitched bowling. "It is also something that Neil Wagner has been very successful doing for us for a long time."

"I don't know if it says any more than what we had in this match."

Williamson said pace bowler Trent Boult was likely to return for the second Test in Melbourne, starting on December 26.

Earlier, Australia's second innings fell away dramatically after being 131 for one at one stage on the third day.

The home team lost seven wickets for 58 runs, as they struggled against a sustained barrage of short-pitched bowling on another hot Perth day.

Tim Southee again impressed with 5-69, after also picking up four wickets in the first innings.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 416 and second innings 217 for 9 (Burns 53, Labuschagne 50; Southee 5-69, Wagner 3-59)

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 166 all out and second innings 171 all out (Watling 40, de Grandhomme 33, Taylor 22; Starc 4-45, Lyon 4-63)

Result: Australia won by 296 runs

Player-of-the-match: Mitchell Starc



Mitchell Starc (L) was the main man in a strong Australian bowling display, finishing with a match-haul of nine scalps, as the hosts thumped New Zealand by 296 runs in the first Test in Perth yesterday. He now has 39 wickets in seven Tests this year.

PHOTO: AFP

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