

RONALDO MAKES HISTORY

Cristiano Ronaldo made more history becoming the first player to finish the season as top scorer in three major leagues -- England, Spain, and Italy as Juventus qualified for the Champions League on the final day of the season on Sunday with a 4-1 win at Bologna and were joined by AC Milan who beat Atalanta 2-0. There has been speculation about Ronaldo's future with the club if they failed to reach the Champions League for the first time since 2012 after their nine-year league reign ended this campaign. The 36-year-old scored 29 goals this campaign, five more than second-placed Belgian Romelu Lukaku for champions Inter Milan.

---AFP



TIGERS EYE series win

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh will be looking to seal the three-match ODI series when they take on Sri Lanka in the second ODI at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today. Although Bangladesh registered a rather comfortable win in the end, the hosts will be wary over the probable threat from a relatively young Sri Lankan side that put up a valiant display in the latter stage of the match, largely due to Wanindu Hasaranga's blistering 60-ball 74.

The visitors gave the Tigers a bit of a scare late in the game but they eventually managed to defend their total of 257 runs and winning by 33 runs.

The senior cricketers with the likes of skipper Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah did their part with the bat by striking fifties while Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Mustafizur Rahman proved to be decisive with the ball in the first game.

On the contrary, the likes of Liton Das and Mohammad Mithun would be hoping to make amends after continuing their poor run of form if they are given another opportunity today.

Weather however could postpone the party with the likelihood of heavy rain in the next few days as the cyclone "Yaas" is set to strike India's east coast around May 26.

'Growth of players and coaches are parallel'

NABID YEASIN



The role of a coach, especially in developing any individual player, often remains in the shadow of all the uproar created by the outcome of his impact. It is only when the tutee acknowledges the mentor's hard work that his overall impact in the game is truly reflected.

Time and again, Bangladesh cricketers have credited their childhood mentors for their role in the reinstatement of the players' position in the game or for their sudden transformation following a long-stretching lean patch. How Shakib Al Hasan turned around from having a poor 2019 IPL campaign to delivering one of the best ever performances in the ODI World Cup the same year with the help of his mentor Mohammad Salahuddin is a story very well known to everyone related to Bangladesh cricket.

Shakib often seeks his mentor's help and so do Taskin Ahmed and many other players in the national squad. Taskin went under a massive transformation in recent times and for that, the pacer credited his childhood mentor Mahubb Ali Zaki.

Most recently, off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz, whose four wickets proved pivotal in helping Bangladesh beat Sri Lanka in the first match of the three-match ODI series on Sunday, talked about how local coach Sohel Islam and his other mentor Nazmul Abedeen Fahim helped the spinner.

"Miraz now knows how to keep patience. He now realises the importance of containing runs even if

he is not getting a wicket after bowling two or three overs," Sohel, while talking to The Daily Star, pointed out the change in Mehedi's mindset.

Mehedi's recent purple patch in limited-overs format has seen him climb to number five in ODI bowling ranking. Be it Shakib's upturn in form, Taskin's transformation or Mehedi's achievements, the impact of local coaches in Bangladesh cricket has been noteworthy.



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Hence, is it not obvious that to ensure a better foundation for cricket in the country, both development of players and the ones who help them, the coaches, should go hand in hand?

Nazmul, with whom Mehedi admitted to having communicated over the phone for guidelines during Tigers' tour of Sri Lanka last month,

mentioned that the development of coaches and players is aligned.

"This [growth of coaches and players] is parallel. Players cannot achieve things on their own. They would certainly need guidelines. And for that, it is very important that quality coaches come up through the pipeline as well," said Nazmul.

Players usually get the service of foreign coaches such as Bangladesh bowling coach Ottis Gibson or spin consultant Daniel Vettori only during national camps and during any tours or before international games. But for the majority of time, players work with their childhood mentors and local coaches to develop their game.

Sometimes, even working with two groups of coaches and adhering to two sets of instructions end up complicating things for players. That's certainly what happened to Taijul Islam, who had once changed his natural bowling action and mirrored Vettori's action only to later realise his mistake and switch back.

According to Nazmul, this gap can be bridged if the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) steps in and allows local coaches to work with foreign coaches side by side. And referring to players as 'machines', Najmul explained the reason behind it.

"It would be great if they [local and foreign coaches] can work together. That way, even the local coaches can learn a lot. Also, it can help our players. The local coaches have been working with the players since they played age-level cricket. So they [local coaches] know the ins and outs of a player and his inner abilities well. It is important to know about the machine before working with it. And it's the local coaches who know better about the machines," said Nazmul.

Hasaranga gave Tigers a glimpse of Cyclone Yaas

MAZHAR UDDIN



Bangladesh may have started the three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka on a winning note after registering a 33-run victory on Sunday but the margin of victory does not reflect the daring comeback showed by the visitors till the end.

Defending the target of 258 runs where Bangladesh managed to take early wickets and had the Lions struggling at 149 for 7 but momentum shifted later on when the Lankan lower middle-order batsman Wanindu Hasaranga, coming in at number eight, launched a cyclone-esque onslaught and tried to take the game deep by building up a crucial 62 run partnership for the eighth wicket with Isuru Udana.

The right-hander has been a revolution for the Sri Lankan lower order for his ability to score quick runs and in the recent past showed a glimpse of his talent with an unbeaten sixty-ball 80-run knock against West Indies earlier in March this year at Antigua. In fact, Hasaranga's unbeaten 80-run is the joint highest score by a Sri Lankan batsman coming in at number eight or lower in the ODIs alongside Thisara Perera.

It was a pretty desperate situation for Sri Lanka in the first ODI where Hasaranga staged a brilliant counter-attack



with some clean hitting where the right-hander struck five sixes and three fours and reached his fifty from just 31 deliveries.

It did seem that Hasaranga was set to take the game away from the Tigers single-handedly where Sri Lanka required 47 runs off the last six overs before his innings finally perished, after scoring 74 off sixty balls, and so did the remaining hopes for the visitors.

It was the Tigers pace bowling all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin who has played against Hasaranga during the 2016 ICC Under-19 World Cup in Bangladesh who eventually dismissed the dangerous man.

Even Saifuddin, who also has the big-hitting ability like Hasaranga, also expressed his desire to contribute more with the bat to emerge as a genuine all-rounder that Bangladesh is desperately seeking.

"I have played with Hasaranga during the Under-19 World Cup and had some idea about his game and although he batted well I am happy to dismiss him by setting the fielders appropriately. Obviously, I am ready to bat in whatever position my team wants whether it's at number eight or seven. But if you ask me personally I wish to bat at number five which however at the moment looks difficult but I am looking forward to work on my batting," said Saifuddin.

Interestingly Hasaranga announced himself as a leg spinner when he picked up a hat trick on his ODI debut against Zimbabwe in 2017. Since then he started showing his caliber as a handy player and in recent times the cricketer has developed himself as a genuine all-rounder by gradually improving his economy in bowling and overall skills and consistency. He remained wicket-less but conceded no more than 48 runs from his ten overs in the first ODI.

Although it is still early days for Hasaranga but even the youngster can be an inspiration for the Bangladeshi players with the likes of Liton Das, Mohammad Mithun, or Soumya Sarkar who despite having all the talents are yet to become the consistent performers which Bangladesh badly needs for their prosperous future.

THE HISTORY OF DUCK



Liton Das and Mohammad Mithun scored ducks in the first ODI against Sri Lanka on Sunday. We have come to use this term, duck, regularly when batsmen get out without scoring runs but how many of us know of the origin of the term? There are many interesting facts associated with the use of the term in cricket and about batsmen who went to forge brilliant careers despite scoring ducks on debut. Scan the QR code to see this special video.



LILLE BREAK PSG'S DOMINANCE

Lille players celebrate winning Ligue 1 title. Lille clinched their first Ligue 1 title since 2011 as they beat Angers 2-1 away on Sunday, becoming only the second club since 2013 to break Paris St Germain's dominance. Veteran Turkey striker Burak Yilmaz and his young compatriots Yusuf Yazici and Zeki Celik have been at the heart of Lille's march to their first Ligue 1 title in 10 years. The trio now aim to carry their club success onto the international stage at this year's European Championship, recapturing the spirit which took Turkey to the semi-finals of the 2002 World Cup and Euro 2008.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Coach, players unhappy

SPORTS REPORTER



Head coach Jamie Day is not happy with the way the training camp is being managed as

the national team's scheduled journey to Saudi Arabia for preparation ahead of next month's World Cup Qualifiers was deferred yesterday, hours before the scheduled departure, owing to the unavailability of a quarantine exemption letter from Saudi Arabia government.

"Obviously this is not the ideal preparation for the players. It was disappointing but the credit to the players who are still motivated and hoping to get something sooner than later," Day told reporters after conducting a training session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The coach had cancelled out Sunday's training session so as to make arrangement for departure for Saudi Arabia, but got back to training on Monday morning after being informed that the trip was postponed.

"We aren't lucky compared to other teams going to Qatar or abroad for preparation. It is difficult to get prepared in such a situation. We could have better facilities there, train in

better pitches, get to acclimatise with the weather if we could have gone there at right time," said Day, adding that it doesn't make sense to have only two to three days' training if they couldn't leave Dhaka by Tuesday.

Goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico told the reporters that all the players were disheartened by the postponement of the journey.

Asked why the BFF confirmed the trip without receiving the quarantine exemption letter, general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag said, "We did everything after getting verbal confirmation about the quarantine exemption from them (Saudi authorities) and they requested us to defer the journey by a day on Sunday midnight."

Shohag, though, informed that they would get the exemption letter by 7:00pm on Monday, but did not receive any letter till 8:00pm when this report was filed, keeping everyone in dark over the fate of the rest of the training camp.

With the uncertainty ever present, Day proposed BFF to make arrangements to send the team to Qatar a couple of days ahead of May 30. The qualifying matches will get underway on June 3.

Aguero enjoys perfect farewell

AGENCIES



Manchester City forward Sergio Aguero, who has been linked with a move to Barcelona when his deal expires next month, said goodbye in style as his double off the bench in his final league match for the club helped them celebrate their Premier League title success in style with the 5-0 thrashing of Everton at The Etihad on Sunday.

For City, it was a celebration. Not only were supporters back after 14 months away but it was their first chance to salute the champions and acknowledge their European exploits.

Supporters would have to wait to see the Argentinian in action, however. Aguero moved onto 260 goals for City, and ended his Premier League career on 184 — only behind Alan Shearer (260), Wayne Rooney (208) and Andy Cole (187).

City coach Pep Guardiola was reduced to tears when asked about Aguero post match. "He is a special person for all of us," Guardiola said. "He is so nice. He helped me a lot. We cannot replace him. We cannot."

Guardiola later said Aguero is close to agreeing a deal to join Barcelona. "Maybe I reveal a secret. Maybe he is close to agreeing a deal for the club of my heart -- for Barcelona," Guardiola told the BBC. "He is going to be playing alongside the best player of all time, (Lionel) Messi."



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