

'Don't think we can attack from the start'

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite the difference between Bangladesh and Afghanistan being only 35 places in FIFA Ranking, Afghanistan's have always been considered a superior side than Bangladesh, solely because of their Europe-based players, but the men in red and green reached the levels of their technically and tactically superior opponents to snatch a valuable point in the World Cup and Asian Cup Qualifiers on Thursday night in Doha.

Afghanistan's dominant performance in the reverse fixture in Dushanbe in 2019 was evidence of their technical and tactical supremacy and ahead of Thursday's match it was hard to find an optimistic person betting in favour of the boys in red and green in their second meeting against Afghanistan on a fast-paced pitch.

Jamie Day's usual defensive strategy had come under intense criticism, even by Bangladesh Football Federation higher-ups, but the British coach set his charges up for a show that every football supporter in Bangladesh wanted to see in all games even though the 41-year-old said that yesterday's game was going to be harder than the Dushanbe match.

"The boys played extremely well and I guess we got the tactics right," Jamie Day told The Daily Star, disagreeing that he had the option to attack Afghanistan from the start. "No, [it is] not possible, if we play open football against the better team, they will punish us. Instead of staying in the game like yesterday [Thursday] and getting a point, we would have lost. Let's be happy with the performance and result."

"I personally don't think we can attack better teams and players from the start although another coach may have a different approach. I think it is better to be in the game for 90 minutes than for the match to be over in 45 because we are two or three goals down," opined Jamie.

Ahead of Sunday's game against India, who are 79 places ahead of Bangladesh in the FIFA Rankings, Jamie is inspiring his



Topu Barman, who scored the match-saving goal against Afghanistan on Thursday, was the centre of attention as the Bangladesh players went through recovery sessions at the team hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

charges to repeat what they showed against Afghanistan.

"India have far better quality and showed it last night when they lost only 1-0 [to Qatar]. This is the simplest way I can put it. England and India have the same difference between them in the rankings. Would India beat England in a football match?" was the reply from Jamie, whose charges surrendered their lead in playing out a 1-1 draw in the reverse fixture against India in Kolkata in October, 2019. Before taking charge of Bangladesh, the boys in red and green also played out two draws against India despite taking the lead on both occasions.

"There are always one or two games where the other team can cause an upset but that's not consistent. They have better technical players than us," said Jamie.

Whatever was playing on Jamie's mind, goal-scorer Tapu Barman was dreaming of

getting some points and toppling India to book a direct ticket for the Asia Cup Qualifiers.

"We gave more than 100 per cent effort and that's why I could equalise in the last moment. Everyone gave their best from their respective positions and that was the most important thing; teamwork," Tapu said in a video message.

"We are looking forward to the matches against India and Oman. The India match is very important for us because we need to get points from this match to play the Asian Cup Qualifying round directly. This fact is on everyone's mind and our confidence has been boosted after the Afghanistan match. This confidence will help us in the India match," said the Bashundhara Kings centreback.

Meanwhile, midfielder Sohel Rana fractured his hand on Thursday night and was ruled out for the next two matches.

DPL yet to match its historical excitement

SPORTS REPORTER



The third round of the ongoing Bangabandhu Dhaka Premier League T20 competition has continued to lack competitiveness with low-scoring encounters the feature of the prestigious domestic tournament so far.

In the first game yesterday, Khelaghar Samaj Kalyan Samity registered their first win, chasing down a modest 139-run target set by Legends of Rugganj with seven wickets in hand. Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Jahurul Islam struck fifties as Khelaghar reached the target in 19.3 overs.

Earlier, Rugganj made a slugging start after being sent in to bat, with national team's left-handed opener Shadman Islam facing 22 balls for eight runs before being bowled by Masum Khan.

Skipper Naem Islam was dismissed on a duck while the other opener, Azmir Ahmed, departed for 28 off 21 balls as lack of intent from the Rugganj top-order pushed them on the back foot right from the start.

Al Amin and Sabbir Rahman showed some positivity, adding 55 runs in quick time before the latter departed for 23 off 21 balls. Al Amin was dismissed for 51 off 42 balls and Jaker Ali scored a quick 19 as Rugganj posted 138 for five in 20 overs.

In the day's second game, Shinepukur Cricket Club successfully defended 137 to seal their first win of the league by 10 runs against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club.

Sheikh Jamal, a relatively experienced side with a bunch of former national players such

as Mohammad Ashraf, Nasir Hossain, Nurul Hasan and Sohrawardi Shuvo, were bundled out for 127 with former national cricketer Elias Sunny emerging with a top-score of 30.

Left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam was the pick of the bowlers for Shinepukur with three for eight runs in four overs. Pacer Hassan Murad bagged two wickets.

In the third match of the day, Prime Doleshwar SC defended 144 runs, beating Gazi Group Cricketers by 36 runs.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board and the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan had previously changed the 50-over format to T20 format keeping the preparation for the upcoming T20 World Cup in mind.

It is also understood that there was huge demand from the players to resume the league -- the biggest source of income -- which was halted in March last year due to the pandemic. The board was also desperate to complete the league keeping the upcoming board election in mind.

But question remains over the quality of the Mirpur surface and overall standard of cricket, with lack of competitiveness undermining the historic intensity of the club-based competition.

The highest match aggregate so far was between Sheikh Jamal and Prime Bank SC, with a total of 315 runs scored in that game.

Sheikh Jamal's 166 for six against Khelaghar is the tournament's highest innings while only three out of 14 times teams have managed to post over 150 despite the presence of all national cricketers.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



Still scaling heights at 98

AFP, Villeneuve

Marcel Remy is the grand old man of Swiss Alpinists, and with his sure and steady progress as he conquers a climbing wall, few would realise he is 98-years-old.

Week in, week out, every Monday morning, Remy drives his old Toyota to the indoor climbing centre in Villeneuve on the eastern shores of Lake Geneva, where he meets his son Claude to plot a path to the top.

The veteran slowly puts on his climbing shoes and harness and having picked out his ascent route, makes his way to the 16-metre (52-foot) high wall.

"It gives me a lot of pleasure because you have to work, think and surpass yourself; that's what suits me well," Remy told AFP, between his two morning climbs.

"I do it for my health -- that's the first thing. I carry on for my muscles, because I've noticed quite often that if I stop for two or three weeks, it's much harder to start again. It's better to keep coming often."

Remy said the secret to his continued success was pacing himself.

"It's the rhythm that you have to take -- for breathing, for the movements," he explained. "If I go beyond that, there's a price to pay afterwards. I can't tell you exactly what, but either the shoulders or the muscles. It's better to go calmly, without over-exertion -- and then it works."

Climbing has always been major part of Remy's life. Brought up on tales of the mountains, he never stopped going off to discover the great outdoors and the Alps became his playground.

Remy worked on the Swiss railways and spent all his free time in the mountains, taking his two sons with him.

"He was a tough dad. With him it was do or die, whatever the conditions," said his oldest son Claude, 68.

But despite his ruggedness, he knew how to pass on his passion for the Alps. Claude and his 65-year-old brother Yves have also become well-known in the climbing world.

In August 2020, the top French climbing magazine Grimper devoted 40-odd pages to their exploits and the most impressive climbs they have accomplished together.

Nowadays, the roles are reversed and it's Claude guiding his father as he makes his second ascent of the morning at the Villeneuve climbing hall, one of the biggest in Switzerland.

This time, Remy is the first one up the route, making it all the harder.

He scales the first few metres with no trouble at all but in the upper sections, he struggles for several minutes to find the breakthrough that will take him to the top.

It is only with an agile jump that he finally unlocks the path to the summit, nimbly springing off his left foot and instantly landing on the same toehold with his right.

"It's good!" he says, out of breath, before making his way down.

Back at the bottom, sitting on a bench for a well-earned rest, he clenches his fists and says to his son: "I'm happy."

Claude explained: "He's a tough character. He's very resistant to hardship."

"Even if it's a very difficult section on the wall, as we saw towards the end, he searches and finally works out how to resolve it because he's motivated."

"He inspires great admiration in all age groups, even among the very young," but even so, "he'll look at how young people climb and try to copy their movements".

Russian tennis player arrested

REUTERS, Paris

Russian player Yana Sizikova has been arrested at the French Open and has been placed in custody over match-fixing allegations, sources told Reuters on Friday.

A police source and the French tennis federation (FFT) said the player had been arrested but did not elaborate on the reasons.

A source with direct knowledge of the matter said the arrest was related to match-fixing allegations.

Last September, French prosecutors opened an investigation into alleged match fixing in a women's doubles match at the French Open.

The investigation into "fraud in an organised group" and "active and



passive corruption" was related to a doubles match between Romanian pair Andreea Mitu and Patricia Mari and Sizikova and American Madison Brengle.

Shamil Tarpishev, president of the Russian Tennis Federation, told the RIA news agency that he had been informed of Sizikova's detention. TASS news agency also reported that the Russian embassy in Paris had been informed of the situation.

"We have not received any documents (regarding the case), so it's difficult to make an assessment of what has happened," Tarpishev was quoted as saying.

Supercrete

জগদা মান, অটিক নির্মাণ



নতুন স্বাগে