

SPORT

Whitewash on the menu for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER



Despite having already won the three-match ODI series with a game in hand, Bangladesh will still be eyeing a clean sweep in the third and final ODI against Zimbabwe in Harare today.

The visitors did manage to win the first two games quite comfortably in the end, but batting has remained one of their biggest areas of concern. In both games, it took individual heroics from Liton Das and Shakib Al Hasan for the Tigers to eventually go past the final hurdle.

Liton scored a decisive hundred in the first ODI where Bangladesh, at one stage, was struggling on 74 for four inside 19 overs. In the end, the visitors managed to post a challenging total of 276, riding on the wicket-keeper batsman's century.

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan

won't take the third game lightly by any means today.

"Look, every game is important, each point is vital and every series is crucial for us keeping the upcoming 2023 World Cup in mind. If you have noticed, Tamim Bhai (Tamim Iqbal) is playing the matches despite carrying an injury as the super league points matter and so every player is trying to give their best keeping that in mind.

"There is no chance to take Zimbabwe lightly as every team is strong at their home soil. Maybe things got tough for us in bringing the result in our favour but we still have a game to keep working in the right direction. Our aim will be to whitewash them and win the series 3-0," said Saifuddin to the media yesterday.

Skipper Tamim, still struggling with his knee injury, is set to return home after the ODI series and thus the left-hander will not take part in the three-match T20I series in Zimbabwe. Moreover, the

Zimbabwe Cricket and Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) have agreed to bring forward their T20I series. The matches will now be played on July 22, 23 and 25 at the Harare Sports Club ground instead of July 23, 25 and 27 July as originally scheduled.



played a pivotal role with both bat and ball in the first two games. In the first ODI, the champion cricketer bagged his third five-wicket haul of his ODI career to help bundle out Zimbabwe on 121 runs, resulting in a convincing 155-run win.

The star cricketer, who had been struggling with his batting form, finally turned the tables in the second ODI where once again, Bangladesh was struggling on 75 for four in 18 overs at one stage while chasing a modest target of 241. This time, Shakib stood firm for the Tigers and struck an unbeaten 96-run knock and added an unbeaten match-winning 69-run partnership for the eighth-wicket with Mohammad Saifuddin who remained unbeaten on 28.

All-rounder Saifuddin informed that the Tigers will eye those ten points and

experienced cricketer is prescribed to rest for eight to ten weeks which means Tamim will end up missing the home series against Australia and New Zealand as well.

The visitors are also missing the vast experience of Mushfiqur Rahim in the middle-order. The team management might look to tinker with the playing eleven and provide an opportunity to others as the likes of Mohammad Mithun and Mosaddek Hossain failed to make an impact in both the games in the middle-order.

In the bowling department, left-arm seamer Mustafizur Rahman's participation in the third and final ODI is still in doubt as the pacer is still recovering from his ankle injury that he sustained during the warm-up game ahead of the Test series.



TRIUMPH FOR POGACAR, MORIKAWA

Two young professionals ruled the roost in two different disciplines on Sunday. Collin Morikawa (L) won the British Open at Royal St. George's as the American became the first player to win two different majors on debut. Morikawa won by two shots from compatriot Jordan Spieth, who lifted the Claret Jug in 2017. "I just want more. When you're in these moments and you truly love what you do, and I love playing golf and competing against these guys, these are the best moments ever because the nerves push you to just be a better person," said Morikawa, who will now look to win an Olympic gold medal in Tokyo. Meanwhile in Paris, Tadej Pogacar became the youngest rider to win back-to-back Tour de France titles after some vintage racing drew comparisons with cycling's greatest. The 22-year-old Slovenian, who won the Tour on his debut last year, hammered his rivals in the Alps with a long-range attack on stage eight, reminiscent of the event in the 1980s, and stayed in control for the rest of the race. "We did it," he said with a huge smile. "It was one thing last year, the first win, I didn't cry this year," he said glowing in his big moment and thanking everyone with his parents and siblings all present.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Jamal propels Covid-hit Saif

SPORTS REPORTER



Saif Sporting Club registered a thrilling 4-3 win over relegation-threatened Arambagh KS in an entertaining encounter of the Bangladesh Premier League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, with captain Jamal Bhuiyan scoring the winning goal from a free-kick two minutes from time.

Saif came into the match on the back of a 2-1 defeat at the hands of Sheikh Jamal and were missing some regular players due to Covid-19 but they never looked playing like missing the services of two foreign strikers -- John O'koli and Kenneth Ngwoke as well as winger Arifur Rahman.

Saif took 29 minutes to break the deadlock, with Emmanuel Ariwachukwu heading home Jamal free-kick but the lead lasted only seven minutes as Islomjon Abdulkodirov brought Arambagh back into the match by converting a penalty.

The second half of the match was more entertaining as Saif

restored the lead with a 74th-minute strike from Maraz Hossain. Faisal Hossain Fahim made it 3-1 two minutes later with a header, giving the impression that Saif were comfortable with the lead but minnows Arambagh bit back strongly to reimburse both goals within seven minutes.

Uzbek midfielder Kholmurodov

converted another spot-kick in 78th minute while substitute Arafat Mia levelled the margin six minutes later as the match changed its complexion entirely. With a draw on the cards, Jamal stole the show with a superb curling effort that from 25 yards out, driving his side to a much-needed victory and raising their tally to 29 points from

18 matches. Arambagh remained bottom of the 13-team table with five points from 17 matches.

Sheikh Jamal pip Sheikh Russel Sheikh Jamal pip DC moved to second position of the table with a 2-0 victory over Sheikh Russel KC, thanks to a brilliant performance from Pa Omar Jobe.

With their 11th win in 17 matches, the three-time champions toppled Abahani to grab the second position with 38 points, still 11 points behind leaders Bashundhra Kings. Russel were in seventh position with 27 points from 18 matches.

Sheikh Jamal, who thrashed Sheikh Russel 4-2 in the first-leg, had to work hard to break the deadlock. Following a barren first half, Sheikh Jamal took the lead in the 59th minute as unmarked Suleyman Sillah drove home a cross from Omar Jobe after two defenders failed to clear the danger. Jobe then sealed the victory with a brilliant curling shot from a difficult angle after dancing past onrushing goalkeeper Ashraf Islam Rana in the 65th minute.



Jamal Bhuiyan was brilliant with his set-pieces against Arambagh at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The Saif SC skipper's effort was headed in by Emmanuel Ariwachukwu for the opening goal before Jamal curled one in to give his side a 4-3 win.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

What to WATCH

TUESDAY
T SPORTS & GTV
Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe
Third ODI
Live from 1:30 pm
TEN 2
England vs Pakistan
Third T20I
Live from 11:30 pm

WEDNESDAY
SONY SIX & TEN 1
Sri Lanka vs India
Second ODI
Live from 3:30 pm

THURSDAY
T SPORTS & GTV
Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe
First T20I
Live from 4:30 pm

FRIDAY
T SPORTS & GTV
Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe
Second T20I
Live from 4:30 pm
SONY SIX & TEN 1
Sri Lanka vs India
Third ODI
Live from 3:30 pm
TEN 1, TEN 2 & TEN 3
Tokyo Olympics 2020
Opening Ceremony
Live from 5:00 pm

The girl from Nilphamari aims for Olympic medal

ANISUR RAHMAN



Teenage archer Diya Siddique is considered to be the third potential athlete -- after Ruman Sana and shooter Abdullah Hel Baki -- to bring success for Bangladesh in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics as the 17-year-old archer has recently hogged the limelight by bagging a silver medal by pairing with Ruman in the Recurve mixed event of Archery World Cup in Switzerland.

The 11-grade student of BKSP was not in the midst of discussion even two months before, although two years ago, she surprised everyone by winning a gold medal in her maiden appearance at an international tournament -- 3rd ISSF Solidarity Archery Championships.

Since then she was absent in both domestic and international tournaments before finding herself in Lausanne, Switzerland in May. Her performance in the Final Qualification tournament for Tokyo Olympics in June also fuelled Bangladesh Olympic Association to think highly about her as Diya lost to tournament's 3rd-ranked Slovenian Ana Umer in tie-break in the third round of women's individual Recurve event despite making equal eight points in a one-arrow tie-breaker.

Interestingly, Diya has a

good record in international tournaments, with one gold in individual event and one silver medal in mixed event, however, she has yet to win a gold medal in domestic competitions since she started competing in the domestic arena in 2018.

Before the departure for Japan

performance," said Diya.

When asked about whether it would be possible to repeat the performance of the Archery World Cup in Tokyo, Diya said, "Our initial target is to qualify for the 16-team competition in the Recurve mixed event. If we can qualify for the finals, then we can

National Sports Council's 2017 talent-hunt programme, recorded her best-ever score -- 634 out of 720 -- during the Archery World Cup in Switzerland, although her overall best score of 649 was made during a trial session. However, she is seemingly inconsistent in the elimination round as



on Friday, Diya shared thoughts about her goals, preparation for the Tokyo Olympics while talking to The Daily Star.

"I never thought that I would take part in the Olympics within such a short span of my playing career, which started in 2017 through the admission at BKSP. Even a few months ago no one knew that I would take part in the Olympics but it is now happening because of a sudden rise in my

expect some good performance because we have a good match temperament.

"To be honest, if I can perform like I usually do in the practice sessions, then it is possible to produce something good. Personally, I have set a target to secure victories in at least two to three matches in the Recurve individual event," said the girl from Nilphamari.

Diya, unearthed through the

established by her average score of 8.74 out of 10.

"After playing two World Cups and the Olympic qualification tournament, my confidence has been satisfactory, backed by steady scores of 27 or 28 out of 30 in practice sessions. Also, I am not worried about playing against the world-class archers as I believe in myself to perform well in the Tokyo Olympics," said Diya with full confidence.

'Tokyo Olympic beds are sturdy'

AFP, Tokyo



The cardboard beds at the Tokyo Olympic Village are "sturdy", organisers reassured on Monday, after a report warned they weren't strong enough for sex.

Irish gymnast Rhys McClenaghan filmed himself jumping repeatedly on a bed to prove the point, after the report in the New York Post claimed the beds were deliberately flimsy to promote social distancing.

"The beds are meant to be anti-sex. They're made out of cardboard, yes, but apparently they're meant to break with sudden movements. It's fake -- fake news!" McClenaghan said in the video posted on Twitter.

The official Olympics Twitter account thanked McClenaghan for "debunking the myth", adding "the sustainable beds are sturdy!"

The report in the New York Post was based on a tweet, apparently tongue-in-cheek, by US distance runner Paul Chelimo who said the cardboard beds were "aimed at avoiding intimacy among athletes".

"Beds will (only) be able to withstand the weight of a single person to avoid situations beyond sports," he tweeted.

It's not the first time the beds, which signal a commitment to sustainability, have come into question.

In January, manufacturer Airweave said they can withstand a weight of 200 kilos (440 pounds) and have been through rigorous stress tests, after Australian basketball player Andrew Bogut queried their durability.

