

T SPORTS

La Liga
Rayo Vallecano vs Getafe
Live from 6:00 pm
Atletico Madrid vs Athletic Bilbao
Live from 8:15 pm
Elche vs Levante
Live from 10:30 pm

Alaves vs Osasuna
Live from 1:00 am (Sunday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
English Premier League
Liverpool vs Crystal Palace
Live from 8:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
English Premier League

Wolves vs Brentford
Live from 5:30 pm
Manchester City vs Southampton
Live from 8:00 pm
Aston Villa vs Everton
Live from 10:30 pm
SONY SIX
Bundesliga

Augsburg vs Borussia Monchengladbach
Live from 7:30 pm
TEN 2
Bundesliga
Bayern Munich vs Bochum
Live from 7:30 pm
FC Koln vs RB Leipzig
Live from 10:30 pm



Brunzon replaces Day for next three events

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) appointed Spanish coach Oscar Brunzon as the national team's interim coach after relieving Jamie Day of his duties for the next two months, handing the mastermind behind the Bashundhara Kings' domestic dominance the task of guiding Bangladesh in the upcoming SAFF Championship.

It was inevitable that Day would be replaced ahead of the regional football extravaganza -- scheduled to begin in Maldives from October 1 -- after BFF president Kazi Salahuddin told an executive committee meeting on Thursday's about a possible change of head coach in the coming days. But the National Teams Committee (NTC) acted fast, finalising the decision the following day.

"We have engagements over the next two months: the SAFF Championship, the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers in October and a four-nation tournament in Sri Lanka in November. We played two



"I think it's a bit unprofessional that I find this (being replaced for the job) out through media."

JAMIE DAY

tournaments in Nepal and Kyrgyzstan recently but the results were not satisfactory," NTC chairman and BFF vice-president Kazi Nabil Ahmed said after the meeting at the BFF House yesterday.

"We discussed it with Jamie Day and were unsatisfied by his explanations. We also discussed it with the BFF president and discussed the matter at today's [Friday's] meeting, which decided

to release Day of his duties from the national football team for the next three events over two months. Bashundhara Kings coach Oscar Brunzon was appointed as interim coach."

Brunzon has coached his side to two Bangladesh Premier League titles, as many Federation Cup titles and one Independence Cup title in the past three years. This season, the Kings finished second in Group D of the AFC Cup under his guidance. The Spaniard also has prior experiences coaching in Maldives and India.

"Over the past two years, Oscar has been the most successful coach in the domestic circuit and we were following his coaching methods. Besides, he has vast experience with the local players and good knowledge about opponents [in the SAFF Championship]," Nabil said. "Oscar will take charge on September 21 but will pick a 35-member preliminary squad tomorrow to submit to the SAFF secretariat."

Nabil, also Abahani's acting director-in-charge, hoped the national team would reach the final of the five-team round-robin tournament under Brunzon's

guidance.

It is not the first time the BFF have removed the head coach ahead of a tournament.

They axed Brazilian Adson Silva Dido and Italian Fabio Lopes ahead of SAFF Championships to appoint local coaches Shahidur Rahman Shantu and Marufur Haque respectively but success eluded them then.

Replying to a query, Nabil said: "Whether our decision is realistic or not will be proven through the performance of the players. We are not considering the training period short because all our players have been in action recently. Most national players will even get a chance to play on September 20. Besides, the coach already has observations of the players because of his coaching in the domestic circuit. There are no questions over players' fitness and nine days is enough time to settle on the tactics for the matches."

When contacted, Jaime refused to comment. Nabil later Jamie Day's future would be decided after two months. Meanwhile, Brunzon is set to face the media on Monday after Bashundhara Kings' last league game against Abahani.

Pakistan disappointed over NZ's tour abandonment

REUTERS, Islamabad



New Zealand abruptly abandoned their tour of Pakistan on Friday citing a security alert in a massive blow to the South Asian country's hopes of staging regular international cricket.

The tour was to get underway with the first of the three one-dayers in Rawalpindi on Friday but New Zealand did not travel to the stadium.

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) then issued a statement announcing their decision to call off the tour. "Following an escalation in the New Zealand Government threat levels for Pakistan, and advice from NZC security advisors on the ground, it has been decided the Blackcaps will not continue with the tour," it said.

NZC declined to share details of the security threat and said arrangements were being made for the team's departure.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said NZC had "unilaterally decided to postpone the series" despite "foolproof security arrangements" made for the matches.

"The Pakistan Prime Minister spoke personally to the Prime Minister of New Zealand and informed her that we have one of the best intelligence systems in the world and that no security threat of any kind exists for the visiting team," the PCB said in a statement.

"PCB is willing to continue the scheduled matches. However, cricket lovers in Pakistan and around the world will be disappointed by this last minute withdrawal."

Newly-appointed PCB chairman Ramiz Raja's tone, a former Pakistan captain, said they would approach the International Cricket Council (ICC) over what transpired

on a "crazy day".

"Walking out of the tour by taking a unilateral approach on a security threat is very frustrating. Especially when it's not shared!! Which world is NZ living in?? NZ will hear us at ICC," Raja tweeted.

New Zealand, minus several frontline players, were visiting Pakistan for the first time in 18 years and were also due to play five Twenty20 matches in Lahore.

"I understand this will be a blow for the PCB, who have been wonderful hosts, but player safety is paramount and we believe this is the only responsible option," NZC chief executive David White said.

New Zealand Jacinda Ardern backed NZC's decision to end the tour.

"I know how disappointing it will be for everyone that the game hasn't gone ahead, but we totally support the decision that's been made. Player safety has to be paramount," she said in a statement.

More disappointment could be in store for the PCB with England now reconsidering what was to be their first Pakistan visit in 16 years to play two Twenty20 matches in Rawalpindi next month.

"We are liaising with our security team who are on the ground in Pakistan to fully understand the situation," an England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) spokesperson said.

The ECB Board will decide in the next few days if the tour should proceed.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam summed up the sentiments in Pakistan where fans have been starved of live action involving top teams.

"Extremely disappointed on the abrupt postponement of the series, which could have brought the smiles back for millions of Pakistan cricket fans," tweeted the batsman.



Napoli's Victor Osimhen celebrates scoring their second goal with Giovanni Di Lorenzo during their Europa League fixture against Leicester City at the King Power Stadium on Thursday. The Nigerian scored two second-half goals to salvage a point for the Italian side.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Joytu Sheikh Hasina GM Chess from Sunday

SPORTS REPORTER

To mark the 75th birthday of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) is all set to organise a grand tournament titled Joytu Sheikh Hasina International Grand Master Chess Tournament with the participation of 12 GMs from 10 nations.

A total of 60 players including 16 international masters are expected to take part in the 15000-dollar tournament starting from Sunday at Hotel 71 in Palton. The champion will receive 4000 dollars as prize money, speakers informed at a press conference yesterday.

Canadian University, Bangladesh is sponsoring the tournament for the second time after they sponsored the first edition of online Joytu Sheikh Hasina Chess tournament held last year.

"Our aim was to improve the standard of this tournament named after the Prime Minister. We are determined to hold this

tournament every year and will try to keep the standard intact in future," said Chowdhury Nafees Sarafat, chairman of Canadian University, Bangladesh and vice president of the chess federation.

It is the first time in a decade that the chess federation is organising a grandmasters' tournament. The last time the federation held a GM tournament was in 2009 even though GM Niaz Murshed, under the banner of Six Seasons, held a GM tournament while Chattogram Jella Krira Sangsha (CJKS) held another GM tournament in recent past.

"It is a big stage for all of us, including those chess players who are in the pipeline. Even if none of our promising players get a GM norm this time, I hope they will get norms in future if the tournament is held regularly," said Murshed, who attended the press conference alongside GM Ziaur Rahman and GM Enamul Hossain Razib. BCF general secretary Syed Shahab Uddin Shamim was also present at the event.

'Need to be smarter in our approach'

In modern-day cricket, Performance Analysis has become the most essential tool in strategising for any team in world cricket as it provides a detailed idea of their opponents. Bangladesh cricket team's performance analyst Srinivas Chandrasekar, who has remained a vital component in the Bangladesh team over the past three years, spoke to The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin during an interview in which he shares his experience along with a few other topics. The excerpts of the interview are given below:

The Daily Star (DS): What are the areas of the Performance Analysis can the players utilise to improve?

Srinivas Chandrasekar (SC): Like me, there'll be someone else sitting in the opposition dugout analysing our team. So it's important for our players to know what the opposition bowlers are up to, such as -- what are his defensive deliveries or which one is the go-to ball under pressure or what he does in the backend of the innings. They have to be well aware of what they're going to face in the game to avoid getting surprised. Even if they come up with something different, I have to anticipate it and inform our players. I normally have conversations with the players in simulating a situation like -- if I was in the opposition, what could I come up with. So it's my duty to inform them of all possibilities.

DS: Bangladesh have an over-the-board fascination with different-handed batting combination and with the ball as well. Does that come from data gathering or it's just something they feel that will upset opponents?

SC: It's not a fascination, rather it's the idea, executed all around the world, of forcing the left-hander to go against the spin by facing an off-spinner. Tell me, why did Tom Latham and Henry Nicholls bat at number five and six in the early stage of the series? It's because they knew off-spinner Mahedi Hasan will open the innings while left-armers Nasum and Shakib will come in

the middle overs, and so they tried to play more with the spin. I think cricket has undergone an evolution where the teams started to realise the importance of having leg-spinners, who could turn the ball both ways, and also deploy left-handers in the middle, just to disturb the opponent's game-plan.

DS: You've worked with big-named

the experience they've gathered playing big pressure matches is more than ours, and they can make the right decisions. We've a relatively young and inexperienced bunch of players, who'll also learn with more experience.

DS: Are you already in the process of analysing world cup opponents? How do you rate Bangladesh's chances in the World Cup?

SC: Yes, I had already started working, with the world cup in mind, a long time back and as far as our chances are concerned, I think we need to take one game at a time. First, we play the qualifiers and then evaluate our chances. As this format is very unpredictable, we don't want to think too far ahead.

DS: What would be the most crucial aspect in performing well in the World Cup and are there any glaring weaknesses that can be worked on?

SC: It'll be to assess the condition as quickly as possible because the pitches can be a bit tricky in Dubai and Abu Dhabi as well as in Oman, considering my experience in the previous edition of the IPL. The grounds over there are relatively bigger and even though we're not a big-hitting team, we can still be a bit smart in finding the gaps and work hard on the running between the wickets. I think we've got an all-around bowling unit irrespective of the surfaces so if we can consistently pile up a good score, we can do well. But for that, we need to be smarter in our approach.



T20 players in the IPL [Indian Premier League]. How strong are the Bangladesh players compared to IPL's?

SC: I won't say there's a big difference in terms of mind-set. It's just that,

Mankading earns Afghan U-19s maiden win

SPORTS REPORTER

Afghanistan Under-19 skipper Nangeyalia Kharote celebrated wildly after Mankading non-striker Mushfik Hasan as the visitors ensured a 19-run victory against Bangladesh Under-19 in the fourth Youth ODI at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

This was the visitors' first victory in the five-match series after the young Tigers had already bagged the series with three wins on the trot.

Chasing a competitive total of 210 for eight posted by Afghanistan, the hosts were bundled out for 191 in 44.2 overs.

Before the last man was Mankaded, a confident Tahjibul Islam was apparently on his way to helping Bangladesh to their fourth win.

Unfortunately, that did not happen due to the Mankading incident as Tahjibul was left stranded at 50 off 75.

Bangladesh, however, had started steadily in their response to Afghanistan's competitive total. Openers Mahfijul Islam (26 off 30) and Ifukher Hossain (18 off 35) stitched together a 52-run stand before the latter fell prey to Faisal Khan Ahmadzai in the 10th over.

Despite a decent start, the young Tigers could not keep up the momentum, losing wickets in clusters with only Tahjibul hanging tight at one end.

Earlier, electing to bat, Afghanistan amassed their highest total in the series.