



Succored by a packed slip cordon, Shoriful Islam drops the cherry against New Zealand XI as Bangladesh hone their pace-bowling craft in tailor-made conditions at the Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Sunzamul spins North Zone to victory

SPORTS REPORTER



Left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam's eleven-wicket haul helped BCB North Zone register their first win in the Bangladesh Cricket League by securing a

six-wicket victory over Islami Bank East Zone on the third day of their third round game at Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi yesterday.

Sunzamul was the chief destroyer for North Zone, picking up eight wickets while conceding 98 as he helped bundle out East Zone for 254 runs in their second innings. North Zone went on to chase the small target of 111 runs for the loss of just four wickets to seal their only win in three games with a day in hand.

It was an eventful third day's play in Rajshahi where a total of 14 wickets fell after East Zone resumed the day on 17 without loss.



The 31-year-old Sunzamul, who had picked up three wickets in the first innings, went on to register his 24th fifer and his seventh ten-wicket haul in first-class cricket following his eight-wicket haul in the second innings yesterday. This was also the first ten-wicket haul in this edition of BCL.

Meanwhile, it was a disappointing batting display from the East Zone as none of the batters were able to convert their starts. Nayeem Hasan's 45 was the top score for the side.

North Zone, however, had swayed the momentum of the game towards them when they took a 144-run first-innings lead.

Meanwhile, at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram, centuries from Amite Hasan and Towhid Hridoy propelled South Zone to 381 for five before stumps against Walton Central Zone.

Despite the two centuries, South Zone still trail by 100 runs in reply to Central Zone's 481 in the first innings.

Resuming the day on 92 for one, overnight batter Pinak Ghosh was dismissed on 71. But Amite and Hridoy added valuable 201 runs for the third wicket stand.

Amite went on to register his fourth first-class ton and his second in the ongoing tournament before being dismissed on 117 off 275 balls. And after smashing a double ton in the previous match, Hridoy followed it up with another well-paced 122.

If the game ends in a draw, both Central Zone and South Zone will advance to the top two of the points table and will face each other in the final.

TIGERS' pace battery charged up a notch

SPORTS REPORTER



Keeping oneself fresh mentally and physically is a challenge during the new normal of quarantine protocols and for a pacer, the task of finding rhythm is perhaps more difficult.

Yesterday's practice game against New Zealand XI provided just the right opportunity for the Bangladesh team's pace battery – a key component in Kiwi conditions – to find some rhythm and much needed confidence following a tough few days for the visitors in New Zealand after spin-bowling coach Rangana Herath had tested positive for Covid-19, which subsequently lengthened the quarantine period and hampered Bangladesh's preparations for the two-Test series, slated to begin from January 1.

U-19s progress as group champs

SPORTS REPORTER

The group-deciding fixture between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka was abandoned after one of the umpires returned positive Covid result midway through the game at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Both Bangladesh and Sri Lanka had already confirmed their semifinals spot and were vying for the top spot in Group B.

The positive Covid result, however, did not impact the young Tigers' progress as they ended the group phase being champions, thanks to a superior run-rate, and are set to face runners-up of Group A, India, in their semifinal on December 30. Sri Lanka, meanwhile, will square off against Pakistan in the other semifinal.

January 1.

Having won the toss, captain Mominul Haque handed the ball to his quicks at the Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui after rain had seen the start delayed till 11:44 pm local time. Abu Jayed Rahi was able to make the new ball talk, picking up the wickets of Luke Georgeson and Devon Conway, the sixth of the innings, in the same over.

Taskin Ahmed, not to be left behind, then picked up Jacob Cumming, out caught behind in the very next over as New Zealand XI slumped to three for eight runs.

Rain had hampered proceedings before early lunch was called. Following a steady partnership, Taskin made inroads after lunch, removing Jack Boyle (20 off 47) out caught-behind to break the hosts' resistance further. Jayed went on to remove Mitch Renwick (18 off 60) before rain halted proceedings with 27.3 overs played and New Zealand XI standing at 71 for five.

Jayed finished with three for 27 in 9 overs while Taskin returned figures of 2 for 26 in 8.3 overs. Shoriful Islam and Shohidul Islam also got a run in, bowling five overs each.

Jayed was satisfied with the day's work and especially using the new ball.

"We played after a long time and it was good for our team. Rain kept coming and going and the bowlers did well and we were able to comeback. We were able to bowl well with the new ball after quite some time and overall bowled in good areas according to the conditions," Jayed remarked in a video message to the media.

On pace-friendly New Zealand conditions, Jayed and Co will now be hoping to carry on the good day's work before the Tigers take on the Kiwis in the red-ball format which is also part of the new World Test Championship cycle, hoping to avoid a hiding after a few dismal results over the last few months.



FEDERATION CUP

Ctg Abahani through to quarters

SPORTS REPORTER

Chattogram Abahani qualified for the quarterfinals of the Bashundhara Group Federation Cup following a 2-0 victory over Bangladesh Police in their Group C fixture at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

Midfielder Arifur Rahman gave the port city side a 24-minute lead, rounding off the Police goalkeeper before placing the shot into open net following a through-ball from Sohel Rana. South African recruit Nkululeko Twala doubled the team's advantage on the hour-mark with a glancing header on a cross from Kamrul Islam.

The win in their first match was enough to see Chattogram Abahani through as they have three points while Police, with a defeat and a draw which they earned in their opening match against Saif SC, are in third position with a single point.

Saif will need to avoid defeat or at least lose by a single-goal margin to secure their last-eight berth when they meet Chattogram Abahani in the last group phase match on Thursday.

Sri Lanka smash hosts in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh had to be content with the runners-up trophy in the Bangabandhu Asian Central Zone Men's Volleyball Challenge Cup following a 3-0 sets defeat against Sri Lanka in the final at the Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The home side gave a run for the money to the 50th-ranked side in the world despite lacking skill in all three departments – defending, attacking and service, as most of the players except for Horosit Bishwas, Syaed Al Jaber



and Mohammad Sujar are inexperienced, coming into the tournament on the back of only a month's training. With the spectators cheering the home team relentlessly, Bangladesh fought equally in the first set and were close to victory before two silly mistakes forced them surrender the lead as the Lankans took the first set 28-26.

In the second set, Bangladesh could not match with pace, power, block and smashing of Sri Lanka and were beaten 25-20. The men in red and green took a 16-14 lead in the third set before poor blocking from them and some intelligent play from the Sri Lankans meant the islanders won the set 25-20.

Sri Lanka had beaten Bangladesh in 3-1 sets in the group stages.

"We lost to Sri Lanka due to inexperience. Most of our players have no experience of playing such a match, which is why we could not match them despite offering equal fight. I think this experience will help us in future," captain Horosit said.

Meanwhile, Nepal lifted the title of Bangamata Asian Central Zone Women's Volleyball Championship after handing a 3-2 sets defeat to Uzbekistan in the final at the same venue.

India seamers make SA toil

REUTERS, PRETORIA

India's seamers made inroads into South Africa's brittle batting line-up as the home side limped to 193 for eight on the third day of the first Test on Tuesday in reply to the tourists' total of 327.

Twelve wickets fell in the first two sessions on a wicket that has sprung to life and is providing plenty of assistance to the seamers in movement, pace and steep bounce at Centurion Park. Mohammed Shami (four wickets) was excellent with his line and length.

Seamer Lungi Ngidi had earlier taken 6-71 as South Africa made light work of bowling India out on the third morning. Ngidi helped South Africa claim the last seven Indian wickets for the addition of only 55 runs.