

Tigers in control

SPORTS REPORTER

Left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam bagged three wickets and kept Bangladesh A in the hunt as the High Performance (HP) Unit ended the third day of the four-day game on 123 for four in their second innings at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi yesterday.

Despite a 50-run opening stand between Mahfizul Islam and Tanzid Hasan, HP lost way as Tanvir came into the attack and removed the Tanzid for a 45-ball 33. HP lost wickets at regular intervals afterwards, with Amite Hasan becoming Tanvir's second victim as he was trapped leg before on four.

Opener Mahfizul (27) was the third wicket to fall while Towhid Hridoy (6) departed cheaply afterwards.

Shahadat Hossain Dipu remained unbeaten on 30 along with Aich Molla (8 not).

They will resume on the fourth and final day with a lead of 34 runs. Apart from Tanvir's three-wicket haul, left-arm seamer Abu Hider Rony picked up a wicket for the A team.

Earlier, after resuming on 197 for six, Bangladesh A rode on overnight batter Fazle Mahmud, who waged a lone battle to give his side an 89-run first-innings lead.

The left-hander resumed on 35 runs and finished as the top scorer for the A team as he was dismissed for a 180-ball 89 that featured 11 fours.

Naeem Islam, who injured his eye while fielding, also came out to bat and scored 21 runs before retiring hurt. Tanvir also scored some valuable runs at the end and remained not out on 23 off 35 balls.

Soumya Sarkar had lain the foundation for the A team by scoring 81 runs on the second day. Pacers led the way for the HP as left-arm seamer Mrittunjoy Chowdhury picked up three wickets while Mukidul Islam and Ripon Mondol bagged two wickets each for the bowling side.



Bangladesh players had to sit through rain as their only scheduled training session ahead of the first T20I against the West Indies in Dominica – scheduled for last night – was lost to inclement weather on Friday. There was rain forecast for the matchday, too, with the second match of the three-match series scheduled for tonight at the same venue – the Windsor Park in Roseau.

PHOTO: AFP

All-round Bumrah puts England to the sword

AFP, BIRMINGHAM

India stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah starred with both bat and ball as England's Stuart Broad conceded the most expensive over in Test history, giving up 35 runs at Edgbaston on Saturday.

India were all out for a breathtaking 416 in their first innings of the Covid-delayed fifth Test, with the tourists 2-1 up in the five-match series.

They then reduced England to 60-3, with fast bowler Bumrah, Broad's chief tormentor with the bat, removing openers Alex Lees and Zak Crawley before getting rid of Ollie Pope amid rain interruptions.

Broad had become just the sixth bowler to take 550 Test wickets when he lost his composure by repeatedly bowling too short at Bumrah, deputising as skipper for the Covid-hit Rohit Sharma, in a forlorn effort to intimidate the tailender.

Bumrah batting at No 10 and facing the new ball, dismantled Broad's figures during eight remarkable deliveries.

The six legitimate balls were thrashed for 23 runs, including four fours and a six. Broad, 36, also sent down a wide that went all the way over the head of wicketkeeper Sam Billings for four and a no-ball Bumrah top-edged for six.

The previous record of 28 runs in a Test over had been achieved on three occasions in the format's 145-year



history, with Broad's team-mates James Anderson and Joe Root two of the bowlers on the receiving end.

Broad did not get a chance to make amends with the ball, although he did end the innings by catching last man Mohammad Siraj.

India, 338-7 overnight, smashed 78 runs in 11.5 overs.

England captain Ben Stokes set the tone for what followed with a ragged opening spell as Ravindra Jadeja converted his 83 not out at Friday's close into the third century of his 60-Test career and first overseas.

Jadeja had been the junior partner in a stand of 222 with Rishabh Pant, who hit a rapid 146, that rescued India from the depths of 98-5 after they had been sent into bat.

Matthew Potts could have had Jadeja out for 92 but a thick edge off the shoulder of the bat split slips Crawley and Root before heading to the boundary.

But one ball after his reprieve, he commandingly cut Potts for four to complete a 183-ball century including 13 boundaries.

Broad then achieved his landmark wicket when Jack Leach caught Mohammed Shami.

Anderson bowled Jadeja for 104 with the new ball and then ended the innings when Siraj holed out to finish with 5-60 in 21.5 overs.

Bumrah then succeeded in his main role by bowling Lees between bat and pad.

Zak Crawley's poor run of form continued as he fell for nine after nicking Bumrah to third slip.

This decider should have been played in Manchester last September only to be postponed just hours before the start because of coronavirus concerns within the India camp.

Inter sign Onana and Mkhitaryan

AFP, ROME

Inter Milan signed on Friday Cameroon goalkeeper Andre Onana and Henrikh Mkhitaryan, the pair arriving in Milan as free agents after their respective contracts with Ajax and Roma expired.

The two signings were listed among completed transfers on Serie A's website, making the deals official even if Inter have not formally announced their arrivals, as the contracts have been deposited with Italy's top flight.

Inter have been active in the summer transfer window, which in Italy officially opened on Friday, also signing Romelu Lukaku and Kristjan Asllani on loan from Chelsea and Empoli.

They are also in talks to bring in another free agent in Paulo Dybala, who has been let go by Juventus after they refused to renew his contract.

Onana, 26, has been brought in as the successor to 37-year-old Samir Handanovic, who has been at Inter for a decade.

He has signed a five-year deal with Inter after not playing much since being handed a nine-month doping ban a year ago.

Former Armenia international Mkhitaryan arrives in Milan on a two-year deal which will reportedly net him 4.5 million euros (\$4.7 million) a season.

He played for three years at Roma, winning the inaugural Europa Conference League under Jose Mourinho last season.



Morsalin shines again as MSC hold Kings

SPORTS REPORTER

Young midfielder Sheikh Morsalin scored his second goal in two matches as Mohammedan Sporting Club held league leaders Bashundhara Kings to a 1-1 draw in a Bangladesh Premier League fixture at the Shaheed Dhirendranath Dutta Stadium in Cumilla yesterday.

Morsalin, who scored his first goal in professional football in Mohammedan's 3-1 win against Sheikh Jamal last week following his loan move from the Kings recently, gave the hosts the lead in the 11th minute with a superb strike.

The 16-year-old midfielder, playing only his third professional match, scored with a wonderful dipping strike from outside the box. Kings hit back in the 34th minute through a volley from Miguel Figueira from the edge of the box.

There were no more goals as Kings dropped their first points after six matches, moving to 45 points from 18 matches, seven clear of Abahani.

Mohammedan, meanwhile, moved to fifth with 26 points from 18 matches, overtaking, on goal difference Chattogram Abahani, who have same number of points from 17 matches.

SAFF Championship moving on from centralised venue?

SPORTS REPORTER

The South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) secretariat is mulling whether they should move on from a centralised venue for the SAFF Championship, floating the idea of organising a month-long tournament across multiple venues.

The proposed format was discussed during yesterday's SAFF electoral congress, where Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin retained the SAFF presidency for a fourth consecutive term.

Under the new format, each of the seven participants will play one game against each team, three at home and three away from home. The team with the most points will be crowned champions.

In the past, the biennial tournament was organised in a tournament format with one or two countries playing host.

A marketing agent proposed the change to the SAFF secretariat to consider multiple venues for the SAFF Championship and the SAFF Club Championship, although the later has never been staged.

"We are thinking of holding the SAFF Championship and SAFF Club Championship in alternate years. That is our plan for the future. A

marketing company proposed multiple venue for both. We will now send the proposal to the member countries. They will study it and provide feedback. If everyone agrees with this proposal, we will go that way," SAFF general secretary Anwarul Haque Helal said, adding that there would be seven matchdays between June and July, with each matchday featuring three games.

Helal also recognised that countries like India and Pakistan may run into problems regarding visas under the format. In such cases, the marketing agency was considering neutral venues.

There were only three candidates -- from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan -- vying for posts in the seven-member SAFF committee during the electoral congress. Two vice presidents posts and two members posts remain vacant. Pakistan did not contest the elections due to a ban from FIFA while Maldives did not send a representative.

"I am grateful and thankful to all that I became SAFF president fourth time," Salahuddin said. "I have been successful in last few years if you talk about SAFF, which had only one tournament [prior to his first term as president]. Now, we have six tournaments a year. I think that says how successful I have been."



France's Harmony Tan continued her stellar Wimbledon debut on Saturday to book her maiden fourth-round spot at a Grand Slam, crushing Briton Katie Boulter 6-1, 6-1 in just 51 minutes. The 24-year-old Tan proved that her thrilling win over seven-times Wimbledon champion Serena Williams in the opening round was no fluke and she has now won three straight Tour-level matches for the first time in her career.

PHOTO: AFP