

Shohidul saga a lesson for future athletes

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh pacer Shohidul Islam's 10-month suspension from all forms of cricket after the 27-year-old breached Section 2.1 of the ICC Anti-Doping Code should serve as a lesson to all young cricketers in the country when it comes to taking medicines, even for personal treatment.

On Thursday, the ICC briefed in a press release that Shohidul's urine sample was collected on March 4 and was found to contain the banned substance, Clomiphene. Shohidul did not intentionally consume the prohibited substance. It was prescribed by his doctor without the consent of the Bangladesh Cricket Board's medical team.

The question is why, despite yearly anti-doping programmes by the BCB, someone made the mistake and paid a heavy price? According to the BCB's chief physician Dr Debashish Chowdhury, it is a player's responsibility to stay vigilant about such serious issues to avoid any disaster.

"According to ICC guidelines, the BCB arranges anti-doping awareness crash courses once or twice a year. We conducted the course this year in February and we arrange it with the support of the Bangladesh Olympic Association every year. It is one of the ICC's conditions that all the member boards must meet. The question is how attentive are the ones that attend the programme. We do our work. But do the players listen? If they don't understand, they can ask us. Among a hundred players, I think a majority follow instructions. One or two players may have failed to comprehend the instructions properly."



Debashish told The Daily Star.

According to the veteran physician, it is important that doctors who hand out prescriptions for players be aware of banned substances.

"In Shohidul's case, he took the medicine as per the doctor's prescription. He thought that it was legal, legitimate because his doctor prescribed it. If the doctor knew that the drug was prohibited, I am sure the doctor would have not prescribed it. Who do you teach and make aware, the doctors or players? The second thing is since you are over 18, an adult. Anything found in your body is your responsibility," he added.

According to Debashish, the only thing to do was raise awareness. He added that there were no restrictions from the ICC in taking such medicines for therapeutic uses, but that the governing body would need to be informed and hand out an exemption.

"Awareness is important. Since Shohidul tested positive, the media is writing about this issue now. So the players will also be aware that if they take such medicines, they need to inform the board. There is no restriction in taking such drugs, but only if he informs first. This is called Therapeutic Use Exemption or TUE, which is given when a medicine is for therapeutic use and not for performance enhancement. At times there can be alternative medicines and if they inform us we can prescribe alternative drugs," Debashish added.

Man United continue red-hot form



Manchester United's Scott McTominay and Anthony Martial shake hands following their 4-1 win over Melbourne Victory at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Friday in their second pre-season match under new coach Erik ten Hag.

PHOTO: TWITTER

AFP, MELBOURNE

Anthony Martial and Marcus Rashford got on the scoresheet as Manchester United rallied from a goal down to beat Melbourne Victory 4-1 Friday and hand manager Erik ten Hag his second win since taking over.

It followed their 4-0 thumping of Liverpool in Bangkok on Tuesday when Jadon Sancho, Fred, Martial and Facundo Pellistri were on target.

A well-organised Victory were no walkover and shocked the English giants in front of 74,000 fans at the Melbourne Cricket Ground with a goal on the break in the fifth minute.

United clawed back with goals on the cusp of half-time from Scott McTominay and Martial before Rashford made it 3-1 with 12 minutes left and a Victory own goal capped the deserved win.

"It was good that we were able to recover," said Ten Hag. "It's pre-season and we wanted to see how the team reacts. We went 1-0 behind but we stayed composed and finally just before half-time we scored twice."

Testing bench strength likely in final ODI

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With the series already in the bag and no stakes in the ICC ODI Super League standings for this series, Bangladesh have the perfect opportunity to test their bench strength going into the third and final ODI against West Indies at the Providence Stadium in Guyana tonight.

Bangladesh ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal stressed the importance of assessing the depth of the squad after their convincing win in the second ODI last Wednesday, so much so that the left-hander said, if needed, he would rest himself to try out different combinations and test the squad depth.

With Tamim's eyes set on forming the best possible squad for the 50-over World Cup next year in India, today's game could be deemed as the perfect opportunity for trials. That being said, on a tour in which the Tigers have been battered in the preceding Test and T20I series, Bangladesh will also be desperate to wrap up the series with a win in the final game of the tour.

However, given how Bangladesh would want to extend their winning streak to 11 ODIs in a row against the Windies and also ensure a whitewash of the Caribbean side in the process, a wholesale change in the playing eleven is unlikely.

Anamul Haque, who was called into the national side after over six years on the back of excellent performance in the 50-over format in the latest domestic season, has been unlucky to have not gotten a nod in the first two ODIs. Captain

Tamim had preferred for Najmul Hossain Shanto instead in the first two matches, mentioning it would have been 'unfair' towards Shanto had he not been given a chance in the format.

But with a prospect of shuffling the playing eleven, Anamul could fancy his chances of starting the game. But that would require the team management to make a tough call, especially after Shanto had

management if they would want to make a few more tweaks in the lineup.

Apart from the prospect of making changes, one other thing the Tigers' think-tank might be considering before the third ODI is how their batting lineup is yet to face a challenge in this series. Bangladesh have had batting meltdowns in the Test and T20I series. And the fact the batting unit



gotten starts in the first two ODIs.

Meanwhile, the team management could also rest ace left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman - who only got a solitary wicket in the first two matches - to make room for Taskin Ahmed, who was dropped after the first ODI, back in the eleven.

Spinner Taijul Islam and Ebadot Hossain are the two other available options for the Tigers' team

have not yet been truly tested in the ODI series, given that Bangladesh were set feeble targets in both ODIs so far, will definitely play a role in the team management's mind while setting the playing eleven.

While Bangladesh will be pondering over potential changes and combinations for the game, West Indies will be desperate to bounce back and avoid a whitewash in their own backyard.



MSC up to fifth

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Mohammedan SC shrugged off some scares to notch up a rather simple 3-0 win over Uttar Baridhara Club in their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Shaheed Dhirendhranath Datta Stadium in Cumilla yesterday.

The Black and Whites, who played out a creditable 1-1 draw against league leaders Bashundhara Kings in their previous game, jumped to fifth position in the 12-team table after 19 outings with 29 points, the same amount as Bangladesh Police, who drew against Rahmatganj MFS in Rajshahi. Rahmatganj are ninth in the league with 15 points from 19 matches.

Following their 12 defeats from 19 matches, Uttar Baridhara remain in 10th place with 13 points from 19 matches, just one point ahead of Muktijoddha Sangsad, who stayed in the relegation zone after playing out a goalless draw against Sheikh Russel KC.

In Cumilla, Uttar Baridhara Club dominated in the first half, with Egyptian midfielder Mostafa Mahmood Kahraba rattling the far post. Mohammedan got their opening goal as Youssouf Bamba conceded an own goal while trying to thwart an attempt from Obi Moneke in the dying stages of the first half.

Mohammedan grabbed the lead in the 70th minute when their Malian captain Souleymane Diabate headed a Shabriar Emon cross home. Obi Moneke ensured the result with a low left-footed shot from outside the box in stoppage time.



Pakistan's pace sensation Shaheen Shah Afridi (R) trains with a football as his teammates look on during a practice session ahead of their first Test against Sri Lanka, which begins at the Galle International Stadium on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

First Lanka-Pak Test starts today

AFP, Galle

Sri Lanka's Dhananjaya de Silva will return to the team after recovering from Covid-19, skipper Dimuth Karunaratne said Friday ahead of the first Test against Pakistan.

The two-match series starts Saturday in Galle. The hosts will be bolstered by the return of de Silva, a batting all-rounder who was one of four players to get the virus before and during the second Test against Australia.

Pakistan, led by Babar Azam, boast a dangerous bowling attack led by ace quick Shaheen Shah Afridi and have brought back veteran spinner Yasir Shah on tracks that are expected to spin.

Crucial World Test Championship points will be on offer in the series, with Sri Lanka moving to third place after the Australia win and Pakistan at four in the current table.



Tunisian Order of Merit for Jabeur

AFP, Tunis

Tennis trailblazer Ons Jabeur, who became the first African woman to reach a Grand Slam singles final, was honoured by Tunisian President Kais Saied on Thursday for "her remarkable sporting successes".

The 27-year-old Jabeur, defeated in the Wimbledon final by Russian-born Elena Rybakina last weekend, was awarded the country's Great Medal of the National Order of Merit.

Saied hailed Jabeur for raising "high the country's flag in international sporting events" and described her as "the ambassador of Tunisia".

"Congratulations for this success and future successes."

Jabeur, nicknamed "Minister of Happiness" by fans in Tunisia, said she hoped to inspire other Arab and African players to succeed at tennis.

"We want to give more hope to the young people who watch us. We hope to continue this momentum. We are proud to be Tunisians and we will continue with this success story," she said.