

Tigers face SA in final warm-up today

SPORTS REPORTER

After a crushing 62-run defeat to Afghanistan in the first official warm-up game ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup on Monday, Bangladesh will have one last chance to tinker with the team combination when they take on South Africa in their second and final warm-up game in Brisbane today.

The team management continued to experiment with the opening slots, with Najmul Hossain Shanto opening alongside Mehedi Hasan Miraz against Afghanistan, but it failed to make an impact as batting remained one of the biggest concerns for Shakib Al Hasan's side.

The Tigers were thoroughly outplayed and ended up on 98 after being asked to chase 161.

The team management will also likely have to contend without Liton Das, who was rested against Afghanistan as a precautionary measure after an injury scare in the preceding match against Pakistan. The think-tank will not want to take any risks with the dashing batter, but instead hope he returns fully fit before their first game of the Super 12 on October 24.

It will be interesting to see whether Bangladesh's technical consultant Sridhar Sriram opts for another makeshift opening pair or whether the strategy will shift towards opting for specialists in the crucial positions.

Bangladesh will also have to wary of high-flying South Africa, who registered a comprehensive nine-wicket win over New Zealand after bundling out the Kiwis for just 98 runs in their first warm-up game.



Netherlands pacer Paul van Meekeren celebrates the dismissal of Namibia's batter Jan Nicol Loftie-Eaton during the T20 World Cup match at the Kardinia Park in Geelong yesterday. The Netherlands suffered a loss of Dutch courage on the way to a nerve-racking, five-wicket win over Namibia that moved them a step closer to qualifying for the Super 12 phase.

PHOTO: AFP



SCORES IN BRIEF

Namibia vs Netherlands
Namibia: 121-6 in 20 overs (Frylinck 43, van Lingen 20, Baard 19; de Leede 2-18)
Netherlands: 122-5 in 19.3 overs (Vikramjit 39, O'Dowd 35, de Leede 30*; Smit 2-24)
Result: Netherlands won by five wickets.
Player-of-the-match: Bas de Leede

Sri Lanka vs UAE
Sri Lanka: 152-8 in 20 overs (Nissanka 74; Meiyappan 3-19)
UAE: 73 all out in 17.1 overs (Aayan 19; Hasaranga 3-8, Chameera 3-15)
Result: Sri Lanka won by 79 runs.
Player-of-the-match: Pathum Nissanka.

Make-or-break for the Windies

AGENCIES

Two-time champions West Indies will be looking to get their T20 World Cup campaign back on track with a win over an in-form Zimbabwe in their group-stage clash, while Scotland will eye to solidify their Super 12 bid with a win against Ireland at the Blundstone Arena in Bellerive, Australia today.

The Caribbeans failed to show up for the party as they were shell-shocked in the opening fixture, suffering a 42-run defeat against Scotland on Monday and will face a stiff challenge against a confident Zimbabwe, who are in a rich vein of form as they have won eight of their last nine T20Is in 2022.

With two wins in their last 11 matches in the shortest format, a new-look West Indies side without stalwarts such as Andre Russell, Sunil Narine, and Dwayne Bravo have not been able to get their A-game up and running yet.

In the first match against the Scots, the Caribbeans failed to execute their big hits as they fell to the stranglehold of the Scottish spinners. The spin trio of Mark Watt, Michael Leask, and Brad Wheal picked up seven wickets amongst themselves using their orthodox spin.

"We didn't bat well. We were four down by the tenth over and that's not ideally where we need to be in a given T20 match. We've got to really set it up better for the back half to really prosper," Holder said while pointing out the failure in their batting efforts in the first game.

The West Indian batters struggled against the street-smarts of the Scottish spinners, which is something that the Zimbabwean bowlers might be looking to exploit.

Zimbabwe, with the return of speedster Blessing Muzarabani, have considerable variety in their bowling ranks. Richard Ngarava and Tendai Chatara offer the left and right options with the new ball along with Luke Jongwe, while at least three spinners -- Sikandar Raza, Sean Williams, and Ryan Burl, all different from each other, remain available.

Meanwhile, Scotland will be eyeing consecutive wins as they take on neighbouring Ireland in their second match at the same venue. The Scottish will be hoping to repeat their impressive group-stage outing in the previous edition in 2021 with another Super 12 qualification.

The Irish, on the other hand, are fresh off a defeat against Zimbabwe, and will be aiming to keep qualification hopes alive with a win against Scotland.

'Bounce and movement? Is this Mirpur?'

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

"Is that extra bounce in Mirpur?"

Even well-trained eyes were deceived and one could be forgiven for thinking that they needed a good rub to banish the afternoon slumber.

The drifting clouds at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur saw slightly overcast conditions in intervals between sunny proceedings during the second day's play of the National Cricket League (NCL) match between Chattogram and Rangpur Division yesterday.

As Test openers Tamim Iqbal and Mahmudul Hasan Joy came out to bat for Chattogram's second innings, they knew they would be tested after having been bundled out for 126 in the first innings.

Rangpur pacers Mukidul Islam Mugdho and Mushfik Hasan certainly tested the duo in that first spell. A few flashy shots often did not meet the bat and the extra bounce on the surface was having its say. So were the Duke balls -- used for the first time in Bangladesh -- kicking from the surface.

Tamim went on to middle some of his trademark shots with the fast outfield helping his cause. But despite those boundaries, the left-hander was not quite comfortable during his knock.

Once Joy departed to a cover drive off Mugdho for 14-ball seven, the challenge on the surface continued despite overcast conditions giving way to a sunny afternoon.

After an initial nine-over spell from Mugdho and Mushfiq, Rangpur operated with medium pacers Alauddin and Abdullah Al Mamun. And it was the former who

got some extra bounce that led to Tamim's downfall, dismissed trying to glance a delivery that went to wicketkeeper Akbar Ali.

Mominul Haque would be the next to face the music as Rangpur kept operating with pace from both ends.

More importantly, the pace and movement on offer led to four fielders positioned in the slip cordon for almost the whole of the Chattogram innings on Day Two.

The lacquer on the Duke balls persist over longer periods and pacers were pitching it full, egged on by the movement they were getting. The balls mostly left batters at waist height, giving head to extraordinary conditions at Mirpur, which has historically seen slow carry and deliveries stopping after landing.

One delivery from Mamun clipped Mominul's bat as it just moved away a shade after pitching and the former Bangladesh skipper departed to a 37-ball 22, bringing Chattogram skipper Irfan Shukkur to the crease. Shamim Hossain fell after a delivery rose sharply while

he played the cut shot. He later indicated the extra bounce had done the trick.

Irfan tried to counter the movement by going far out of his crease for a couple of deliveries and his unbeaten 48-ball 50 helped Chattogram to 126 for six when the bails were drawn for the day, leading by 30 runs.

Only one over of spin was bowled as Nasir Hossain took over for the final over of the day.

One player, who has been playing in the NCL for a long time, said after the day's proceedings: "It's the kind of wicket we need here. Quite hard (surface) and the Duke ball too is used elsewhere," he noted on the prominent seam of the Duke balls. Another player, recently playing in the NCL, told this reporter: "It's a good wicket although couldn't bat for too long."

The players appeared happy with the challenge that faced them, a sign of good things amidst the gloomy national team performances in the T20 World Cup endeavor. Talking to a BCB official involved with the NCL heavily, the reporter was told that these kinds of wickets are being demanded now. "The surface is hard and we have left grass on it which helps extra bounce too."

Asked if the Duke ball was having its say, he concurred and said: "Yes. They are going with pace throughout, that's an indication."

With India coming to tour Bangladesh in December, such surfaces will train batters for faster hands and see more bowlers with ability to impact games. This will help develop Test cricket mentality not just for the India series but for the future as a whole.

Star batter Mushfiqur Rahim hit an unbeaten 108 off 242 deliveries at Chattogram's Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium as Rajshahi Division reached 333 for six, with a 199-run lead at close against Dhaka Metropolis.

Diya, Alif spark BKSP dominance

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) became champions in the Sheikh Russel 4th National Youth Archery Championships, with Diya Siddique and Abdur Rahman Alif winning gold medals in their respective events on the final day at the Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master Stadium in Tongi yesterday.

Diya, who has been representing the national team for a while, faced little resistance as she won six sets without reply against Manisha Akhter Mou of Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club in the final of the women's junior recurve individual event.

Meanwhile, Alif, who was also a gold medalist in the Bangladesh Games, thrashed teammate Sagor Islam by seven sets to one in the men's recurve individual event in the Cadet category.

Diya also teamed up with Mishad Prodhan and won gold in the junior recurve mixed event while Alif, teaming up with Ridoy Hossain and Sagor Islam, bagged gold in the men's junior recurve team event.

Those feats from Diya and Alif helped BKSP top the table with 12 gold, nine silver and 7 bronze medals.

Bangladesh Police finished as runners-up with two gold, two silver and three bronze medals.

Nahid Biswas beat BKSP's Ahnaf Sakib by 7 sets to one in the final of the men's youngsters recurve individual event, while Police grabbed gold in the men's recurve junior team event by beating their BKSP rivals in straight sets.

'We can't go there (Pakistan)'

AGENCIES

Asian Cricket Council (ACC) president Jay Shah said the 2023 Asia Cup, originally scheduled in Pakistan, would be played at a neutral venue.

"We can't go there (Pakistan), they can't come here. In the past also, Asia Cup has been played at a neutral venue," he said.

Cricket tours between India and Pakistan remains suspended because of soured political relation between the neighbours.

United Arab Emirates hosted this year's Asia Cup which was shifted out of Sri Lanka because of political unrest in the island nation.

Shah, son of Home Minister Amit Shah, was re-elected as secretary of the world's richest cricket board.

Former Test player Roger Binny was elected president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) during its annual general meeting in Mumbai yesterday.

BCCI also approved a women's Indian Premier League, which is likely to begin in March next year, after the men's event proved a massive hit.

Binny, a bowling all-rounder in his playing days, was part of the India team which won the 1983 World Cup in England, a victory that sparked India's obsession with the game.

WHAT TO WATCH	
T SPORTS & STAR SPORTS 2 T20 World Cup West Indies vs Zimbabwe Live from 10:00 am Ireland vs Scotland Live from 02:00 pm SONY TEN 2 DFB Pokal Hannover vs Dortmund	Live from 10:00 pm Augsburg vs Bayern Munich Live from 12:45 am STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 EPL Manchester United vs Tottenham Live from 01:15 am (Thursday)



Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema and Yashin Trophy awardee Thibaut Courtois pose with their trophies in presence of their teammates in Real Madrid's practice session in Madrid on Tuesday. The French striker and the Belgian goalkeeper stood out as Real won their 14th UCL and 35th La Liga titles in the 2021-22 season. Benzema scored 44 goals in 46 games, and a consistent Courtois starred in the UCL final, where he made nine saves against Liverpool, taking home the player-of-the-final award.

PHOTO: TWITTER