



Australian batter David Warner screams in joy as he celebrates his double century on his 100th Test during the second day of the second Test against South Africa at the MCG on Tuesday. The 36-year-old hurt himself while celebrating the feat and subsequently retired, but the hosts ended the day at 386 for three in reply to the visitors' 189 in the first inning.

PHOTO: AFP

Gafurov steers Kings

SPORTS REPORTER

Title aspirants Bashundhara Kings survived a couple of late scares to make a winning start to the Federation Cup, beating newcomers Fortis FC 2-0 in a Group B encounter at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Flight Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj yesterday.

Bashundhara Kings, who had pulled out of Federation Cup last season citing the poor condition of the astro-turf in Kamalpur, made eight changes to the team that beat Fortis FC in a league encounter on Friday.

But the second-string eleven sans the team's three Brazilians -- Robson Da Silva, Dorielton Gomes and Miguel Ferreira -- hardly posed any threat in the first half, forcing coach Oscar Bruzon to bring on all three Brazilians as well as two other sets of fresh legs.

Those changes made the difference for the Independence Cup champions. Uzbek midfielder Asror Gafurov struck twice between late scares from Fortis, who came out of their shell as they looked to cancel out a 53rd-minute nod from Gafurov.

Kings' second choice goalkeeper Hamidur Rahman Rimon denied Mojibur Rahman Jonny in the 78th minute with a nice save, bravely gripping a close-range shot, before defender Yeasin Arafat made an inch-perfect tackle as Brazilian forward Luis Junior broke into the box with only the goalkeeper to beat.

Gafurov then ensured the triumph with a placed shot following a cut-back from Miguel in the fourth and final minute of stoppage time.

Meanwhile, Chittagong Abahani made a winning start in the same group with a single-goal win over Muktijoddha Sangsad at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj.

Both teams came into their opening Federation Cup match on the back of defeats in the Bangladesh Premier League but they fought neck-and-neck throughout the match before the port city side scored the winning goal in the dying minutes.

Nigerian forward Ojukwu David Ifegwu, who squandered an open chance in the first half, scored the decisive goal with a close-range header off a chip from compatriot Candy Augustine in the 90th minute.

Shake-up ahead of England series?

SPORTS REPORTER

England, the current champions of the white-ball format, will set foot in Bangladesh after six years on February 20 to take part in a three-match ODI and three-match T20I series, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) confirmed through a press release yesterday.

However, they may arrive to a far different outfit than they are expecting, with rumours swirling that the BCB had already informed head coach Russell Domingo they were unwilling to continue with him for upcoming assignments, including the England series.

The South African flew back home on Monday after the India series and, according to sources, the board is holding discussions to bring back Chandika Hathurusingha -- who had served as the Tigers' coach from 2014-2017 -- on a long-term contract.

The board is expected to announce a new head coach very soon. "We are yet to take a final decision, but we expect to announce a new head coach very soon," BCB cricket operations chairman Jalal Yunus told The Daily Star yesterday.

It was learned that the BCB is keen to employ Sridharan Sriram, who previously worked as the Tiger's technical consultant for the T20I format, as the full-time coach for T20Is while Hathurusingha oversees the ODI and Test teams.

However, Sriram is also working in the coaching panel of Indian Premier League franchise Sunrisers Hyderabad. If the former all-rounder is unable to take charge of the Tigers, the board may opt for pace-bowling coach Allan Donald or batting coach Jamie Siddons for an interim period as head coach.

Bangladesh will hope any changes to the coaching panel does not disrupt the momentum. The Tigers have had an

ENGLAND'S BANGLADESH TOUR		
01 Mar	1st ODI	SBNCs, Mirpur
03 Mar	2nd ODI	SBNCs, Mirpur
06 Mar	3rd ODI	ZACS, Chattogram
09 Mar	1st T20I	ZACS, Chattogram
12 Mar	2nd T20I	SBNCs, Mirpur
14 Mar	3rd T20I	SBNCs, Mirpur

outstanding record since 2016, winning 13 of 14 bilateral series, including the latest triumph against India earlier this month.

"In a World Cup year, this series provides a wonderful opportunity for the teams to assess their strengths. For fans in Bangladesh and all over the world, ODIs and T20Is offer a mouthwatering prospect. Bangladesh has an outstanding white-

ball record at home and we all know what a brilliant side England are," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told the media yesterday.

The last time the English toured Bangladesh was in 2016 when the Tigers registered their maiden Test win against England to draw the series before losing the three-match ODI series 2-1.

The visitors will participate in two warm-up games before the series starts with the first ODI at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on March 1. The second ODI will be at the same venue on March 3.

For the third and final ODI on March 6, the teams will then travel to Chattogram, which will also host the opening T20I on March 9. The teams will then return to Dhaka for the second and third T20Is on March 12 and 14 respectively.

The tour will be a part of England's preparations for the ODI World Cup, which will be staged in India in October 2023.



BKSP players and officials celebrate winning the Al Arafah Islami Bank 27th National Youth Hockey Championship trophy -- their 14th overall title -- following a 6-2 win over Rajshahi in the final at Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday. Rokibul Hasan Rocky and Saddam Hossain of BKSP were named the best player and highest scorer respectively in the championship, which featured 57 teams.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Scaloni set to stay on as Argentina coach

AGENCIES

Lionel Scaloni has no intention of stepping down as head coach after guiding Argentina to World Cup glory, said Argentine Football Association (AFA) president Claudio Tapia.

Argentina defeated France 4-2 on penalties in a thrilling Qatar 2022 final that finished 3-3 after extra time to add to the Copa America crown won last year.

With his team's latest success, Scaloni became just the third manager in history to win both competitions, after former Brazil bosses Mario Zagallo and Carlos Alberto Parreira.

The 44-year-old is due to be out of contract later this week and has been tipped to take on a high-profile position at club level, but Tapia does not see that happening.

"I have no doubt he will continue

to be the head coach of the Argentina team," AFA chief Tapia told reporters.

"We are both men of our word. We shook hands and we said yes to each other. He is currently travelling but as soon as he comes back we are going to finalise it."

Scaloni has been in charge since July 2018, initially on a caretaker basis, and also won the inaugural Finalissima earlier this year with victory over European champions Italy.

However, the decision to appoint Scaloni as Jorge Sampaoli's successor after defeat to France in the last 16 of Russia 2018 was not a unanimous one.

"Ninety-nine per cent of people thought we were wrong or even crazy," Tapia said. "But this team brought happiness to the people with the three titles they won."

NZ reply strong in Karachi

REUTERS, Karachi

Devon Conway and Tom Latham forged an unbroken opening partnership of 165 to lead New Zealand's robust reply to Pakistan's first innings 438 in the opening test in Karachi on Tuesday.

Conway was batting on 82 having completed 1,000 test runs in 19 innings, the fastest by a New Zealand batsman.

Latham was on 78 with New Zealand, who scored at three-and-a-half runs an over, still 273 behind.

After Pakistan resumed on 317-5 on day two, home captain Babar Azam fell in the first over but the lower order resisted strongly, led by Agha Salman's maiden test hundred.

Agha's defiant 103 included 17 fours.





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