

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
Bangladesh vs New Zealand
First Test, Day 2
Live from 9:30 am
SONY SPORTS 2

UEFA Champions League
Galatasaray vs Man Utd
Live from 11:45 pm
Real Madrid vs Napoli
Live from 1:30 am
(Thursday)

SONY SPORTS 5
Sevilla vs PSV
Live from 11:45 pm
Bayern vs Copenhagen
Live from 1:30 am
(Thursday)

Joty and Co get due wages

SPORTS REPORTER

Twenty-six Bangladesh national women's team cricketers under central contract received their due salaries yesterday after five months, informed Bangladesh Cricket Board women's wing chairman Shafiu Alam Chowdhury Nadel.

"There were some changes to the proposal that we gave to the board, which is why it was unexpectedly delayed. In fact, it was very late," Nadel told reporters in Sylhet yesterday.

"We communicated with the board president and the CEO after we got to know the issue. It was later processed and, as far as I know, the salaries have already been transferred to the players' accounts."

After Bangladesh won the third match earlier this month in Mirpur to achieve a 2-1 ODI series triumph against Pakistan, it was reported that the Tigresses had remained unpaid for five months due to a "technical reason".

Admitting the delay, Nadel informed that the board had met its obligation and had also given the players and coaching staff bonuses based on the Pakistan series success.



Veteran Bangladesh batter Mushfiquur Rahim walks back dejected after falling for 12 following an injudicious stroke on a day where most of the batters were guilty of throwing away the initiative in the first Test against New Zealand in Sylhet yesterday. (Inset) Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto shows the edge of his bat to his teammates after returning to the pavilion following a show of uncalled-for-aggression with the bat.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'Element of unknown' in Phillips' favour

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite beginning his international career as a wicketkeeper-batter, Glenn Phillips worked on his off-spin bowling to fit into New Zealand's strong line-up as a batting allrounder, and the transformation appears to be working well.

On the opening day of the Sylhet Test yesterday, interestingly, it was Phillips who emerged as the most successful bowler with four scalps, surpassing the impact of two world-class spinners in Ish Sodhi and Ajaj Patel.

Phillips was aided by the Bangladesh batters who lacked the temperament necessary in the red-ball format. The home side, ending on 310 for nine at stumps, would be disappointed to slip from a position of strength -- 180 for two, near the end of second session.

When a well-set Bangladesh skipper, Najmul Hossain Shanto, threw his wicket away after top edging a full toss delivery, bowler Phillips, playing only his second Test, had his hands on his head in amused disbelief.

"I have dreamt of getting my first Test wicket for a long time, but that was not how I thought I would get it," Phillips told reporters yesterday.

Phillips feels the Bangladeshi batters' over-aggressive approach towards the fifth bowler provided the opportunity for him to further dismiss Mominul Haque, debutant Shahadat Hossain Dipu, and Nurul Hasan Sohan -- all relatively set at the crease.

"Obviously with someone new that the guys haven't faced before, there's always that element of unknown. Obviously being the fifth bowler, as a batter, I'd look to target myself as well," added the all-rounder, who was born in South Africa and moved to New Zealand when he was five years old.

"I think maybe the combination of those two things presented the opportunity to take a few wickets, which was really nice. The pressure was built by everyone all round. I just received the reward."

A good opportunity squandered?

SPORTS REPORTER

In the build-up to the first Test between Bangladesh and New Zealand, there was a guile of mystery surrounding what the playing surface at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium would play like.

Kiwi skipper Tim Southee, perhaps influenced by the greenish practice pitches in Sylhet, said that he expects to get a 'good surface' on the day before the match.

But past history of the venue presented a different picture as in the only other Test played at the ground in 2018, spinners claimed a total of 32 wickets in a 151-run win for Zimbabwe against Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh team management also knew what to expect beforehand, which was evident from the fact that they had only one pacer in their team sheet and three spinners.

From that perspective, the match began perfectly for the Tigers. They won the toss and elected to bat first, hoping to pile up as many runs as possible and put the scoreboard pressure on the visitors.

The openers also set the tone -- at least somewhat -- by negotiating the early hint of swing and movement from Tim Southee and Kyle Jamieson.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Bangladesh
VS
New Zealand
First Test, Day 1
Bangladesh: 310 for nine in 85 overs (Mahmudul 86, Shanto 37, Mominul 37, Nurul 29, Shahadat 24, Miraz 20; Phillips 4-53, Jamieson 2-52, Patel 2-76, Sodhi 1-71)

Introduced in the seventh over, left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel, one of three available spinners in the Kiwi ranks, got the cherry to turn away and induce an outside edge off Mahmudul Hasan Joy in the fourth delivery he bowled -- indicating the turn already available in the surface.

But at the end of the day, Bangladesh's accumulation stands at an unimpressive 310 for nine -- a scoreline that only adds to the Tigers' regrets.

"We got dismissed playing rash shots," said a remorseful Joy, who missed out on his second Test ton

by 14 runs, at the end-of-day press conference yesterday.

Joy's dismissal could be credited more to the bowler than to the fault in judgement of the batter -- he was taken at slip off the bowling of leg-spinner Ish Sodhi after a 166-ball 86.

But the likes of stand-in skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto, Mominul Haque, Mushfiquur Rahim, Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Nurul Hasan Sohan threw away their wickets with ordinary shots.

Even a part-time spinner like Glenn Phillips, who before the match had zero Test wickets, claimed a four-for, which only shows how the Tigers curated their own downfall in batting once again.

Stand of 53 and 88 at the top of the order -- between Shanto and Joy for the second wicket and Mominul and Joy for the third wicket respectively -- also highlights Bangladesh's failure to capitalise on the advantage of winning the toss and how their batters sullied good starts with poor judgments.

"Our plan was to get to around 350-380. We could not do that. However, we have some quality spinners who can hopefully bundle them [New Zealand] out for a lower total," Joy had to hope after a day that could have belonged to the Bangladesh batters.

Man Utd braced for Galatasaray cauldron

AFP, London

Thirty years after Manchester United left Galatasaray with their Champions League hopes in tatters on one of the most notorious nights in the club's history, they will return to 'hell' for another do-or-die clash with the Turkish team.

United sit bottom of Champions League Group A and will be eliminated if they lose to Galatasaray in their penultimate fixture on Wednesday.

It is a predicament that brings back painful memories for United players and fans who ran the gauntlet of hate in Istanbul back in 1993.

Finally crowned English champions the previous season, United were confident of a long run in their first European Cup campaign since 1969.

A surprise 3-3 draw against Galatasaray in the second round first leg at Old Trafford put that ambition in peril, but even then United were not fully aware of the cauldron that awaited them in Turkey.

United were greeted at the airport by thousands of Galatasaray fans, one waving the infamous banner that said 'Welcome to Hell', while others threw missiles and menacingly drew their fingers across their throats.

Alex Ferguson, United's manager at the time, described the intimidation as being "exposed to as much hostility and harassment I have ever known".



The nightmare was only just beginning as United, clearly unsettled by the volcanic atmosphere in the Ali Sami Yen Stadium, failed to get the result they needed.

Galatasaray held on for the draw, knocking out United on away goals and sparking an appropriately chaotic finale.

United's star striker Eric Cantona was attacked by a Turkish police officer wielding a truncheon after being sent off following the final whistle.

When United midfielder Bryan Robson tried to come to Cantona's rescue, he was left with six stitches in a cut arm after being thrown down concrete steps that led to the dressing room.

"The hatred was unbelievable. Even the police started to pick fights with us. I remember one of the Old Bill just smashing Eric on the head," United midfielder Paul Ince said.

Galatasaray has been a house of horrors for United, who have failed to win any of their three visits, losing their most recent encounter there 1-0 in the 2012-13 Champions League group stage.

Although the Ali Sami Yen Stadium closed in 2010, a visit to the banks of Bosphorus is one of the toughest assignments in European football.

There is little doubt Galatasaray's fans will be able to replicate the wall of sound that greeted United three decades ago when they meet at the 52,600-capacity RAMS Park on Wednesday.

Emerging unscathed from their latest visit to the Galatasaray inferno would be another significant step in the right direction for Ten Hag and his troubled team.

From England to Sylhet for the love of Tests

SABBIR HOSSAIN, from Sylhet

"Why are you here?"

The day's play had just begun at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium. The players had taken the field in front of about a hundred fans in the gallery.

The low turnout in the morning wasn't surprising given the 9:30am starting time. But what was surprising was seeing a foreigner sitting by himself almost right below the scoreboard so early, all set to watch the action unfold from ball one.

His presence piqued the interest of some local fans, who were hovering around him, and of this correspondent.

Although very few in number, some passionate New Zealand fans had made the trip to Sylhet to see their beloved Black Caps in action.

This correspondent expected the foreign gentleman to be one of those New Zealanders but realised his mistake after hearing his unmistakable British accent.

So, after exchanging greetings, this correspondent couldn't help but ask him, "Why are you here?"

"I love Test cricket," answered Steve Neal, a retired British civil engineer who travels the world for his love of cricket's vintage format.

Neal's love affair with Tests began when he

was four or five and the first time he watched a Test live was in Edgbaston, Birmingham in 1963, a match between England and the West Indies.

Neal's love for the game has only deepened with time, and now, at the age of 67, he regularly travels to different parts of the world to watch Test cricket. Barring Zimbabwe and Afghanistan, Neal has watched Test in all Test-playing nations.

Neal, however, doesn't share the same love for cricket's other formats as to him, the thrill of Test cricket is unmatched.

"I don't watch one-day cricket. I love Test cricket because it's like a game of chess. It could change in a session"

Neal is also no stranger to Bangladesh, as he came here before in 2008 and 2016 during England's tour, and also has a special place in his heart for Bangladeshi cuisine.

"I love Bangladesh. When I go out for a meal in Birmingham, I always go to a Bangladeshi curry shop. And the places I go to, come from Sylhet. They said I would love it in Sylhet."

Neal's obsession with Test cricket has led him to live a very unconventional life, for which he considers himself privileged.

"I would do it all over again. It's been a privilege to go and watch cricket all over the world. I am a very lucky man."



Australia's Mitchell Starc (L) and captain Pat Cummins pose with the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 Trophy at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Tuesday. Since a number of members of the team are still in India playing a five-match T20I series against the hosts, the public celebration has been put on hold for the time being.

PHOTO: AFP