

Young Tigers need more than a win against Pak

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's final Super Sixes match against Pakistan in the ongoing ICC Under-19 World Cup has turned out to be a virtual quarterfinal, with the young Tigers needing more than just a win at Willowmoore Park in Benoni today.

Having beaten Nepal by a comprehensive margin of five wickets with 148 balls to spare in their first Super Sixes encounter, Bangladesh sit third behind India and Pakistan in Group 1.

While the big margin win over Nepal kept the young Tigers in the hunt for a semifinal spot, they still need a comprehensive win in today's game to go through.

"There's an equation at play here concerning our net run-rate, so we will have to play with that in the back of our minds," mentioned Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby, Bangladesh Under-19 skipper, on the eve of the game yesterday.

Both defending champions India and Pakistan are



Sylhet Strikers players celebrate their 15-run win over Durdanto Dhaka in a Bangladesh Premier League fixture in Sylhet yesterday. The victory put an end to Sylhet's five-match losing streak. A few changes appeared to have worked for Sylhet, who put on a different coloured kit and had its players' names and numbers printed in Bangla to mark the month of February -- a month when the sacrifices made by the martyrs of the Language Movement are remembered. Meanwhile, in the second game of the day, Chattogram Challengers were bundled out for 72 in 16.3 overs, the lowest total in BPL so far, as Comilla Victorians romped to a seven-wicket victory.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

BCB announces SL series schedule

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced the schedule for Sri Lanka's forthcoming month-long tour of Bangladesh in March through a press release yesterday.

Dhaka will not host any of the matches in this three-format series, which indicates BCB's attempt to reduce overdependence on the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The visitors will arrive in Bangladesh on March 1 and will begin the tour with a three-match T20I series in Sylhet.

The first T20I is scheduled on March 4 at Sylhet International Cricket Stadium. The second and third T20I will take place on March 6 and 9 respectively at the same venue.

Both teams will then travel to Chattogram for the three-match ODI series with the matches scheduled for March 13, 15, and 18. The Tigers will then play two Tests, part of the World Test Championship, beginning on March 22 in Sylhet. The second Test will be played in Chattogram on March 30.

EQUATION FOR BANGLADESH TO REACH SEMIS

➔ If Bangladesh bat first, they have to win at least a margin of 50 runs in order to qualify for the semifinals.

➔ If Pakistan bat first then Bangladesh would need to chase down the total inside 38-40 overs.

unbeaten in the tournament, with India confirming their spot in the last four as they lead the Super Sixes Group 1 with eight points following their win over Nepal yesterday.

Pakistan, who have six points, possess a better net run-rate (+1.064) than Bangladesh, who have four points and a net run-rate of +0.348, meaning that just a win for Pakistan today would be enough to see them through.

However, a loss to Pakistan -- or even a narrow victory -- will see Bangladesh miss out on a semifinal berth.

Rabby mentioned instead of sweating over the run-rate equation, his troops will first try to get the main job done.

"But first, we need to win this game. If we can't win this game then there is no point thinking about run-rate. So, we will follow our process and then just follow any directives given by the management," Rabby added.



While a calf injury forced Cristiano Ronaldo to miss his much-anticipated reunion with Lionel Messi in Al-Nassr's exhibition match against Inter Miami in Riyadh on Thursday, the Portuguese superstar had the last laugh. Messi was reduced to a 13-minute cameo appearance, but not before his team slumped to an embarrassing 6-0, the eventual outcome of the match. Turki Alalshikh, the Chairman of Saudi Arabia's General Entertainment Authority, took a dig at Messi after the match. "Saudi Arabia has become Messi's curse," he said, referring to Argentina's 2-1 defeat to Saudi Arabia in the 2022 World Cup which nearly spoiled the eventual champions' campaign.

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Bangladesh's title defence off to great start

SPORTS REPORTER

Forward Mosammat Sagorika struck a double and Munki Akhter scored once as Bangladesh began their title defence of the SAFF U-19 Women's Championship with a 3-1 victory over Nepal at Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur, Dhaka, yesterday.

Three-time champions Bangladesh have been regarded as the favourites in the four-nation tournament, particularly given that the girls in red and green won the title twice as hosts. With their sights set on the coveted trophy, Saiful Bari Titu's charges also hope to emulate the standard the senior women's team set against Singapore in recent FIFA friendlies.

Although the Afeida Khandakar-led team did not score as many goals as their seniors did against Singapore in December last year, they dominated the runners-up of the previous edition from the word go, leading 2-0 at the break.

Bangladesh, strengthened by five senior team players, came close to breaking the deadlock in the fifth minute when Sapna Rani's free-kick rebounded off the far post and Munki's follow-up header was blocked. Two minutes later, Sagorika danced past two players to set up Munki but she was denied by goalkeeper Sujata Tamang.

The home side kept pressing the Nepal backline high up the pitch and soon reaped the reward. Puja Das narrowly missed the target twice before Sagorika finally drew first blood with an over-head chip over advancing goalkeeper Sujata



Win in the first match was very important for us because this triumph is a strong step towards the final... I want to appreciate their efforts in the match.

Saiful Bari Titu
 Bangladesh coach

after being fed by Sapna Rani in the 40th minute.

Munki soon extended the lead with a clever finish inside the box after Eity Khatun sent a wonderful ball inside the box from the right wing, having noticed that the Nepal goalkeeper Sujata was out of position.

The home side could have had a greater cushion at the interval when Sagorika was brought down inside the box by defender Simran Rai in stoppage time. Captain Afeida's penalty kick, however, rattled the far post, frustrating a couple of thousand enthusiastic home fans who kept beating the drums and chanted the players' names on a chilly evening.

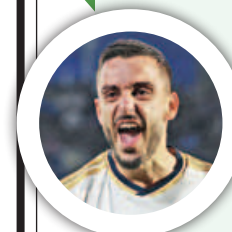
In the second half, Nepal regrouped to put pressure on Bangladesh and were able to reduce the margin in the 54th minute,

courtesy of an error by goalkeeper Swarna Rani Mandal who misjudged a long ball and allowed Sukriya Miya find the back of the net.

Conceding the goal had Bangladesh seemingly nervous as they focused on retaining ball possession. However, soon the game was put to bed when Eity played a defence split through pass for Sagorika, who raced into the box to beat substitute goalkeeper Karun Budhathoki and slipped down inside the box before finishing clinically in the 56th minute.

Coach Titu later introduced fresh legs to carry the momentum but Bangladesh were unable to increase the winning margin as India did in the tournament's first match earlier in the evening, defeating Bhutan by a whopping 10-0 while riding on four goals from Pooja and a hat-trick from Sibani Devi.

SHORT CORNER



Real reclaim top spot as Joselu seals win at Getafe

Spanish forward Joselu scored twice to give Real Madrid a 2-0 win at local rivals Getafe on Thursday, propelling them back to the LaLiga summit, two points ahead of surprise package Girona. Real moved to 57 points, two ahead

Girona and 10 clear of Atletico Madrid and Barcelona.

Rising Black Caps star Ravindra eager for SA Tests

Rising Black Caps batting star Rachin Ravindra said Friday he is relishing his next crack at Test cricket when New Zealand take on a weakened South Africa side today. With many first-choice stars committed to playing in South Africa's domestic Twenty20 competition, only seven of their 15-man squad have previously played Tests.

Abahani return to winning ways, Rahmatganj remain unbeaten

Six-time champions Abahani returned to winning ways in the Bangladesh Premier League yesterday, defeating Bangladesh Police FC 2-1 in Mymensingh, while Rahmatganj MFS played a goalless draw against Sheikh Russel KC to keep their unbeaten run intact.

Young Tigresses lose tri-nation T20 series final against SL

Bangladesh suffered a 36-run defeat against Sri Lanka in the final of the Women's U19 Tri-Nation T20 Series 2024, also involving Pakistan in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Smith, Green guide Australia to crushing win

Skipper Steve Smith and Cameron Green eased Australia to a crushing eight-wicket victory over the West Indies with a dominant 149-run stand in the first ODI in Melbourne on yesterday. It was Australia's 10th consecutive ODI win.

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Defiant Jaiswal steals the show

STAR SPORTS DESK

The opening day of the second Test between India and England belonged to the defiant Yashasvi Jaiswal, who hit his first Test ton at home and second overall to keep the hosts afloat in a day that would've otherwise belonged to the visiting bowlers.

Jaiswal made 179 out of the 336 runs India made at the Vizag Stadium yesterday and was easily the stand out batter on display with Shubman Gill being the second highest scorer with 34.

The English bowlers kept India on a reasonably tight leash for most of the day and had six scalps to show for their efforts with leg spinner Rehan Ahmed and debutant left-arm spinner Shoaib Bashir taking a couple of wickets each.

But England failed to break the resolve of Jaiswal, who showed controlled aggression throughout the day, hitting 17 fours and five sixes of the 257 balls he faced.

Jaiswal's defiance was on full display in the 49th over of the innings, when he smashed left-arm spinner Tom Hartley

Yashasvi Jaiswal broke a 60-year-old record yesterday as his 179 was the highest score for an Indian batter against England on the opening day of a Test match. The record previously belonged to Budhi Kunderan, who hit an unbeaten 170 in Chennai in 1994.



Jaiswal's 179 is also the second highest tally for an Indian batter on Day 1 of a home Test. Former opener Wasim Jaffer holds the record with 192 runs against Pakistan in Kolkata in 2007.

for a six over long-on to reach the three-figure mark.

Despite Jaiswal's brilliant knock, India are a fair bit away from the average first innings score in Tests at the venue, which is 479. India need Jaiswal to continue his defiance, complete his maiden double ton in Tests and help India score as many runs as possible on the second day.