

'A' team lose one-day series in Pakistan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh 'A' team lost the three-match one-day series against Pakistan Shaheens 1-0 after the third and final match was abandoned due to persistent rain and wet outfield at the Islamabad County Club Oval on Friday.

Earlier, the second one-day between the sides on Wednesday also ended as a no result after the hosts won the first match of the series by eight wickets on August 26.

The Bangladeshi side were slated to play two four-day matches and three one-day games but most of the fixtures were impacted by rain.

"We are really disappointed that we did not get enough chances to play here due to rain," Bangladesh 'A' head coach Mizanur Rahman Babul told The Daily Star on Friday.

"We couldn't complete our two batting innings in both four-day games."

"We had nothing to do during the rain. We had to sit idle most of the time as there was no indoor facility here," he concluded.



Persistent rain and wet outfield forced the opening day's play of the second Test between Bangladesh and Pakistan to be called off without toss at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday. However, weather forecasts suggest that Rawalpindi will enjoy bright sunshine today. The tourists are leading the two-match series 1-0 following their 10-wicket win in the first Test at the same venue last week.

PHOTO: AFP

Afghan wins Paralympic medal for refugee team

REUTERS, Paris

Afghan Zakia Khudadadi completed a remarkable journey to become the first athlete from the refugee team to win a medal at the Paralympics when she clinched a taekwondo bronze on Thursday.

Khudadadi, who made her Paralympics debut in Tokyo days after being exfiltrated from Taliban-controlled Kabul, secured her place on the podium when her opponent withdrew before their bronze medal bout in the K44-47kg category.

The 25-year-old, who was granted asylum by France, was cheered on like a local throughout the day by the Grand Palais crowd and by her coach, Haby Niare, who took a taekwondo silver medal at the Rio Olympics in 2016.

"This medal is fantastic for me but also for all the women in Afghanistan and all the refugees," she said in impeccable French.

"We're not giving up for equality and freedom in my country."

Khudadadi delivered a message of freedom.

"I want to give this medal to the whole world. I hope that one day there will be freedom in my country, for all the world, for all the girls, for all the women, for all the refugees in the world," Khudadadi, who was born with an atrophied arm, said.

"And that all of us work towards that, for liberty and equality."

Big-spending Brighton to trouble Arsenal?

City look to continue dominance at West Ham

AGENCIES

Two of the four sides still with a perfect record meet at the Emirates as Arsenal host Brighton on Saturday.

The Seagulls have become accustomed to having their best talents picked off by richer rivals in recent years but this time it is Brighton who have been one of the biggest spenders in the division.

New boss Fabian Hurler has been backed with nearly a £200 million spending spree on eight new signings.

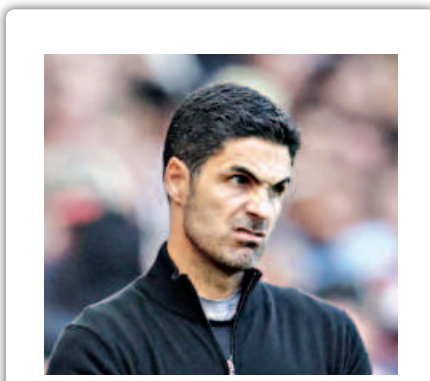
That investment has been met with an immediate reward in wins over Everton and United, but 31-year-old Hurler is aware of the step up in class his side face at the Emirates Stadium.

"They're one of the best teams in the world at the moment," said the youngest manager in Premier League history.

"They don't have a lot of weaknesses, they have quality and solutions for all phases."

"We're going to need a really good day. We'll need individual performances, a great togetherness. We go there to win because my squad has the potential."

Arsenal's long-awaited midfield boost came midweek when the Gunners signed Spaniard Mikel Merino from Rael Sociedad for a fee of 31 million pounds but an expected debut will have to wait as the 28-year-old suffered a shoulder injury in his first training session which has sidelined him for weeks.



"It's very unfortunate. Yesterday he had a collision and got a shoulder injury. He's going to be out for a few weeks. It's really bad luck and we were all very excited. He was looking very good, but he landed

on the floor; Gabi went on top of him and it looks like he's got a small fracture probably. He was in so much pain, so we have to wait and see with the staff to do some more tests to have more conclusive answers," Arteta said.

Meanwhile, in the capital, West Ham host reigning champions Manchester City who also have won their opening two fixtures. Pep Guardiola's side followed up a 2-0 win at Chelsea with a 4-1 thumping of newly-promoted Ipswich Town which starred Erling Haaland's 23rd career hat-trick, 10th for City.

West Ham have hardly been able to trouble City in the past decade as they have failed to win any of their 17 Premier League meetings with the Citizens since a 2-1 away victory in September 2015 under former boss Slaven Bilic.

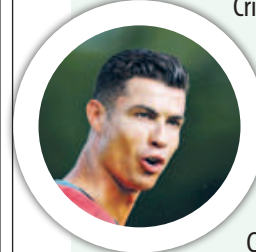
City have scored more away goals against West Ham than they have against any other Premier League side (42), while their 25 goals at the London Stadium is the most an away side has scored at a venue since its opening in 2016-17.

The Citizens also have sweet memories of their last visit to the London Stadium as a 3-1 win on the final day of the last season sealed an unprecedented fourth successive league title.

For City, star midfielder Rodri still remains a doubt as Mateo Kovacic continues to get the nod and Phil Foden who missed the win over Ipswich through illness is expected to return to the lineup.

SHORT CORNER

Ronaldo in Portugal squad for Nations League games



Cristiano Ronaldo has kept his place in the Portugal squad for next month's UEFA Nations games against Croatia and Scotland despite an ineffective display at Euro 2024. The 39-year-old failed to score as he appeared at a record sixth European Championship, with Portugal exiting in the quarterfinals, but he retains the backing of coach Roberto Martinez.

Ancelotti says there is no excuse for Real's slow start

Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti said on Thursday there was no excuse for his side's slow start to the La Liga season after the team fought back to rescue a 1-1 draw at lowly Las Palmas thanks to a Vinicius Jr goal late in the second half. Ancelotti said he expected his team to play better together and blamed himself, saying that he needs to work harder and do a better job. "It is clear that we are struggling to find the soundness of last season. But we must not look for excuses," Ancelotti told a news conference.

United to face Mourinho's Fenerbahce

Manchester United will travel to Turkish giants Fenerbahce, now coached by Jose Mourinho, among their eight games in the league phase of the new-look Europa League, the draw for which took place in Monaco on Friday. The Old Trafford club won the Europa League with Mourinho as coach in 2017. He recently became coach of Fenerbahce, who were knocked out of the Champions League in the third qualifying round.

De Bruyne in, Lukaku out in Belgium's Nations League squad

Kevin De Bruyne was included in Belgium's squad for next week's Nations League matches but Romelu Lukaku was omitted after asking for time off to concentrate on getting fit after his move to Napoli, coach Domenico Tedesco announced on Friday. There had been much speculation about the international future of the 33-year-old De Bruyne, who had complained about a potentially exhausting season with multiple commitments ahead for both his club Manchester City and the Belgian side.

*Read full stories on The Daily Star's website



Gus Atkinson cemented his love affair with Lord's by scoring a maiden century on Friday, with his 118 powering England to an imposing first-innings 427 all out against Sri Lanka on the second day of the second Test. The 26-year-old had taken 12 wickets on his debut at the same venue against the West Indies last month. The lanky pacer later took a wicket as England reduced the visitors to 129 for seven at tea.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Alcaraz makes 'no excuse' after shock defeat

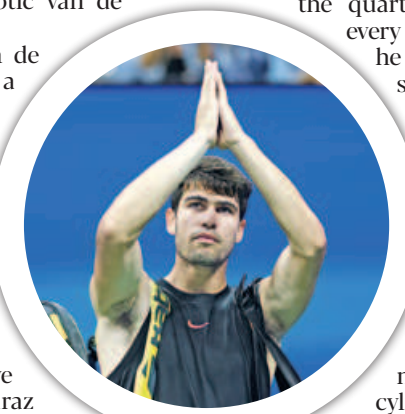
REUTERS, New York

Carlos Alcaraz made no excuses for his shock second-round exit at the US Open on Thursday after the former champion crumbled to a 6-1, 7-5, 6-4 defeat at the hands of Dutchman Botic van de Zandschulp.

Unseeded Van de Zandschulp was a huge underdog against a player who was on a 15-match winning streak at the majors, and fans inside Arthur Ashe Stadium could scarcely believe their eyes as Alcaraz dished out error after error in the shock loss.

"I think my level stayed at the same point all the match, and it wasn't enough to win the match or to give myself the chance to get into the match or trying to give myself chances," he said.

"So, you know, what can I say? I didn't feel well hitting the ball.



I think I made a lot of mistakes. When I wanted to come back or I think I wanted to come back, it was too late."

Alcaraz, winner of the last two Grand Slams at Roland Garros and Wimbledon, had made it to at least the quarterfinal stage at every major in which he has competed since winning the US Open two years ago.

But there were warning signs the 21-year-old, who won silver at the Paris Olympics, was not firing on all cylinders in the run-up to Flushing Meadows, losing to Gael Monfils in the second round of the Cincinnati tune-up tournament.

"I came here with not as much energy as I thought that I was going to come. But, I mean, I don't want to put that as excuse," he told reporters.

Meanwhile, Van de Zandschulp,

who will next face Britain's Jack Draper, had contemplated retiring from the game by the end of the year due to foot injuries. However, the 28-year-old world number 74 might think differently now as he romped to his biggest win of his career.

"Maybe I'm still processing it," Van de Zandschulp said shortly after his stunning win over the 2022 champion.

"Maybe in a couple of hours or tomorrow, I feel a little bit more emotional with what happened tonight."

Van de Zandschulp bruised a bone in his left foot last year and later tore ankle ligaments, before dealing with an infection on his right foot. He began questioning his future in the sport after a first-round defeat at the French Open in May.

"At the time I said it [about retiring], I was thinking about it. It was just more the way things were going. Of course, I would give myself to the end of the year and see how everything was progressing. Yeah, of course, there was a serious thought," said Van de Zandschulp, who was ranked 115th in April.



Bangladesh national football team players and officials pose for a group photograph at the Paro International Airport after reaching Bhutan yesterday morning. The charges of Javier Cabrera will play two FIFA friendly matches against the hosts at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu on September 5 and 8.

PHOTO: BFP