

Dipayan helps hosts beat Nepal

SPORTS REPORTER

Dipayan Goldar made a brilliant raid in the last moment to help hosts Bangladesh kabaddi team go 2-1 up in the five-match kabaddi series against Nepal with a hard-fought 42-37 points victory in the third match at the Paltan Ground yesterday.

Bangladesh, who had comprehensively beaten the visitors in the first match before losing the second one, were close to facing another defeat against an improving Nepal side.

The visitors even once took the lead in the second half despite trailing the first half by 20-17 points.

Dipayan, however, won five crucial points from two raids including a 'lona', from which Nepal never recovered.

"Nepal are a really good with captain Ghanshyam Raka Magar, who is a brilliant player. None of our players can be compared to him, so we made mistakes because it was tough to catch him," Dipayan said after the match.

"We are hundred percent hopeful about winning the rest of the matches. We will improve with more international matches that we play in future," added man-of-the-match Goldar.



Jude Bellingham trains at Real Madrid's practice facilities on Tuesday ahead of tonight's Copa del Rey semifinal first-leg match against Real Sociedad at the Anoeta Stadium. The English forward, who is serving a two-match suspension in LaLiga, will probably play the entirety of this game as he is also suspended for the club's next Champions League assignment against Atletico Madrid.

PHOTO: REAL MADRID

Arteta vows not to give up on title race

REUTERS

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said his side will not give up on the Premier League title race despite slipping further behind leaders Liverpool after Saturday's loss to West Ham United, insisting the team have done well despite injuries and setbacks.

"We're not going to stop. Over my dead body," Arteta told reporters on Tuesday ahead of their midweek trip to third-placed Nottingham Forest.

Liverpool are 11 points above Arsenal, who have a game in hand.

With forwards Gabriel Jesus and

Kai Havertz out for the season and wingers Bukayo Saka and Gabriel Martinelli also sidelined with injuries, second-placed Arsenal face a hill to climb, with Liverpool being unbeaten in the league since September.

"If somebody tells you at the start of the season that you play five times with a red card, over half an hour in each of those games, and you have lost this amount of players... you're in the middle of the table at least," Arteta said.

"That's not the situation. So that tells you the resilience, resources, the ambition the team has."

Arteta said that in the 15 matches

prior to the loss to West Ham, Arsenal had won the exact same number of points as Liverpool.

"We got that defeat and on top of that, they win... it was a hard one to take," the former Arsenal midfielder said.

"The reality is, there's so many games to play. And you have to get back to it. And we have the levels, the consistency and the hunger to go again. And that's what we're going to do on Wednesday."

"At the end you have certain numbers you have to hit to win in this league and we have to hit that number if we're going to have any chance."

Butler's 'future Bangladesh' square off against UAE today

SPORTS REPORTER

After a gap of almost five months since the successful title defence of the SAFF Women's Championship in October last year, Bangladesh national women's team are set to play an international match as they take on hosts United Arab Emirates in one of two friendly matches in Dubai.

The match, that will get underway at 9:30pm (Bangladesh time), will however not feature the same group of players who had enthralled the country's football fans by winning their second successive SAFF title starting the campaign with a hard-fought draw against Pakistan. Instead, it will be an almost new group of players who will be fielded today, having made the pledge to prove themselves in absence of 18 rebel senior players.

Over last the three weeks, the rebel footballers drew all the attention after boycotting the team's training camp under English coach Peter Butler, who however silently worked with the new group of players alongside eight players who were part of the SAFF campaign.

Even though Butler said the country's football fans should be realistic and pragmatic regarding where Bangladesh stand at the moment, players like Afidea Khandokar, Surma Jannat, Kohati Kisku, Swapna Rani, Shaheda Akter Ripa, Munki Akhter, Sauravi Akanda Prity and Yearzan Begum will be key to Butler's



'future Bangladesh.'

These players have proved themselves in different age group teams as well as in the senior team whenever they came on as substitutes while the new players will try to cement their places in the senior teams by performing well.

"There are many new players in the squad and it is a new experience for them as well and a rare opportunity for them and I discussed this matter with them. Coach Peter Butler also spoke about everything with the girls. It's been a friendly atmosphere and I am also motivated after talking to the team. We are really hopeful that they will really perform well and produce a good result," BFF's vice president Fahad Karim, who was accompanying the team, said in a video message from Dubai.

The only problem regarding preparation is that the team reached Dubai yesterday morning and got only one practice session before facing the hosts, who are 16 places ahead of Bangladesh in FIFA ranking.

CORPORATE BOOKING

Fantasy Kingdom and Water Kingdom will be reserved on 26th February (Wednesday), 2025 for Corporate Booking.

From 27th February (Thursday), 2025 Fantasy Kingdom and Water Kingdom will remain open for all.

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