

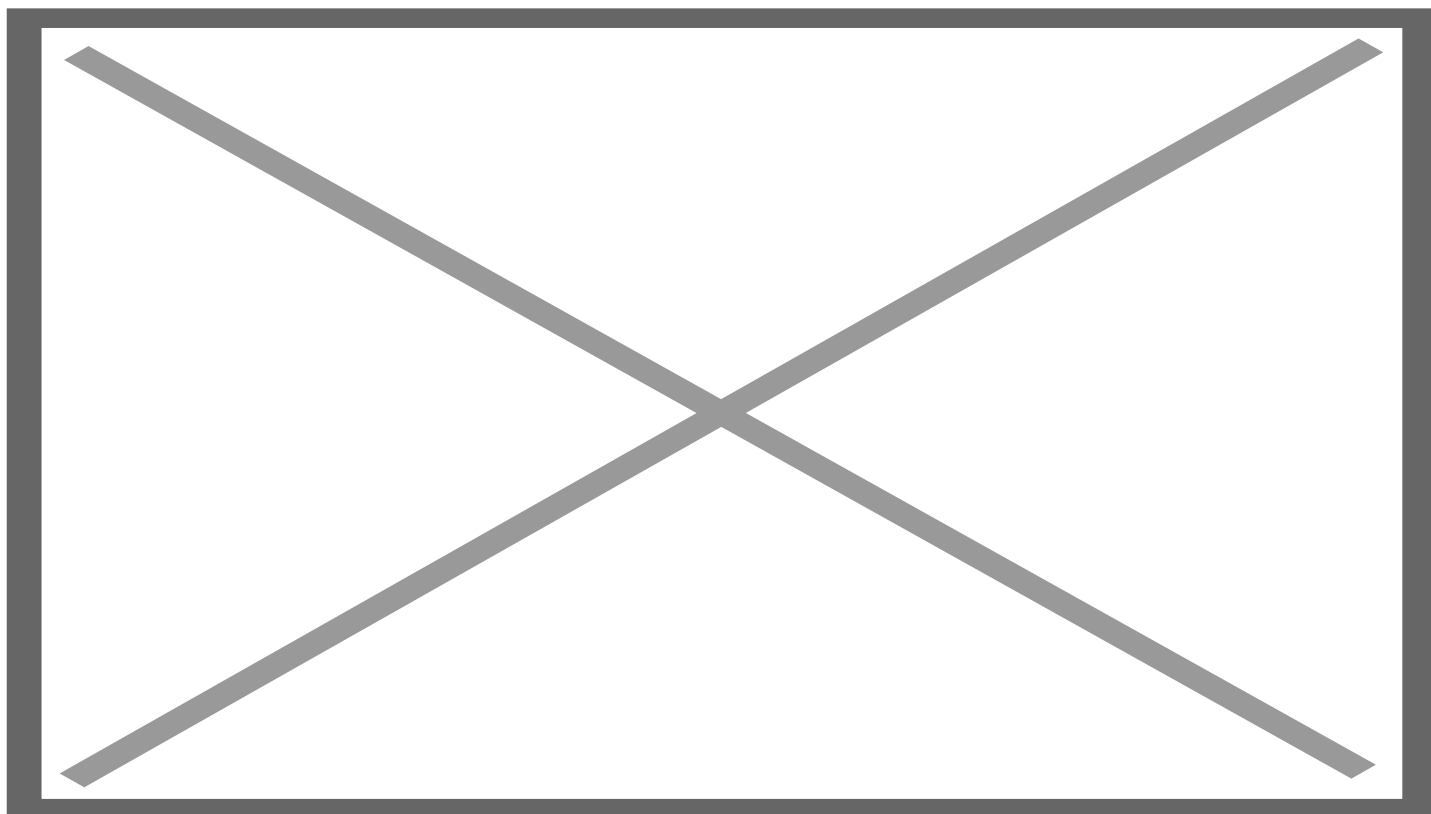
BPL 2023: Shamim show knocks Shakib's Barishal out of BPL 9

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Online Desk: Rangpur Riders powered by Shamim Hossain's half-century knocked Fortune Barishal out of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) 2023 with a four-wicket win in the eliminator at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Sunday. Shamim was the star batsman for Rangpur, scoring 71 off 51 balls, while Mahedi Hasan and Dasun Shanaka laid the finishing touches with unbeaten scores of 18 and 16 respectively to take Rangpur to 172-6 in 19.3 overs.

Earlier, make-shift opener Mehidy Hasan Miraz made 69 off 48 balls, while Mahmudullah made 34 off 21 balls and Karim Janat hit an unbeaten 33 off 25 balls to take Barishal to 170-3 in their 20 overs. Chasing 171, Rangpur lost Mohammad Naim for a duck in the opening over. Shamim then came to the middle and dictated the chase till his departure in the 17th over. The left-hander formed a 61-run partnership for the second wicket with Rony Talukder (29 off 17 balls) to steady the innings and formed a couple of more brief partnerships with Nurul Hasan (18 off 13 balls) and Nicolas Pooran (five off eight balls) to keep the required rate within reach.

Shamim, who completed his half-century off 36 balls, struck four fours and sixes in his career best BPL innings before getting caught at long-on off pacer Khaled Ahmed. But Shamim's wicket didn't cause a twist at the tale as Mahedi and Shanaka formed an unbroken 21-run stand off 13 balls to take them home. Earlier, Rangpur fielded four brand new overseas players in Dwayne Bravo, Mujeeb ur Rahman, Dasun Shanaka and Nicolas Pooran. Sent to bat, Barishal did some major shuffling in their batting line-up.



The shuffling started from the top as Barishal sent Miraz to open the innings alongside Andre Fletcher, with regular opener Anamul Haque getting demoted. Miraz justified his promotion by hitting five fours and a six

in the powerplay overs to give Barishal a decent start. After Fletcher (12 off 16 balls) departed in the sixth over, Barishal sent Mahmudullah at one-down and not in-form captain Shakib Al Hasan, who has been in fine hitting form in the ongoing BPL. This change in the batting line-up also paid dividends as Miraz and Mahmudullah joined hand to form a 69-run second wicket partnership off 46 balls.

Miraz was the aggressor, completing his half-century off 35 balls, while Mahmudullah gave him decent support from the other end. The duo was seemingly setting Barishal up for a flourish in the final overs. But part-time medium pacer Shanaka spoiled their hard work, removing both batters in consecutive overs to reduce Barishal to 126-3 after 15.1 overs. Mahmudullah was the first to go, as he lost his leg-stump to Shanaka. Miraz then top-edged a length delivery from Shanaka and got caught by Hasan Mahmud.

Barishal then promoted Karim Janat and newcomer Rajapaksa ahead of Anamul and Shakib. After struggling initially, the duo added 44 runs off 29 deliveries for the fourth wicket to take Barishal to a decent total which proved insufficient in the end. Rangpur will now face the loser of the first qualifier between Sylhet Strikers and Comilla Victorians which will take place later in the day. The second qualifier will take place on 14 February.