Rashid Khan prefers Pakistan Super League over County cricket

KABUL: Afghan Cricketer Rashid Khan has revealed prioritizing Pakistan Super League (PSL) tournament over his County contract with Sussex.

Rashid has announced that he has placed his County contract with Sussex on hold in order to participate in the Pakistan Super League (PSL). He, however, appreciated the County for understanding his decision to take part in PSL's franchise Lahore Qalandars.

According to media reports, Rashid said, "Unfortunately, I only played two games in PSL 6 and had to go away for national duty. Now I had the option to stay back in England and here I must appreciate Sussex for their help and understanding as I had to decide between missing five games with the county or playing a whole tournament like PSL which seemed like a better option, especially as the fans wanted me to play in the PSL."

The young spinner also believes that participating in the PSL will provide Afghanistan players with valuable experience. It will assist in the building of relations between the Pakistan and Afghanistan cricket boards.

Khan said, "All the players who have come from Afghanistan and are playing the PSL. This is a great opportunity for them to come and play alongside top players and to improve their own cricket."

"For all those Afghan youngsters who have not got an opportunity to play in other leagues. This is a great chance to prove that they have the skills and talent to play in top-level cricket," he added.

Earlier, Rashid had announced to quit PSL to attend the national duty. He had also thanked his fans for the support and hoped to join the league again next year.

Moreover, the remaining Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2021 matches will commence from June 9 in Abu Dhabi.

Six doubleheaders will be played during the event, including Qualifier 1 and Eliminator on the same day.

The matches will start at 8 pm UAE time (8:30 Kabul local time). The first match on the day of the doubleheader will start at 5 pm UAE time (5:30 pm Kabul local time).

On the other hand, the player's replacement meeting for the remaining matches of PSL 6 matches took place after which all teams had the option to pick two additional players and take their squad up to 20 members.

The Kabul Times

Sanford Health breaks ground on $40M Sports Complex expansion in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — Sanford Health has broken ground on a $40 million, 173-acre expansion of its Sanford Sports Complex in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, that will feature 18 outdoor turf fields.

The new, lighted fields will host host baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse and other activities starting in 2022 and are expected to host 1 million new visitors over five years for tournaments, sports training programs and youth and adult league games, according to Sanford Health.

Mammoth Sports Construction will lead the work on the expansion, which Sanford Health said in a news release was the biggest turf field project in the United States with nearly 1.7 million square feet of turf.

"This is a landmark day for children in our communities who are simply looking for a chance to play," said Steve Young, president of the Sanford Sports Complex. "We will now be able to provide year-round programming and opportunities on our campus that will allow more athletes and their families to experience the positive and foundational growth sports offers."

Sanford Sports Complex, which sits on about 500 acres in northeast Sioux Falls, has hosted both national and regional sports events at its multiple facilities including the Sanford Pentagon, Sanford Fieldhouse, the Scheels Ice Plex, Huether Family Match Pointe Tennis, Power & Grace gymnastics and the Great Shots golf entertainment center.

The expansion is funded by a $300 million donation in March from credit card billionaire and philanthropist T. Denny Sanford, the health system's chief patron. Sanford's donations have transformed Sanford Health, which was renamed after him, and catapulted its growth into one of the nation's largest health systems.

Sanford Health, based in Sioux Falls, has 46 hospitals across the Upper Midwest, including major medical centers in Sioux Falls, in Fargo, North Dakota, and Bemidji, Minnesota, as well as over 200 clinics and 366 Good Samaritan Society senior care and living centers in states across the nation.

Denny Sanford's giving to the health system now tops $1 billion. The latest donation for $300 million was aimed at growing the Sanford Sports Complex, expanding graduate medical education programs and creating a 'state-of-the-art virtual hospital" to support rural telehealth both in and outside the health system's footprint. Sanford Health officials have said details are still coming on the virtual hospital.

jamestownsun

How to create a new normal for basketball, youth sports, after Covid-19

The Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic has been a time-out of sorts for basketball and youth sports in general. Like any time-out during a game, it's given everyone an opportunity to think about what's been going well previously and more importantly what needs to be improved. The last thing that you want to do is come out of timeout thinking, "let's do everything exactly the way that we've always done it."

With about half of the U.S. population now fully vaccinated against Covid-19 vaccine and everyone 12 years and older now eligible for the vaccine, youth sports can do one of two things. They can rush back to how things were before the pandemic as if it were the last roll of toilet paper on a store shelf. Or they can reflect and ask, "do we really want to go back to business as usual? Is this an opportunity to re-imagine how things are being done?"

This latter approach was the general theme of the 2021 Jr. NBA Conference powered by Under Armour, held on May 18-19. It wasn't an in-person meeting, because there's this thing called the pandemic that's still going on around the world. Instead, it was a virtual meeting. The following video contains all the sessions of the conference:

As you can see, ESPN's Rachel Nichols hosted the conference, which featured NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert, former NBA players Grant Hill, Raja Bell, Quentin Richardson and Darrius Miles, former WNBA players Taj McWilliams-Franklin, Dr. Chantel Tremitiere and Ruth Riley and retired General Martin E. Dempsey, as well as others.

"Youth basketball in a different place now compared to before the pandemic," explained David Krichavsky, Senior Vice President, Head of Youth Basketball Development at National Basketball Association (NBA). "That was the approach for the conference this year." He mentioned that this fifth annual Jr. NBA Conference included themes such as "a healthy return to play, physical health and the Covid perspective, mental health, elevating the youth voice, and reinforcing access to, equity, and inclusion in sport."

Returning to play safely, of course, is a key issue. Even though Covid-19 vaccines are now available, the ball with spiked proteins is still in play. Yes, even though some people are acting as if everything is back to "normal," whatever normal means, the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV2) is still spreading throughout the U.S. and many parts of the world. When it comes to the pandemic, this certainly ain't the offseason just yet.

Forbes

Michigan football unveils ticket prices, on-sale dates for 2021 season

With season ticket interest collected and a near-capacity stadium expected, Michigan has unveiled ticket prices and on-sale dates for its seven-game home football schedule this fall.

Three and four-game ticket packs will go on sale to donors of Michigan's athletic department beginning at 8:30 a.m. on June 21 and continue all week. They will be available to the general public thereafter.

Ticket packs start at $260 per seat and include your choice of either the Washington or Ohio State game, your choice of the Western Michigan, Rutgers or Northwestern games, and your choice (or both) of the Northern Illinois or Indiana games.

Once ticket-pack sales are finalized, individual game tickets will go on-sale beginning at 8:30 a.m. on July 13. Like with ticket packs, individual game tickets will first be available to donors of the school's athletic department.

More: Jim Harbaugh rejuvenated by younger, 'hungry and humble' U-M coaching staff

Single-game tickets range from $145 to $190 for the Washington and Ohio State games, $70 to $110 for Big Ten games against Rutgers, Northwestern and Indiana, $60 to $105 for the regular-season opener against Western Michigan and $55 to $100 for the non-conference finale against NIU.

Tickets, which will be entirely digital this year (with exceptions for returning season ticket holders) can be purchased online via the athletic department website, the soon-to-be-released mobile app, or through the Michigan ticket office, 1000 South State in Ann Arbor, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. You can also call (734) 764-0247 or email mtickets@umich.edu for more details.

The Wolverines are scheduled to open the 2021 football season Sept. 4 against Western Michigan (noon, ESPN), the first of four straight home games that include Washington (Sept. 11), Northern Illinois (Sept. 18) and Rutgers (Sept. 25).

Jim Harbaugh's team returns to Michigan Stadium on Oct. 23 against Northwestern, follows up Nov. 6 against Indiana and concludes its regular-season schedule Nov. 27 in Ann Arbor against arch rival Ohio State.

Michigan posted a 2-4 record in 2020, a season that was played without fans in the stands due to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. On June 1, the state of Michigan lifted all outdoor gathering restrictions, paving the way for full college football stadiums this fall.

Cricket-Sri Lanka players agree to England tour despite contract row - reports

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's players have agreed to tour England this month even though a contract dispute with their cricket board remains unresolved, local media reported on Tuesday.

The players, including test captain Dimuth Karunaratne and ODI skipper Kusal Perera, had refused to sign new contracts which offer lower base salaries and more performance-based incentives.

Some of the players felt the contracts were "non transparent", Sri Lankan media said.

"They will play this tour without signing any contract," players' representative Nishan Premathiratne told the ESPNericinfo website.

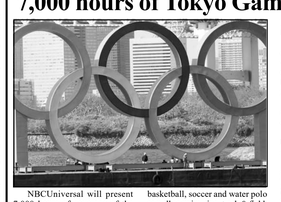
"They have signed a voluntary declaration, but there's nothing there about player remuneration. They have always been committed to playing for Sri Lanka."

Sri Lanka Cricket did not immediately reply to request for comment.

Sri Lanka will play three one-dayers and three Twenty20 Internationals in England. The limited-overs tour begins on June 23.

channelnewsasia

Sports Digest: NBCUniversal will have 7,000 hours of Tokyo Games coverage



NBCUniversal will present 7,000 hours of coverage of the upcoming Tokyo Olympics across eight networks and multiple digital platforms from July 20 to Aug. 8.

The Tokyo Games will be NBCUniversal's 11th consecutive Olympics production and ninth consecutive Summer Games – beginning with the 1988 Seoul Games. NBC's first Olympics were in Tokyo in 1964.

NBC is scheduled to air 250 hours across 17 days, headlined by its prime-time coverage.

NBC also announced earlier this year that it would air live coverage of the opening ceremony at 6:55 a.m. on July 23. Tokyo is 13 hours ahead of the Eastern time zone, meaning many of the marquee events will take place during prime time in the U.S.

USA Network, CNBC, NBCSN, Olympic Channel and Golf Channel will combine for over 1,300 hours, and Telemundo Deportes and Universo have at least 309 hours for Spanish-language viewers.

Coverage of the Games begins July 20 at 8 p.m. on NBCSN with live softball and 4 a.m. on July 21 on USA Network when the United States faces Sweden in women's soccer.

NBCSN (440 hours) and USA Network (388.5 hours) will present round-the-clock coverage beginning July 24. NBCSN's coverage will focus on soccer, softball, beach volleyball, table tennis, handball, badminton, fencing and equestrian.

USA Network will feature basketball, soccer and water polo as well as swimming, track & field, diving, beach volleyball, volleyball, cycling and triathlon.

CNBC (124.5 hours) will concentrate on diving, beach volleyball, skateboarding, rowing, canoeing, archery, water polo and rugby.

Olympic Channel (242 hours) will focus on tennis and wrestling and Golf Channel (111 hours) has coverage of the men's and women's tournaments.

NBC Sports Digital will stream more than 5,500 hours of coverage on NBCOlympics.com and the NBC Sports app. NBCUniversal's Peacock streaming service will include studio programming and other coverage that has yet to be finalized.

VOLLEYBALL: Two-time medalists Foluke Akinradewo Gunderson and Jordan Larson headline the 12-player U.S. women's volleyball team picked to compete at the Olympics in Tokyo.

Akinradewo Gunderson and Larson were part of the U.S. team that won a silver medal in 2012 in London and a bronze in 2016 in Rio de Janeiro.

Coach Karch Kiraly also announced he will be bringing back outside hitters Kim Hill and Kelsey Robinson for a second straight Olympics.

The other eight members will be making their first Olympic appearance: outside hitter Michelle Bartsch-Hackley; opposites Annie Drews and Jordan Thompson; setters Micha Hancock and Jordyn Poulter; middles Chiaka Ogbogu and Haleigh Washington; and libero Justine Wong-Orantes.

The U.S. women's team is currently ranked No. 1 in the world and is hoping to win its first Olympic gold. The women's volleyball competition will begin July 24.

NFL: The San Francisco 49ers signed safety Tony Jefferson to a one-year deal.

The 49ers released cornerback Briean Boddy-Calhoun to make room for Jefferson on the roster.

Jefferson played seven seasons with Arizona and Baltimore but sat out last season after tearing his ACL with Baltimore in 2019.

Jefferson has 434 tackles, 22 passes defensed, 8 1/2 sacks, eight forced fumbles, four fumble recoveries and four interceptions in 98 career games.

He provides depth at safety behind starters Jimmie Ward and Jaquiski Tartt.

Boddy-Calhoun appeared in one game with San Francisco in 2020 and also spent time on the team's practice squad.

Former Dallas Cowboys center Travis Frederick was the 2020 winner after making the Pro Bowl in 2019 following a year away to recover from an autoimmune disease that attacks the nervous system. Frederick retired after the 2019 season.

• Ja'Wuan James filed a $15 million grievance against the Denver Broncos, who released him last month after he ruptured an Achilles tendon during an off-site workout.

Also, the offensive tackle agreed to a two-year deal with Baltimore that ESPN reported was worth up to $9 million and includes $500,000 this year while James rehabs with the Ravens.

The Englishman, who was at par after the opening round and 1 under after the second, made six birdies and an eagle to get 8-under 216 for his first European Tour title in his 71st appearance.

The 33-year-old Armitage bogeyed the 16th hole after a missjudged putt from more than 100 feet and produced a remarkable chip to save par on the 17th after an overly cautious tee shot.