

Dhaka, July 12:

The Bangladesh U23 lost a friendly match against their Nepalese counterparts at Lalitpur, near Kathmandu yesterday afternoon.

Despite the scoreline of 1-0, the Red and Greens had a good game dominating on both halves. Nepal's lone goal came from number 10 Bimal Gharti Magar early in the 19<sup>th</sup> minute of first half.

Head coach Andrew Ord said the difference was in the strikers. "They had someone who took responsibility in front of the goal."

The national U23 men's team will be arriving in Qatar later today for a three-day training camp and another friendly with the national U23 side there, before heading for Palestine to play in the AFC U23 qualifiers.

The newly appointed national coach was quite direct with his observations when he said, "We have got players running away from the goal rather than taking initiative."

He noted that the young men had several good opportunities. "Just couldn't convert them."

Ord was disappointed with Bangladesh's tough luck against referee decisions as well since there were two clear penalties. "But they were not given by the referee."

His exasperation was, however, still lined with hope. "It is hurting us that our big players have not done anything for one month. The good news is that it is not the tournament."

Ord said the match would eventually help his wards build fitness and temperament.

The team practised and trained in Nepal, the day before their friendly game, with passing, finishing exercises and 11 vs 11 possession game.

Before the game, head coach Andrew Ord discussed strategies with the team showing them video footage of their game against Abahani.

Ord, the national coach in charge of the U23 squad said there were a few minor 'niggles' with the day's squad.

Andrew Ord said after the team meeting that some of the players, including Zoni and Shushanto were being rested for the match against Qatar.

He said six players would get the 90 minutes of play while Hemanta, Jewel and Toklis will continue to build their fitness with less time in the field.

Ord said today's match would give an indication of how his wards will perform and where they stand. "I am looking forward to seeing how team plays in unfamiliar conditions."

Captain Sohel Rana said his boys were looking to play an attractive brand of football today, and win against Nepal U23. "It will certainly boost our confidence for the upcoming matches."

The experienced campaigner said the team was trying to follow every bit of guidance that Ord was giving them. "That is only how we might get good results for the team and the country

proud.”