

U19 WC: India beats South Africa by 45 runs, starts campaign on winning note

■ AGENCY

GEORGETOWN: Four-time champions India dished out a clinical show to start their U-19 World Cup campaign on a winning note, thrashing South Africa by 45 runs here.

Put in to bat at the Providence stadium on Saturday, India rode on skipper Yash Dhull's responsible 82 to post a fighting 232 all-out and then bundled out the opposition for 187, with left-arm spinner Vicky Ostwal (5/28) and pacer Raj Bawa (4/47) doing bulk of the damage.

Chasing 233, South Africa colts lost opener Ethan John Cunningham (0) in the first over as he was trapped in front by pacer Rajvardhan Hangargekar (1/38).

But Valentine Kitime (25) and Dewald Brevis (65), who idolizes AB de Villiers, then rallied the innings with a 58-run stand.

The duo played patiently and hit the loose balls away as South Africa cantered to 38 for 1 after 10 overs.

Kitime then took on left-arm medium pacer Ravi Kumar (0/30) in the 10th over, hitting him for a boundary and a six as South Africa amassed 10 runs off it.

Brevis and Kitime then hammered Bawa, amassing



17 runs of the 11th over. But Ostwal broke the stand after removing Kitime, who edged to stumper Dinesh Bana in the 12th over.

It soon became 83 for 3 as Ostwal struck again, this time dismissing GJ Marce (8), who was caught by Bana in the 21st over.

Thereafter, India did not allow any other South African batter to settle down. Bawa sent back a well-set Brevis, who was caught by rival skipper Dhull in the 36th over and that triggered a collapse for the rainbow nation.

Skipper George Van Heerden (36) tried to take the game deep but he was devoid of partners as Bawa and Ostwal wrecked havoc on the middle and lower order.

The South African innings eventually folded in 45.4 overs.

Earlier, Dhull helped India recover from a poor start and his knock laid the cornerstone of India's fighting total.

The start of play was delayed by around 40 minutes due to rain and amid the prevailing conditions, South Africa decided to put India in to bat.

Left-arm pacer Aphive Mnyanda rocked the Indian top-order by trapping in-form opener Harnoor Singh (1) and his partner Angriksh Raghuvanshi (5) in front of the stumps.

Left-handed Harnoor, who was India's leading run getter in the Asia Cup and scored a century in the warm-up game against Australia here, fell to a ball that nipped back in. Raghuvanshi played around Mnyanda's inswinger and was plumb in front, leaving India for 11 for two.

With India in trouble, skip-

per Dhull and Shaik Rasheed (31) got together to resurrect the innings. They shared a 71-run stand before Rasheed missed a sweep shot off left-arm spinner Liam Alder to be adjudged LBW.

Rasheed, who was

dropped on 17 at second slip off Andile Simelane, played some impressive strokes in his 54-ball knock, including an aerial pull and an on drive off pacer Matthew Boast to break the shackles.

SCOREBOARD		
India Under-19s Innings		
Angkrish Raghuvanshi lbw b Mnyanda	05	
Harnoor Singh lbw b Mnyanda	01	
Shaik Rasheed lbw b Alder	31	
Yash Dhull (c) run out (Simelane)	82	
Nishant Sindhu st †Solomons b Copeland	27	
Raj Bawa lbw b Brevis	13	
Kaushal Tambe c Simelane b Boast	35	
Dinesh Bana † b Boast	07	
Vicky Ostwal c & b Brevis	09	
Rajvardhan Hangargekar c †Solomons b Boast	00	
Ravi Kumar not out	00	
Extras	22	
Total	232/10	
South Africa Under-19s Innings		
Ethan-John Cunningham lbw b Hangargekar	00	
Valentine Kitime c †Bana b Ostwal	25	
Dewald Brevis c Dhull b Bawa	65	
Gerhardus Marce c †Bana b Ostwal	08	
George Van Heerden (c) c Dhull b Bawa	36	
Andile Simelane b Bawa	06	
Michael Copeland b Ostwal	01	
Kaden Solomons † b Ostwal	00	
Matthew Boast c Hangargekar b Ostwal	08	
Liam Alder not out	17	
Aphive Mnyanda c Dhull b Bawa	05	
Extras	16	
Total	187/10	

Sen wins men's singles crown, Satwik-Chirag pair claims maiden India Open title



■ AGENCY

NEW DELHI: India's Lakshya Sen secured his maiden Super 500 title by winning the Yonex-Sunrise India Open with a stunning straight-game victory over reigning world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in the men's singles final here on Sunday.

It was after Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty became the first team from the country to win India's flagship tournament after toppling three-time world champions Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan.

The 20-year-old Sen, who had claimed his maiden world championships medal with a bronze in Spain last month, produced a fine performance to outshine the fifth seeded shuttler 24-22 21-17 in the summit clash that lasted 54 minutes.

Satwik and Chirag showed

nerves of steel as the duo saved five game points to overcome the world No. 2 Indonesian pair 21-16 26-24 in 43 minutes. Going into this match, the two had a 2-2 head-to-head record with Sen losing two of the last three meetings, but the Indian was the better man on show on Sunday as he showed great athleticism, used his attacking shots to good effect and came up with his punched winners from the back at the right moments. It is Sen's biggest title of his career. He had won two Super 100 titles -- Dutch Open and SaarLorLux Open -- besides three international challenge at Belgium, Scotland and Bangladesh in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic came in the way of his progress.

Last year, the youngster made it to the semifinals at Hylo, reached the knockout stage at World Tour Finals on

debut before sizzling at the World Championships with a bronze.

Satwik and Chirag came into the match with a 1-3 head-to-head record against their opponents but they dished out a brave effort to stave off a fightback from the Indonesians and reign supreme in the final.

From almost missing the tournament following false COVID positive results to winning the title, it turned out to be an incredible start to 2022 for the Indian pair, which accumulated valuable ranking points ahead of a busy season, which comprises big-ticket events such as the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games.

The Indian pair started on a positive note and even though the Indonesian combination fought back, Satwik and Chirag ensured they were two points ahead at the first interval.

PSF felicitates winners of National Table Tennis Championship



PSF Poonch members posing with medal winners during felicitation ceremony.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Pritam Spiritual Foundation (PSF) Poonch on Sunday felicitated six Table Tennis players for bringing laurels to J&K Union Territory especially Poonch district by winning medals in fourth National Championship held at Delhi Public School Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh on January 8 and 9, 2022.

Five table tennis player under-17 category namely

Ridhik Kapoor, Akshit Tandon, Pratham Suri, Pranav Khajuria, Mridul Kashap and Gurjoot Singh took part in open category and won gold medals. Beside these players a famous Poonch table tennis (CT coach) Narinder Singh was also facilitated by the Trust.

Chairman of the Foundation, Prof Jagbir Singh presented the certificates of appreciation to players and coach in pres-

ence of Vice President Er. Rydham Singh, Matinder Pal Singh, Sawanpreet Singh, Priyanka Singh, Rukhsar Mughal, Mohd Shahban and Mohd Shahid. They congratulated the medals winners, their parents and coach especially who prepared and encouraged them to participate in such national level championships. Prof Jagbir Singh expressed hope that all the medal winners will give their best in future too.

Australia beats England by 146 runs, completes 4-0 Ashes win

■ AGENCY

HOBART: Australia completed a dominant 4-0 Ashes series victory over England on Sunday by winning the fifth day-night Test by 146 runs with two days to spare.

England, set a target of 271 for victory, crashed to 124 all out in the last session on the third day at Hobart, losing 10 wickets for 56 after Zak Crawley (36) and Rory Burns (26) combined in the best opening stand of the series by putting on 68 runs.

Fast bowlers Scott Boland (3-18) and Cameron Green (3-21) made an impact in their first Ashes series by sharing six wickets on a lively greenish wicket as England crumbled against pace for the second time in the match after being dismissed for 188 in the first innings in reply to Australia's score of 303.

Australia skipper Pat Cummins also had an impact in his second spell to finish with

3-42 on an eventful day that saw 17 wickets tumble for the second successive day in the game. Cummins, who grabbed the last two wickets off three balls, led from the front in his first series as Australia captain and grabbed 21 wickets.

"It's pretty crazy, even as a professional cricketer these are the series you have in your diary a couple of years out," said Cummins.

"Really feels like we are building to something big. To have someone like Cameron Green in his second year to grow as a batter and bowler as well as some of the younger players can't wait to show our wares overseas, we really judge ourselves in all conditions."

Earlier, Australia was bowled out for 155 just after the dinner break for an overall lead of 270 runs after it resumed from an overnight 37-3.

England paceman Mark Wood snared 6-37, utilizing short-ball tactics against the

Australians to perfection. Alex Carey top-scored for Australia with 49 after getting two reprieves.

"We've been outplayed in all areas and credit to Australia," said England captain Joe Root, who remained the tourists' lone fighter with 322 runs, behind only Travis Head (357) and Marnus Labuschagne (335) who led the home side.

"We've played good cricket in parts, just not been able to structure a whole game together it's pretty obvious we need to be putting more runs on the board (and) too often we've not given our bowlers enough to work."

Australia missed an early opportunity when Burns could have been out lbw in Mitchell Starc's second over, but Cummins chose not to go for a television referral as the replays suggested the ball crashing onto the top of the stumps.

Doda beats Nowshera to lift Pir Panjal Kabaddi League trophy



A final Kabbdi match in progress at Doda.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: Doda defeated Nowshera in the nail biting final and won the Pir Panjal Kabaddi League organized by Indian Army in coordination with Jammu and Kashmir Police, Health Department, District Sports Authorities and Civil Administration from January 13 to 15, 2022 at Sports Stadium, Doda.

A total of seven teams including Doda, Kishtwar, Bhadarwah, Ramban and Nowshera took part in the league.

Sector Commander, Indian Army graced the closing ceremony as Chief Guest. Civil dignitaries of Doda also attended the closing ceremony.

The champion and runner-up teams were awarded with cash prize and trophies. Winners, first runners-up and second runners up were also presented with gold, silver and bronze medals. Best Raider and Best Catcher were felicitated with individual trophies and cash prizes.

Gavaskar wants Rishabh Pant to succeed Kohli as Test skipper

■ AGENCY

NEW DELHI: The legendary Sunil Gavaskar wants Rishabh Pant to succeed Virat Kohli as the next India Test captain as he believes a sense of responsibility will make the glovesman a better cricketer in all forms of the game.

Kohli surprised the cricket fraternity by quitting Test captaincy on Saturday evening, a day after losing the Test series in South Africa 1-2 to draw the curtains on a successful seven-year reign.

Gavaskar said he preferred Pant as he is an automatic choice for selectors across all formats of the game.

"It's going to be quite a debate as far as the selection

committee is concerned as to who should be taking Indian cricket forward. First of all, it should be someone who is an automatic pick across all formats of the game. Once that happens, it will be a lot easier," Gavaskar told India Today.

"If you ask me, I am still staying, I would look at Rishabh Pant as next India captain."

"For one reason only, just like Rohit Sharma was given the captaincy of Mumbai Indians when Ricky Ponting stepped down, look at the change in his batting after that. Suddenly the responsibility of being captain made him convert those beautiful cameos of 30s, 40s and 50s into hundreds, 150s and

200s.

"I think that sense of responsibility given to Rishabh Pant will help him score many more of that wonderful hundred he scored at Newlands," he added.

Further explaining the rationale behind his pick, Gavaskar cited the example of Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi, who achieved great success after taking over the captaincy at a very young age.

"Yes, I am saying that. Tiger Pataudi was captain at the age of 21 under adverse circumstances when Nari Contractor was injured. Look what he did after that. He took to captaincy like duck to water.

Sunday's ISL fixture between Kerala Blasters & Mumbai City FC postponed

■ AGENCY

PANAJI: The Indian Super League (ISL) match between Kerala Blasters FC and Mumbai City FC in Vasco was postponed on Sunday, hours before their kickoff as the southern outfit did not have the requisite number of players to field.

The match was scheduled to be played at the Tilak Maidan in Vasco. The tournament organisers did not specify the reason for the postponement but sources close to the league attributed it to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prior to this, two more matches had been postponed this season after the coronavirus breached the ISL's bio-bubble.

"Hero Indian Super League (ISL) has decided to postpone Match No. 62 between Kerala Blasters FC and Mumbai City FC scheduled to be played today, Sunday, January 16, 2022, at Tilak Maidan Stadium, Vasco. The League will look to reschedule the fixture to a later date," the ISL said in a statement.

"The decision has been taken in consultation with the League's medical team after it was assessed Kerala Blasters FC did not have the requisite number of players available for the match.

"The League will work closely with the medical experts to monitor and ensure the safety of all the players and support staff in the squad and others involved," it added in the statement.

Anushka pens emotional note for Virat Kohli: You always stood up for the right thing

■ AGENCY

MUMBAI: Actor-producer Anushka Sharma on Sunday penned a heartfelt note for her cricketer husband Virat Kohli and said she was extremely proud of the legacy he leaves behind as the Test captain of the Indian cricket team.

Kohli, who took over from MS Dhoni midway through the Australian tour back in 2014-15, on Saturday announced his sudden decision to quit Test captaincy a day after India lost the Test series in South Africa 1-2.

Sharma took to Instagram and shared candid pictures of the 33-year-old cricketer, who leaves as the most successful India captain in Test cricket with 40 wins from 68 matches with the highlight being the wins in Australia and England last year.

The actor, who tied the knot with Kohli in 2017, wrote how she saw the cricketer grow leaps and bounds ever since he took on the Test captaincy.

"I remember the day in 2014 when you told me that you have been made the captain as MS had decided to retire from test cricket. I remember MS, you and I having a chat later that day and him joking about how quickly your beard will start turning grey. We all had a good laugh about it. Since that day, I've seen more than just your beard turning grey.

"I've seen growth. Immense growth. Around you and within you. And yes, I am very proud of your growth as the captain of the Indian National Cricket team and what achievements the team had under your leadership. But I'm more proud of the growth you



achieved within you," she wrote.

Sharma recalled how in 2014, the couple was "young and naive", who believed just good intentions, positive drive and motives can take one ahead in life.

The actor said while these qualities are instrumental, they come with their own challenges.

"A lot of these challenges that you faced were not always on the field. But then, this is life right? It tests you in places where you least expect it to but where you need it the most. And my love, I am so proud of you for not letting anything come in the way of your good intentions," she wrote.

The "Jab Harry Met Sejal" star lauded Kohli for "leading by example" and noted how the cricketer never fell prey to any pretence and always kept his life "unconventional and straightforward".

"You led by example and gave winning on field every ounce of your energy to the extent that after some losses I've sat next to you with tears in your eyes, while you wondered if there's still something more you could have done. This is who you are and this is what you expected from everyone.

"You've been unconventional and straightforward. Pretence is your foe and this is what makes you great in my eyes and the eyes of your admirers. Because underneath all this were your pure, unadulterated intentions always. And not everyone will be able to truly understand that," she added.

The 33-year-old actor said the couple's daughter, Vamika, will be a witness to how instrumental Kohli's captaincy was in shaping him not only as a cricketer but also a father.

The couple became parents to their baby girl in January 2021.

"Truly blessed are those who tried to get to know you beneath what meets the eye. You are not perfect and have your flaws but then again when did you ever try to conceal that? What you did was to always stand up for doing the right thing, the harder thing, always!

"You held on to nothing with greed, not even this position and I know that. Because when one holds on to something so tightly they limit themselves and you, my love, are limitless. Our daughter will see the learning of these 7 years in the father that you are to her. You did good," she concluded.

Djokovic leaving Australia after losing deportation appeal

■ AGENCY

MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic left Australia on Sunday evening after losing his final bid to avoid deportation and play in the Australian Open despite being unvaccinated for COVID-19. A court earlier unanimously dismissed the No 1-ranked tennis player's challenge to cancel his visa.

Djokovic, a 34-year-old from Serbia, said he was "extremely disappointed" by the ruling but respected it.

Australian media reported Djokovic was seen upon arrival at Melbourne's airport. He left on an Emirates flight to Dubai, the same United Arab Emirates city he flew to Australia from.



He has won a record nine Australian Open titles, including three in a row, but this time won't even get the chance to try.

"I respect the Court's ruling and I will cooperate with the relevant authorities in relation to my departure from the country," he said in a statement.

Djokovic said he was

"uncomfortable that the focus had been on him since his visa was first cancelled on arrival at Melbourne's airport on January 6.

"I hope that we can all now focus on the game and tournament I love."

Tennis Australia, said it respects the decision of the Federal Court. "We look forward to a competitive and exciting Australian Open 2022 and wish all players the best of luck," it said in a statement.

A deportation order also usually includes a three-year ban on returning to Australia.

In Serbia, President Aleksandar Vucic said the hearing was "a farce with a lot of lies."

He said he told Djokovic after talking to him "that we can't wait to see him in Serbia, to return to his country, to come where he is always welcome."

He did not say whether Djokovic said he would first go to Serbia after his deportation.

Chief Justice James Allsop said the ruling came down to whether the minister's decision was "irrational or legally unreasonable."

Hawke welcomed the decision. His office did not immediately provide detail of how or when Djokovic would leave.

"Australia's strong border protection policies have kept us safe during the pandemic, resulting in one of the

lowest death rates, strongest economic recoveries, and highest vaccination rates in the world," Hawke said. "Strong border protection policies are also fundamental to safe-guarding Australia's social cohesion which continues to strengthen despite the pandemic." Prime Minister Scott Morrison welcomed what he described as the "decision to keep our borders strong and keep Australians safe." But opposition spokesperson on the home affairs portfolio, Kristina Keneally, said Djokovic was being deported for what he said and did publicly overseas before the government gave him a visa in November.