

Australia batsman David Warner will be hoping to make up for a disappointing outing against the West Indies in his last match when the reigning champions take on India today. However, they will be cautious of Rohit Sharma (R), who comes into the game on the back of a match-winning unbeaten century against South Africa. PHOTO: AFP

MR EFFICIENT



Jason Roy disappointed in his last outing against Pakistan in the previous game, dropping a straightforward catch off Mohammad Hafeez -- who went on to top-score for his side -- and then failing with the bat with a score of just eight runs. However, the 28-year-old bounced back strongly against Bangladesh and registered his ninth ODI hundred and his maiden World Cup century. Roy was eventually dismissed on 153 off 121 balls, a knock that featured 14 fours and five sixes as England posted a mammoth total of 386 for 6 in fifty overs.

Kohli & Co desperate to lay down a marker vs Aussies

AFP, London

India and Australia clash in the standout game of the World Cup so far on Sunday, with Virat Kohli's men desperate to lay down a marker against the five-time champions.

In the past five editions of the tournament, India are the only team to have denied the Australians the trophy, on home soil in 2011.

AFP Sport takes a look at three key battles ahead of the match at The Oval.

KOHLI V STARC: Virat Kohli is the world's top-ranked batsman in one-day internationals and Tests while Mitchell Starc is Australia's left-arm pace spearhead.

Kohli was out for just 18 in India's opening game in Southampton but averages more than 53 against Australia in ODIs.

Starc, who took five wickets in Australia's win over the West Indies, will be handed the responsibility of taking early wickets, with Kohli the prized scalp.

"When he's got his rhythm and his form is good, he's definitely the best around -- I think that is without question," said former Australia captain Allan Border, who led the team to their 1987 World Cup triumph.

WARNER V BUMRAH: Swashbuckling Australian opener David Warner has returned from his ball-tampering ban in style.

After topping the run charts in the Indian Premier League, Warner smashed an unbeaten 89 in Australia's opening World Cup win over Afghanistan. But the left-handed batsman will be up against an Indian paceman who tops the ODI bowling rankings, with 87 wickets in 50 matches. Bumrah set the tone for India's win against South Africa on Wednesday with his two early strikes. South African opener Hashim Amla called him "one hell of a bowler" after

the 25-year-old quick sent the veteran batsman packing for six in Southampton.

ZAMPA V CHAHAL: Adam Zampa is no Shane Warne but is expected to be Australia's key spin hope against India.

Fifteen of the leg-spinner's 64 ODI wickets have come against India since his debut in 2016 and variations including the googly and the straight ball make up for his lack of prodigious turn. His Indian counterpart, Yuzvendra Chahal, is seen as Kohli's go-to spinner along with spin partner Kuldeep Yadav.

Chahal returned figures of 4-51 against

opening match.

"The past is past," he said. "What's gone before means nothing, it's just about being better on the day, nothing else. I will not look back, it gives you confidence but it's just about tomorrow, not the history. Self-belief has played a big part in these past five or six years, I know I can get the job done for the team."

"I don't look at records or milestones or where I am in rankings, it's just about playing well and doing a good job for the team. Perhaps there will be external rewards but that's for the end of my career, not now."



South Africa and the former chess player will be looking to plot Australia's downfall.

"Chess has taught me patience and planning," he said. "When you play chess you normally plan 15 to 16 moves in advance."

SHARMA REFUSES TO LOOK AT HISTORY

History is meant to teach us about the future but Rohit Sharma, India's vice-captain, prefers to live firmly in the present. Sharma averages more than 60 against Australia but insists that will count for nothing when the two sides clash.

On the all-time list of Indian ODI run scorers only Virat Kohli and MS Dhoni average more. Sharma is in fine form, having scored an unbeaten 122 to secure a straightforward six-wicket win against South Africa in his team's

India have won just five of their 15 ODI matches at The Oval -- another stat Sharma swats aside with the disdain he treated South Africa's bowlers -- while he insists the recent defeat to Australia should not be overplayed either.

"We've got a good rivalry, we played some really good cricket there and they played really well in India. We just need to focus on the basics and then everything will follow," he added.

"I was happy with my performance against South Africa, I had to curb my natural instincts and play to the conditions and that gives me immense satisfaction. It wasn't my best innings but it was one of my best innings."

Australia struggled against a rejuvenated West Indian pace attack at Trent Bridge, fighting back from 38/4, so probably won't be too pleased to see Jasprit Bumrah fired up at full speed with the new ball in hand. But Sharma warns he doesn't expect them to make the same mistake twice.

"If the batsmen is finding it uncomfortable we will welcome him with some short stuff but these guys play bouncers all the time growing up in Australia," he added.

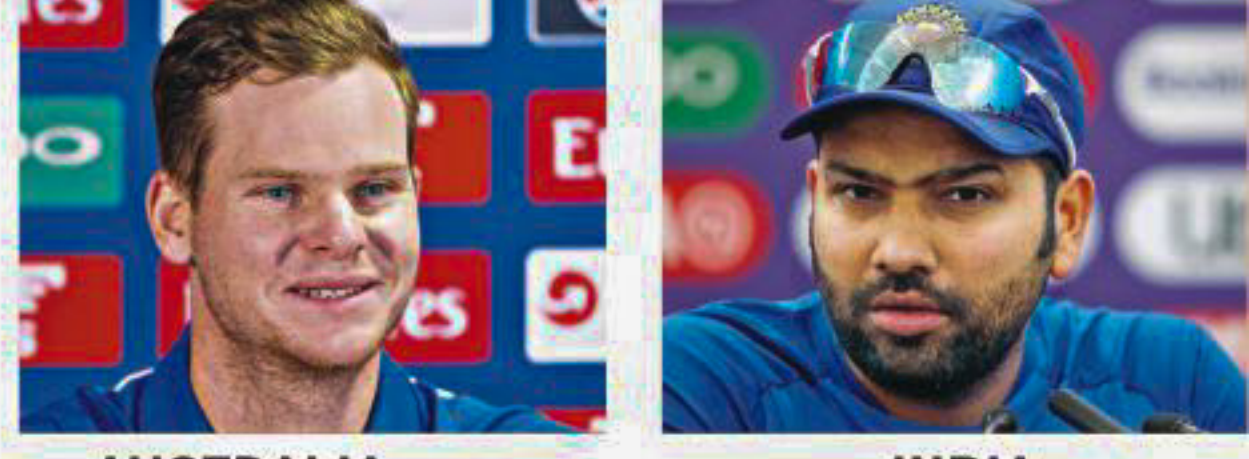
INFO ZONE

HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUP			
AUSTRALIA		INDIA	
8	WIN	3	
3	LOSS	8	
0	TIE	0	
0	NR	0	

HEAD TO HEAD IN ODIS			
AUSTRALIA		INDIA	
77	WIN	49	
49	LOSS	77	
0	TIE	0	
10	NR	10	

LAST MEETING
March 13 2019 at Feroz Shah Kotla in Delhi
Australia won by 35 runs.

KEY PLAYERS



AUSTRALIA		INDIA	
Steven Smith	Bat/Bowl Avg	Rohit Sharma	Bat/Bowl Strike rate
41.92/34.48	85.83/38.7	48.11/64.37	87.9/74.1
20	50s	41	
8	100s	23	
164	HS	264	
5.34	Econ	5.21	
3/16	BBM	2/27	
3522/27	Runs/wickets	8132/8	
73	Last Match	122*	

FACTS

- Australia skipper Aaron Finch has amassed 1013 runs -- highest by any player any Australian batsmen in their current World Cup squad -- in the 25 matches he played against India. Finch has also scored two centuries against Virat Kohli's side which is the most by any current players in the Australian side.
- Usman Khawaja has a staggering 62.12 average in the eight matches he featured against India. This remains the highest average by any Australian batsmen in their current World Cup squad.
- Australia have won their last ODI series against India at their own backyard by 3-2 in March of this year.
- Rohit Sharma has scored 1980 runs -- highest by any player of either teams' current World Cup squads -- in the 36 matches he played against Australia. Rohit's 209 that came back in 2013 is also the highest individual score by any players between the two teams.
- Bhuvneshwar Kumar has scalped 20 wickets in the 17 games he played against Australia. This is the highest by any bowlers in the current Indian side.
- Yuzvendra Chahal's six for 42 against Australia is the best figure by any bowler of either sides' current World Cup squads.

Warner 'shaken up' after training mishap hospitalises bowler

AFP, London

Australia halted their practice session at the Oval on Saturday after opening batsman David Warner hit a net bowler on the head with a powerful drive.

Warner was middling the ball in the nets ahead of the World Cup match against India on Sunday and one of his drives felled the paceman.

The batsman rushed to the aid of the bowler, who lay flat on the practice pitch as his visibly concerned team-mates stopped their session.

The Australian physio attended to the bowler, identified as Jaykishan Plaha, who was taken off on a stretcher to a medical room at the ground.

One of Plaha's fellow net bowlers told AFP the injured player was conscious and the session subsequently resumed.

International Cricket Council venue manager Michael Gibson told reporters: "The net bowler has been taken to hospital as a precautionary measure because it was a head injury."

"He was conscious and smiling as he was taken off."

The Aaron Finch-led team, who have won both of their games at the World Cup, are looking to defend their crown.

Finch said Warner was "shaken up" by the incident.

"Dave is obviously pretty shaken up. The young guy (Plaha) is in pretty good spirits at the moment. He has obviously been taken to



Nets bowler Jaykishan Plaha was struck on the head as David Warner drove a shot, and was consequently stretchered off to hospital. PHOTO: AFP

the hospital to be assessed that everything is OK," said Finch.

"It was a pretty decent hit, so hopefully everything goes well for the youngster and he is up and running shortly."

On the issue of more protection on grounds around the world for net bowlers, Finch said, "It's quite rare that somebody gets hit, it's really unfortunate. Our own medical staff and the paramedics on the ground did a great job."