

HIGHLIGHTS

England suffered a Test defeat inside two days for the first time in the last hundred years (28 May 1921, against Australia).

The visitors were bowled out for only 81 runs in their second innings, which is their lowest Test score against India.

Ravichandran Ashwin became the second-fastest bowler in the history of cricket to claim 400 Test wickets. He is the fourth Indian to enter the 400 club.

Axar Patel (11/70) now has the best match figures for any bowler in day-night Tests.

Left-arm spinner Patel is the first bowler to take successive 5-wicket hauls in a day-night Test.



India captain Virat Kohli was all smiles as the English batsmen fell like ninepins in their second innings during the second day of the third Test in Ahmedabad yesterday. (Below) Spinner Axar Patel celebrates one of his five wickets on the day.

PHOTO: BCCI

Sk Jamal snap draw streak with emphatic win

SPORTS REPORTER



After four successive draws in the Bangladesh Premier League, title contenders Sheikh Jamal DC returned to winning ways by handing an emphatic 3-1 defeat to struggling Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Gambian striking duo of Sulayman Sillah and Omar Jobe, and Uzbekistan's Jonov Otobek struck a goal apiece to help the three-time champions climb to second position in the 13-team table with 22 points from 10 outings, 10 points fewer than leaders Bashundhara Kings, who have played a match more than Sheikh Jamal DC.

Sheikh Jamal, who came into the match on the back of four successive draws against Abahani, Kings, Uttar Baridhara Club and Bangladesh Police, looked positive and dominated throughout the match against the Gopibagh-based outfit playing without a head coach in the last four matches.

The so-far unbeaten Sheikh Jamal came close to breaking the deadlock in the 18th minute but goalkeeper Titumir Chowdhury denied Sulayman Sillah by thwarting a close-range header before Joseph Nur Rahman saw his powerful shot float over the Brothers Union post in the 23rd minute.

Sulayman then made amends to brilliantly bring down a Monir Hossain right-flank cross inside the box before launching a right-footer into the far post to give Sheikh Jamal a 34th-minute lead.

Sulayman's countryman Omar Jobe then all but doubled the margin after beating advancing goalkeeper Chowdhury but his overhead chip came off the post two minutes before the break.

After resumption, Jobe made it 2-0 in the 59th minute as the Gambian forward, availing a long ball, advanced into the box from the left to place to the right of the Brothers keeper to net his 12th goal of the league and its joint top-scorer along with Robson Da Silva of Bashundhara Kings.

Otobek sealed the result in the 76th minute when he found the back of the net with a 25-yard free-kick before Faisal

Ahmed pulled one back for Brothers Union in the 81st minute with a header off a Furkat Jon free-kick.

At Birsheshta Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj, Bangladesh Police notched their third victory in the last four matches when they beat hosts Arambagh KS 2-1.

Jamir Uddin put Police FC ahead in the 14th minute before Fredrick Pooda doubled the lead in the 29th minute.

Trailing by two goals, betting-scambhit Arambagh pressed for goals and the promising Nihat Zaman Uchash pulled one back in the 72nd minute by scoring his third goal in the league. With their third win, ninth-placed Police raised their tally to 12 from 10 outings while Arambagh remained at bottom with one point from 10 matches.



Sheikh Jamal's Gambian striker Omar Jobe celebrates his side's second goal against Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Shortest since World War II

India demolish England inside two days

REUTERS, Ahmedabad

India's Axar Patel claimed an 11-wicket match haul as they beat England by 10 wickets inside two days in the day-night third test on Thursday, dashing the tourists' hopes of making the final of the inaugural World Test Championship (WTC) in June.

On a viciously turning track, England were shot out for 81 in the second innings, their lowest ever total against India, at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

Chasing 49 for victory in the spin-dominated, low-scoring contest, India overwhelmed the target without losing a wicket to go 2-1 up in the four-test series.

The hosts need a draw in the final test, also in Ahmedabad from March 4, to reach the WTC final against New Zealand.

England had been on the back foot since being skittled out for 112 in their first innings on a turning track at the world's largest cricket stadium.

Joe Root and Jack Leach shone with the ball to drag the tourists back into the contest by bowling out India for 145.

The tourists, however, suffered a second batting collapse to allow the hosts to take charge again.

Earlier, resuming on 99-3, India looked on course for a handy first-innings lead but Root (5-8) and Leach (4-54) wreaked havoc with the pink ball.

Rohit Sharma top scored for



India with 66 but the hosts lost their last seven wickets for 31 runs. Patel had claimed six of the 10 English wickets in the first innings and the left-arm spinner returned to haunt them with a two-wicket first over. Ben Stokes (25) and Root (19)

offered hints of a partnership before they fell in successive overs.

Patel went on to claim 5-32, while Ravichandran Ashwin dismissed four batsmen en route to reaching 400 test wickets.

England lasted 30.4 overs with all 10 batsmen falling to spin.

India captain Kohli said: 'To be honest, I don't think the quality of batting was at all up to standard from both teams, to be honest. The batting was below-par from both sides. It was bizarre that out of 30 wickets, 21 was to straight balls.'

England captain Joe Root said, 'We will take the feelings from this week and harness them. But this shouldn't define us as a team and one defeat will not change us overnight. We have to accept it, move forward, and get better.'



South Asian Games triple gold medallist Ruman Sana is ready to draw his bow for one of the seven recurve team event matches in the BAF National League (Stage-1) at the Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master Stadium in Tongi yesterday. Although Sana -- Bangladesh's first archer to secure direct qualification for the Summer Olympics -- recovered from a poor performance in December's Victory Day Archery tournament, his teammates could not help him finish among the top three teams in the eight-team league, which will have further stages in April, June and November. Bangladesh Ansar finished fourth but will still have a chance to bounce back as the champions will be decided on the basis of performances of all four stages.

PHOTO: STAR

Messi steals Champions League's thunder

STAR SPORT DESK



On the same night that Manchester City were extending their historic run to 19 consecutive wins with a 2-0 triumph over Borussia Monchengladbach in the Champions League round of 16 and Real Madrid recorded one of the duller 1-0 wins against 10-man Atalanta, Lionel Messi was lighting up the Camp Nou, albeit on a much lesser stage, with a pair of goals as Barcelona stormed to a 3-0 win over Elche in La Liga.

Pep Guardiola's suddenly imperious side had Messi in their sights immediately after he had expressed his desire to leave Barcelona last summer following a humiliating exit from the Champions League and a breakdown in his relationship with club president Josep Maria Bartomeu. Ultimately, the 33-year-old decided to stay -- for the final year of his contract at least. His decision was made in part by



exterior factors, with the pandemic denting club's finances and the legality of his exit clause being questioned. Internally, he was frustrated by the direction of the club and the quality of players that surrounded him.

Yesterday, for much of the first half, Barcelona again lacked that intangible spark. They had just two shots on target, both from Francisco Trincao, their lowest tally in the first 45 minutes of a home game this season in all competitions.

But Koeman's team turned it around in the second half, Messi linking up in sublime fashion with Martin Braithwaite before scoring three minutes into the second half. 15 minutes later, Frenkie de Jong found Messi in the box after a slalom run and the Argentine doubled the lead by easing the ball home following a series of feints that left the Elche defence scrambling.

His 13th goal took Messi go ahead of Bayern Munich's Robert

Lewandowski as the top scorer across Europe's top five leagues in 2021 in all competitions, but the talisman knows there is plenty of work ahead.

Chiefly, the Blaugrana can hope to bridge a five-point gap in the league with leaders Atletico Madrid, but the desire for another remontada against PSG will also be burning. After all, neither Barcelona nor Messi can risk another Champions League humiliation and a 4-1 defeat at home has left them staring down the barrel.

Any encouraging signs will have to come from their captain and in that regard, Messi's timing could not have been better. On a night when the Champions League offered fans nothing, Messi reminded them of his capabilities with a display that was every bit as emphatic as it was brilliant.

Barcelona will be hoping that he can hold on to that form and, if he does, there is every reason to believe that the air at the Parc des Princes will have a very different vibe about it come March 11.

Guptill answers critics with explosive knock

AGENCIES



Martin Guptill fell short of a third Twenty20 international century but his strong return to form helped New Zealand to a four-run win over Australia in the second match in Dunedin yesterday.

The 34-year-old opener used the occasion of the first T20I to be hosted at Dunedin's University Oval to announce that he's far from a spent force in the most dynamic form of the game.

Guptill scored 97 from just 50 balls in leading his team to 219. In doing so he struck eight sixes, taking him to 132 in T20Is, passing India's Rohit Sharma (127).

After a lean trot that extended to his form for Auckland in the Super Smash, Guptill had seen his stock on the T20 circuit fall. He came into this match with perhaps as much pressure on his white-ball status as there ever has been. What he delivered was a wide-open window to his immense talent. 'Outstanding knock from Martin,' Kane Williamson said. 'The presence he brings at the top of the order

MOST SIXES IN T20I



Player	Inns	Sixes
Martin Guptill	92	132
Rohit Sharma	100	127
Eoin Morgan	94	113
Colin Munro	62	107
Chris Gayle	54	105

along with that power game that he has, it was great to see that today.' Guptill's knock ended a run of low scores after he was out for a duck in Christchurch and made a total of 46 runs in three T20Is against Pakistan in December.

New Zealand extended their lead to 2-0 in the five-match series.

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