

# What to WATCH

## T SPORTS

SAFF-19 Women's Championship Football  
Bangladesh vs India  
Live from 3:00 pm

## LPL

Colombo vs Kandy  
Live from 8:00 pm  
La Liga  
Celta Vigo vs Espanyol

Live from 2:00 am (Saturday)  
**SONY SIX**  
Australia vs England  
Second Test (Day 2)

Live from 10:00 am  
**STAR SPORTS 2**  
Asian Champions Trophy Hockey  
India vs Pakistan  
Live from 3:30 pm

## DAY'S EVENT

SAFF-19 Women's Championship  
Bangladesh vs India,  
Kamalapur

Asian Champions Trophy Hockey  
Bangladesh vs South Korea,  
Dhaka

## Lewy eyes another milestone

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich striker Robert Lewandowski can achieve another milestone on Friday in his club's last game of 2021 as the Bundesliga leaders look to extend Wolfsburg's miserable six-match losing streak.

With another goal, Lewandowski can claim a new record for most goals scored in German league football during a calendar year.

He scored twice in Tuesday's rout of Stuttgart to draw level with Gerd Mueller, who scored a record 42 goals over 12 months back in 1972.

Lewandowski loves to score against Wolfsburg, netting 23 goals in 15



games against Wolves, the most he has scored against any club in Germany's top flight.

That tally includes the five Lewandowski hit in nine jaw-dropping minutes when he came off the bench to steer Bayern to a 5-1 victory and claim a host of records in September 2015.

Bayern are buoyed by winning the last six games in all competitions, including beating second-placed Bundesliga rivals Dortmund, then Barcelona to seal a perfect six wins from six Champions League group stage games.



England wicketkeeper Jos Buttler looks dejected as he dropped a sitter off James Anderson -- much to the delight of the partisan crowd, to give Marnus Labuschagne (95 not out) a new life during the opening day of the second Test in Adelaide yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

# Patience, fortune put Australia on top

AGENCIES



A day that began chaotically ended on a high note for Australia, who take a commanding position in Adelaide via patient top order knocks and a slice of late luck.

The good fortune offered England by Australia's unexpected loss of captain Pat Cummins to pandemic protocols proved shortlived as Marnus Labuschagne and David Warner combined again to put their team into a position of strength after day one of the second Test.

Warner fell short of his century but Labuschagne remained on course for a hundred.

Australia finished day one on 221-2 despite being jolted before the start of the match at Adelaide Oval with Cummins forced out after being identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. With five overs remaining, Jos Buttler dropped a regulation catch off the bowling of James Anderson to offer a reprieve to Labuschagne, who remained not out on 95.

Buttler had earlier spilled a tougher chance behind the stumps when Labuschagne was on 21.

England dominated the first session though they blew two reviews trying to get Warner, who made 95, dismissed.

Warner said nothing could deter him from going out to face the old enemy despite the injury to his ribs sustained in the first test in

Brisbane, which left him unable to pick up his children.

"I didn't feel great," he said. "I had a couple of painkillers and a local (injection) this morning. You have got to put your best foot forward." Warner looked destined for his 25th Test century as he began to open his bat, but fell in the nervous 90s for the second Test in a row, caught by Broad off Ben Stokes. Labuschagne almost did the same, also on 95, when wicketkeeper Jos Buttler dropped a sitter off Anderson -- much to the delight of the partisan crowd.

"There's a bit of disbelief -- it is my job to capitalise on that now, I gave him a chance... I've got to make sure tomorrow no chances," Labuschagne, who rode his luck more than once, said of Buttler's

costly mistake.

Labuschagne hung on to the close of play, surviving 275 balls to remain unbeaten, while Steve Smith -- captaining the team in the absence of Cummins -- was 18 not out in front of 32,328 fans. Smith became his country's third captain - after Tim Paine and Cummins - in the last three Tests.

Broad took 1-34 while Anderson bowled a very tidy 18 overs for 29.

"I thought we stuck at it well but they played particularly well in the first two sessions," said England assistant coach Graham Thorpe.

"But we would have obviously loved to have more wickets down. It's not a case of feeling sorry for ourselves, we just need to do very similar things tomorrow," he added.

## CA defends protocols after Cummins scratched

REUTERS, Adelaide

Cricket Australia has defended its biosecurity protocols after captain Pat Cummins was forced to withdraw from the second Ashes test in Adelaide on Thursday for being a close contact of a COVID-19 case. Cummins was ruled out of the day-night clash after dining in the same restaurant as the positive case on Wednesday night and must isolate for seven days.

His absence from the match is a big blow to Australia's hopes of extending their lead in the five-test series after winning the opener in Brisbane. Cricket Australia boss Nick Hockley said the 28-year-old had done nothing wrong and was acting within the protocols set by its medical team.

"We have protocols that flex according to risk levels of each jurisdiction," Hockley told reporters at Adelaide Oval. "We are looking at them every single day. We are comfortable with the protocols with what they are for SA (South Australia)."

"We don't want to completely lock down the players, we want to take a proportionate approach, we are very conscious of their mental wellbeing."

The only limit on Australia's players in Adelaide are that they head out in public in small groups.

Australia were fortunate not to lose three first-choice players for the pink ball Test, with fast bowler Mitchell Starc and spinner Nathan Lyon

also dining at the same restaurant. However, because they ate at a separate table outdoors, they were deemed casual contacts by authorities and allowed to play.



## Smith, Boucher and De Villiers showed racial prejudice: ombudsman

AFP, Johannesburg

South African cricket legends Graeme Smith, Mark Boucher and AB de Villiers were all found to have engaged in racially prejudiced conduct in a report by an independent ombudsman released on Wednesday.

Cricket South Africa made public a 235-page interim report by Advocate Dumisa Ntsebeza, who headed a Social Justice and Nation Building Commission to investigate allegations of racial discrimination in South African cricket. CSA board chairman Lawson Naidoo said the board would study the report and would "engage with it and its recommendations".

Ntsebeza found that former Test captain Smith's appointment as CSA's director of cricket was irregular, although he did not attribute this to racial discrimination. But he

was critical of Smith's decision to appoint Boucher as head coach of the national team ahead of Enoch Nkwe, a black coach who served briefly as national team director, which he found was not in accordance with the organisation's human resources policy.



"Mr Smith and CSA failed to rebut the presumption of unfair discrimination in the appointment of Mr Boucher ahead of Mr Nkwe," according to the report. Smith was also accused of racial discrimination, along with other CSA and team officials, when he was captain

of the Test team in England in 2012.

Following an injury to Boucher, leading batsman De Villiers was selected as wicketkeeper ahead of Thami Tsolekile, a specialist wicketkeeper. "The (ombudsman) is persuaded by the argument that CSA, its coaches and selectors unfairly disadvantaged against Mr Tsolekile on the basis of his race."

De Villiers was also found to have resisted the selection of Khaya Zondo, a black batsman, when he was South Africa's one-day international captain ahead of a series-deciding match in India in 2015.

Dean Elgar, a late replacement for the one-day games, was picked ahead of Zondo, who was part of the original squad for the series.

Boucher was accused by former teammate Paul Adams of leading a song in after-match fines meetings in which Adams was referred to as a "brown sh\*\*".

## 53 IN 53

Borussia Dortmund's Erling Haaland scored once in either half to steer his team to a 3-0 victory over bottom club Greuther Fuerth on Wednesday and cut the gap to leaders Bayern Munich to six points. The Norwegian opened his account in the 33rd minute and then grabbed his 53rd league goal in 53 Bundesliga matches in the 82nd minute.



PHOTO: REUTERS

## Injured Pliskova ruled out of Australian Open

AFP, Prague

Wimbledon finalist Karolina Pliskova will miss the Australian Open in January after breaking her forearm in training, her husband and manager Michal Hrdlicka said on Thursday.

"Karolina broke her radius... in a fitness room at a training camp in Spain," Hrdlicka said in a statement, adding that treatment would take about four weeks.

"Unfortunately I will be out for a while and will not compete at my favourite tournaments in Australia," the 29-year-old Pliskova said on Facebook.

"Some days are worse than others... but time and belief can heal everything," added the world number four, posing for a photo with her right forearm in a bandage.

Pliskova has yet to win a Grand Slam tournament, having reached the 2016 US Open final and then lost in three sets to Ashleigh Barty in the Wimbledon final this year.

## Covid wrecks havoc in Premier League

REUTERS

Leicester City's Premier League game against Tottenham Hotspur on Thursday became the fourth English top flight fixture to be postponed in the past week as rising COVID-19 cases threaten to play havoc with the season. The Premier League confirmed the postponement shortly after Brentford manager Thomas Frank called for all games in the coming week to be postponed to allow clubs to recover their depleted squads.

Tottenham, who reported 13 positive tests among players and staff, have had two Premier League games postponed after last week's trip to Brighton and Hove Albion also went



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