

# Will Dhoni be able to turn back the clock as a batsman?

The veteran has been facing criticism for his knock against Afghanistan which had too many dot balls



**K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR**  
MANCHESTER

Among players with tattoos and the odd designer stubble, M.S. Dhoni is the original rebel. The man, who hoisted the 2011 World Cup winning six, loved riding his superbikes, nursed a fascination for the army and was often difficult to trace on the phone.



**Missing helicopter:** M.S. Dhoni has not lost his touch, but his patented big hits seem to have dried up of late. • AP

He has always defied the odds and it is time for him to do that yet again. The former India captain, playing his last World Cup – he will turn 38 on July 7, is facing a few whispers about his relevance as a batsman. Against Afghanistan on Saturday, Dhoni strode out to a thundering applause. But during his dogged tenure where the accent was on defence while coping with wily spinners upon a sluggish pitch, restlessness coursed through the stands at Southampton's Hampshire Bowl.

Dhoni scored 28 off 52 balls and his 53.84 strike-rate jarred with the audience. A section booed even when he departed after giving a futile

charge to leg-spinner Rashid Khan. Dhoni had starred in an innings-reviving 57-run fifth-wicket partnership with Kedar Jadhav but the excessive dot-balls consumed was deemed a failure.

**Tendulkar's remark**  
Even Sachin Tendulkar, usually guarded in his words,

spoke about the need for positive intent on the part of Dhoni and Jadhav. It is not that Dhoni has lost his touch but he is judged by his own exalted standards and his latest show was juxtaposed with the fact that the opposition was Afghanistan.

At the crease, he looks secure, blocking well, weighing

the conditions, tapping the ball to the deep for a leisurely single, nudging it close and sprinting at break-neck speed or striking the odd four. Where he has slipped is in the conversion rate in which a patient knock acquires its concluding kinetic burst. Biding his time and then launching those mammoth sixes, has

been Dhoni's patented act. He does the first part but it is the decisive second and final instalment that has been erratic.

Dhoni is still vital to the squad and in the latest World Cup, he dished out a searing cameo (a 14-ball 27) against Australia and a measured 34 off 46 deliveries in the open-

## Saini to bowl at the nets

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MANCHESTER

The Indian team opted to rest while brooding clouds dispensed rain and a steady wind rustled through the trees here on Monday.

Virat Kohli tweeted a picture from his breakfast table as he and his men preferred to unwind in the lead-up to Thursday's clash against the West Indies.

Previously, India had snatched a close win against Afghanistan at Southampton's Hampshire Bowl on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Delhi fast bowler Navdeep Saini

linked-up with the squad. He will serve as a net bowler as the team needs additional resources at training following Bhuvneshwar Kumar's hamstring injury that benched the seamer.

India's imminent rival, the West Indies, has been in town for a while.

Jason Holder's men suffered a gut-wrenching loss against New Zealand at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Ominously, Carlos Brathwaite, whose fiery ton nearly ruined the Kiwis' best-laid plans, tweeted: "Where can I get a bat fixed at Manchester?"

## Dhoni at CWC 2019

<b>34 off 46 balls</b> (2x4) (Strike Rate: 73.91) vs South Africa
<b>27 off 14</b> (3x4, 1x6) (SR: 192.85) vs Australia
<b>1 off 2</b> (SR: 50.00) vs Pakistan
<b>28 off 52</b> (3x4) (SR: 53.84) vs Afghanistan

with Kohli and the rest, that remains an intangible which can never be evaluated unlike runs scored, catches taken and stumpings effected. There is no number to altruism and chutzpah.

When Mohammad Nabi threatened to seal the contest in Afghanistan's favour, Dhoni was in the thick of things, finessing field placements, being a constant voice in Kohli's ear and at one stage he even asked his skipper to move a shade wider in the outfield. Kohli complied without a murmur and later hat-trick hero Mohammed Shami thanked Dhoni for his valuable advice that shaped those last over dismissals.

As India gears up for its final set of league games, Dhoni was to reveal his entire cricketing repertoire. Perhaps he will turn the clock back as a batsman and the emotional Indian fans should respect an icon inching towards his twilight.

## Shakib spins a web around the Afghanistan batsmen

Finishes with a five-for to complement his half-century; Mushfiqur shines again

**SHAYAN ACHARYA**  
SOUTHAMPTON

There's no stopping Shakib Al Hasan! The 32-year-old dished out another all-round show – 51 off 69 balls, followed by a five-wicket haul (five for 29) – as Bangladesh defeated Afghanistan by 62 runs on Monday.

After putting up a modest 262 for seven at the Hampshire Bowl, Bangladesh bundled out the opponent for 200 to climb up to the fifth spot in the table.

Chasing a rather tricky total on a slow track, Afghanistan got off to a steady start with captain Gulbadin Naib (47) and Rahmat Shah (24)

forging a 49-run partnership. But things changed when Shakib packed off Rahmat. Though Naib looked determined to play a long innings, he was dismissed by the same bowler after Afghanistan crossed the 100-run mark. After the skipper's exit, even the middle-order collapsed.

Following his gritty half-century against India in the last outing, expectations were high from Mohammad Nabi. But Shakib struck again, castling him for a duck.

Though Samiullah Shinwari (49 not out) and Najibullah Zadran (23) stitched a 56-

run partnership, it was not enough for Afghanistan.

Earlier in the day, Mushfiqur Rahim too contributed a 83-run knock to put Bangladesh on the right path.

**Mahmudullah injured**  
Key batsman Mahmudullah suffered a calf injury while batting and did not field during the Afghanistan innings. He is doubtful for the remainder of the tournament.

**Next assignment**  
**AFGHANISTAN:** June 29 vs Pakistan, *Headingley*, 3 p.m.  
**BANGLADESH:** July 2 vs India, *Eggbaston*, 3 p.m.

### STAT SPHERE

**1** Shakib is the first player in World Cup history to aggregate 400 runs and take 10 wickets in a single edition (6 matches, 476 runs, 10 wkts., so far)

**1** The Bangladesh all-rounder is the first to score two centuries and take two four-fors in the history of the tournament

**Hundreds**  
121 vs Eng, Cardiff 2019  
124 vs WI, Taunton, 2019

**Four-fors**  
4/55 vs NZ, Hamilton, 2015  
5/29 vs Afghanistan, Southampton, 2019

**6** Number of fifties for Mushfiqur in World Cups. This is also his 35th in One-Day Internationals

SCOREBOARD BANGLADESH VS AFGHANISTAN	
<b>BANGLADESH</b> Liton Das c Hashmatullah b Mujeeb 16 (17b, 2x4), Tamim Iqbal b Nabi 36 (53b, 4x4), Shakib Al Hasan lbw b Mujeeb 51 (69b, 1x4), Mushfiqur Rahim c Nabi b Dawlat 83 (87b, 4x4, 1x6), Soumya Sarkar lbw b Mujeeb 3 (70b), Mahmudullah c Nabi b Naib 27 (38b, 2x4), Mosaddek Hossain b Naib 35 (24b, 4x4), Mohammad Saifuddin (not out) 2 (2b); Extras (w-9): 9; Total (for seven wkts. in 50 overs): 262. <p><b>FALL OF WICKETS</b> 1-23 (Liton, 4.2 overs), 2-82 (Tamim, 16.6), 3-143 (Shakib, 29.2), 4-151 (Sarkar, 31.6), 5-207 (Mahmudullah, 42.6), 6-251 (Mushfiqur, 48.3), 7-262</p>	<b>AFGHANISTAN BOWLING</b> Mujeeb 10-0-39-3, Dawlat 9-0-64-1, Nabi 10-0-44-1, Naib 10-1-56-2, Rashid 10-0-52-0, Rahmat 1-0-7-0. <p><b>AFGHANISTAN</b> Gulbadin Naib c Liton b Shakib 47 (75b, 3x4), Rahmat Shah c Tamim b Shakib 24 (35b, 3x4), Hashmatullah Shahidi st. Mushfiqur b Mosaddek 11 (31b), Asghar Afghan c sub b Shakib 20 (38b, 1x4), Mohammad Nabi b Shakib 0 (2b), Samiullah Shinwari (not out) 49 (57b, 3x4, 1x6), Ikram Alikhil (run out) 11 (12b, 1x4), Najibullah Zadran st. Mushfiqur b Shakib 23 (23b, 2x4), Rashid Khan c Mortaza b Mustafizur 2 (3b), Dawlat Zadran c Mushfiqur b Mustafizur 0 (8b), Mujeeb Ur Rahman b Saifuddin 0 (4b); Extras (b-1, lb-6, w-6): 13; Total (in 47 overs): 200.</p> <p><b>FALL OF WICKETS</b> 1-49 (Rahmat, 10.5 overs), 2-79 (Hashmatullah, 20.5), 3-104 (Naib, 28.1), 4-104 (Nabi, 28.3), 5-117 (Afghan, 32.2), 6-132 (Alikhil, 35.1), 7-188 (Najibullah, 42.4), 8-191 (Rashid, 43.3), 9-195 (Dawlat, 45.4).</p> <p><b>BANGLADESH BOWLING</b> Mortaza 7-0-37-0, Mustafizur 8-1-32-2, Saifuddin 8-0-33-1, Shakib 10-1-29-5, Mehidy 8-0-37-0, Mosaddek 6-0-25-1.</p> <p><b>Toss:</b> Afghanistan. <b>MoM:</b> Shakib. Bangladesh won by 62 runs.</p>

## Russell ruled out of WC



Andre Russell. • AP

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
MANCHESTER

West Indies was dealt a severe blow ahead of its crucial match against India on Thursday after all-rounder Andre Russell was on Monday ruled out of the remainder of the World Cup with a knee injury.

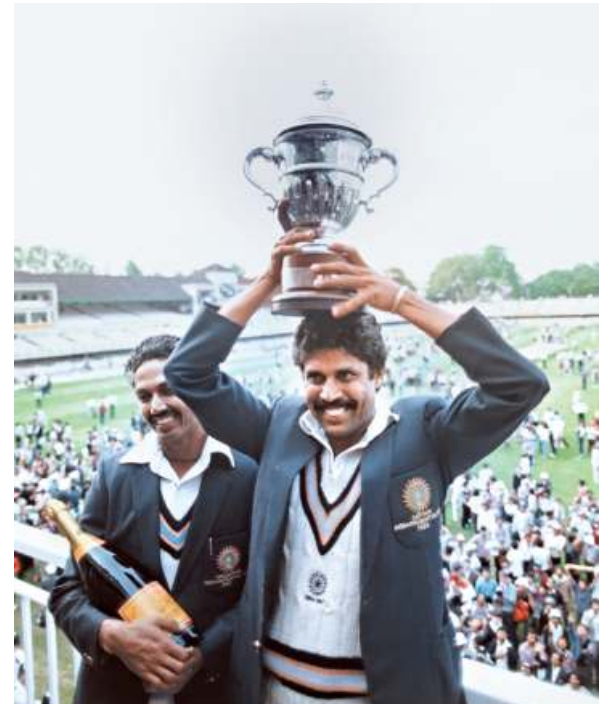
Russell has been replaced by Sunil Ambris. In the four matches he played, Russell managed just 36 runs at an average of 12.

## Where they stand

Team	Mat	Won	Lost	NR	PTS	NRR
New Zealand	6	5	0	1	11	1.306
Australia	6	5	1	0	10	0.849
India	5	4	0	1	9	0.809
England	6	4	2	0	8	1.457
Bangladesh	7	3	3	1	7	-0.133
Sri Lanka	6	2	2	2	6	-1.119
Pakistan	6	2	3	1	5	-1.265
West Indies	6	1	4	1	3	0.190
South Africa (E)	7	1	5	1	3	-0.324
Afghanistan (E)	7	0	7	0	0	-1.634

*\*till the Bangladesh-Afghanistan match on June 24; E: Eliminated*

## Steeped in history



**Top of the world:** On this date, 36 summers ago, Kapil Dev and his trusted lieutenant Mohinder Amarnath helped India achieve its greatest cricketing moment by stunning West Indies at Lord's to claim the Prudential World Cup. The two teams will again square off on June 27 at Old Trafford.

• ADRIAN MURRELL/GETTY IMAGES

## Tendulkar in England camp!

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
LONDON

A Tendulkar helped England ahead of its World Cup clash against Australia – not the man who owns almost all the batting records but the boy who aspires to shine with the ball.

Aiming to live up to his illustrious surname, Arjun Tendulkar ran in fast and bowled at the England batsmen on the eve of their big-ticket clash against arch-rival Australia at Lord's.

Arjun could be seen bowling under the watchful eyes of the team's spin bowling consultant, Saqlain Mushtaq.

This is not the first time that Arjun has bowled in the nets for England.

In 2015, as a 15-year-old, he was part of the group of net bowlers which helped England prepare for the second Ashes Test.

**K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR**  
MANCHESTER

It happens once in four years. South Africa arrives at the World Cup full of hope and then the performances fluctuate. Once the Proteas wilt, the tear glands of their captains are tested in press conferences where some questions prove to be knives that cleave the soul.

**Dirge continues**  
In the 2011 edition, Graeme Smith turned up at the Mirpur's Shere Bangla National Stadium's media hall after his men suffered a 49-run loss in the quarterfinal against New Zealand. The word 'chokers' was banded around and Smith's eyes turned damp, it was heart-breaking. The dirge continued in 2015 and New Zealand rode on Grant Elliott's unbeaten 84 to scale past South Africa's tall score in the semifinal at Auckland's Eden Park.

The worry-lined foreheads and quivering voices that combined to be the final curtain on South African aspirations in almost every World Cup since 1992, is overwhelmingly linked to one image that blends initial comedy with a tragic climax. Lance Klusener and Allan Donald run without a clue in the 1999 semifinal against Steve Waugh's men at Birmingham's Edgbaston. The stumps are thrown down, Klusener walks away in disgust, Donald's shoulders slump and it is a picture that unerringly comes back to haunt.

Cut to the latest World Cup, and there is no avoiding the funeral air as Faf du Plessis and his men, crashed



**Agony:** Nothing went right for Faf du Plessis' men. • REUTERS

out following their loss to Pakistan at Lord's on Sunday. With one victory in seven games and just two matches remaining, South Africa became the first premium unit to press the exit button.

**Bad start**  
It may not come as a surprise considering a history of unfulfilled promises and a tendency to implode at the slightest hint of pressure but there is no denying the lingering sadness in the cricketing fraternity. The campaign had a terrible start as first-up there was the disruptive news about A.B. de Villiers pitching for a slot in the team. Rightly his plea was rejected as he had already retired and a squad was built to offset his absence.

The related chatter was distracting and then came Dale Steyn's injured shoulder that ruled him out. Add to it Hashim Amla's dwindling returns, a sharp contrast to his exalted standards and there was nothing sunny about the South Africans, except for leg-spinner Imran Tahir's celebratory sprints after extracting a wicket.

A tired du Plessis spoke about the latest free-fall "chipping away at him as a man". There is pathos and back home, tumult is evident. Ever since Cricket South Africa goaded by the government, implemented a transformation phase in which there were quotas based on race in provincial squads and even pushed for it at the national level, many players have snuggled into English counties or Twenty20 leagues. Even Kevin Pietersen sought glory in the England shade.

Having followed the accused Apartheid, a racially discriminatory policy in the distant past, South Africa is trying to make-up for its sins. Just that in sport, the emerging talent, be it White, Black, Cape Coloured or Indian, is struggling to wriggle through the quota-sieve. Some persist, others say 'show me the money' and a country lapses into distress.

## At Lord's, a clash of the titans

England has won nine of its last 10 games against Australia

**SHAYAN ACHARYA**  
SOUTHAMPTON

It will be a clash of the heavyweights when England takes on Australia in a World Cup fixture at Lord's on Tuesday. The Eoin Morgan-led side will seek resurgence against the Aussies to move closer to a semifinal spot.

While the top-order batsmen – Jonny Bairstow, Joe Root and captain Morgan – have tried their best to give the side steady starts, the absence of the injured Jason Roy has affected its batting intensity.

With openers David Warner and Aaron Finch in top form, Australia looks strong.

THE FACE-OFF						
England vs Australia						
LORD'S						
HEAD-TO-HEAD						
	MORGAN	MATCHES	ENG	AUS	TIED	NR
Overall		147	61	81	2	3
World Cup		7	2	5	0	0

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 (SD & HD), 3 P.M.

However, it could be a challenge for a rather shaky middle-order – which has failed to contribute in the last three games – to up the ante, against a star-studded England pace attack, comprising Mark Wood, Chris Woakes and Jofra Archer.

England, though, has an edge over the defending champion, as it has won nine of the last 10 meetings.

**An eye on the sky**  
With thunder showers predicted for Tuesday, the toss could prove crucial.

## TV PICKS

**ICC World Cup:** Star Sports 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 3 p.m.  
**FIFA women's World Cup:** Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 p.m.

## IN BRIEF



## Hannah Green's first title is a Major

LOS ANGELES  
Hannah Green became the first Australian to win a Major in 13 years on Sunday, holding off a pack of marquee players with a wire-to-wire victory at the Women's PGA Championship. The 22-year-old Green, who had never won on the LPGA Tour before, delivered an even-par 72 and a one-stroke victory over defending champion Park Sung-hyun. "To win a Major as my first event I am so over the moon," said Green. She is the third Australian woman to win a Major after Karrie Webb and Jan Stephenson. AFP



## Baghdatis to quit after Wimbledon

PARIS  
Former World No. 8 Marcos Baghdatis, who was Australian Open runner-up in 2006, will quit tennis after this year's Wimbledon, the 34-year-old Cypriot announced on Monday. "It has proven tough for me, especially physically, to come back to where I feel I belong," said Baghdatis. AFP

## Indian junior boxers shine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Indian junior women pugilists clinched seven medals, including five gold, and the team was adjudged the best of the tournament in the Black Forest Cup boxing in Villingen, Schweningen, Germany. Tamanna (48kg), Anju, Neha, H. Ambeshori Devi (57kg) and Preeti Dahiya (60kg) returned with golds, the Boxing Federation of India said in a release.

While Tamanna beat Daria of Ukraine 4-1, Neha was dominant over Lithuania's Kara Kornelija (RSC) in the first round.

Anju demolished Fatima of Germany 5-0, while Ambeshori blanked Varga Beata of Hungary 5-0. Preeti outsmarted Tutal Lutfiye of Germany 5-0.

Germany's Lara downed India's Tannu 3-2 in the 52kg final while Aashreya Dinesh Naik lost to local hope Heck Jenin 5-0 in the 63kg category.

## Argentina enters quarterfinals

Group-winner Colombia gets past Paraguay

## COPA AMERICA

REUTERS  
PORTO ALEGRE (BRAZIL)  
An early goal from Lautaro Martinez and a late second from Sergio Aguiro gave Argentina a 2-0 win over Qatar on Sunday, a deserved victory that took it into the Copa America quarterfinals against Venezuela.

Argentina took the lead after three minutes when an atrocious pass out of defence went straight to Martinez, who made no mistake from 15 metres out.

The first half was an even affair with Martinez and Aguiro missing good chances for Argentina and Bassam Alrawi clipping the post from a free kick for the Asian champion. But even with Lionel Messi looking more sprightly than in Argentina's first two games, it took until the second half before it was able to seal the points.

With eight minutes remaining Aguiro ran on to a through ball and angled a fine drive past the Qatari keeper.

## Gain confidence

"We played a good game and we won, and that was what mattered," Messi said. "We needed a game like this to



Hit-men: Lautaro Martinez, left, and Sergio Aguiro found the net for Argentina against Qatar on Sunday. •AFP

gain some confidence and calm. As we play more games the team grows each one and that game was good for that."

Coach Lionel Scaloni said he was content with the performance and delighted to still be in with a chance of silverware.

"Of course there are things we can improve on but we're satisfied," he said. "The message has to be that as long as are in the Copa

America we need to keep pushing forward."

Argentina's win, its first after a loss to Colombia and a draw with Paraguay, left it in second place in Group B on four points behind group winner Colombia, which beat Paraguay 1-0 at Salvador.

Colombia made 10 changes from the side that beat Qatar in their its outing but still dominated play while Paraguay, which had to win to en-

sure it progressed, barely caused any danger.

Midfielder Gustavo Cuelar put Colombia ahead just after the half-hour mark, sliding the ball through the legs of Paraguay goalkeeper Roberto Fernandez, while Luis Diaz struck in the second half but the goal was ruled out by VAR.

The results: Group B: Argentina 2 (Martinez 4, Aguiro 82) bt Qatar 0; Colombia 1 (Cuelar 31) bt Paraguay 0.

## Henry's extra-time strike puts France in last eight

England also advances with ease amid VAR mayhem

## WOMEN'S WC

REUTERS  
LE HAVRE  
France captain Amandine Henry came to the rescue as the host scraped into the women's World Cup quarterfinals with a 2-1 win against Brazil after extra time on Sunday, setting up a likely clash with holder the United States.

Henry found the back of the net in the 107th minute of a tense game at the Stade Oceane after Thaisa had cancelled out Valerie Gauvin's second-half opener.

Brazilian legend Marta said: "I'm proud of our performance, the grit that we showed until the end. That's the feeling that I will keep with me. "Those are the kind of matches that will help women's football to continue to grow."

## Cameroon's anger

Meanwhile in Valenciennes, England marched into the quarterfinals after a 3-0 victory over Cameroon on Sunday in a dramatic match that was overshadowed by the African side's anger towards the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) over several



See, I did it! French captain Amandine Henry celebrates her goal that sent the host into the quarterfinals at the expense of Brazil on Sunday. •AFP

decisions. England took the lead in the 14th minute when Steph Houghton drilled the ball low into the right corner of the penalty area. Forward Ellen White then scored her fourth goal of the tournament, with VAR confirming that she was not offside after the goal was initially disallowed.

That incensed Cameroon's players who appeared to almost refuse to restart the contest as they argued with the referee in the middle of the pitch, furiously pointing to the screen in stadium which showed the replay.

The match continued af-

ter Cameroon coach Alain Djeumfa managed to calm his players but more anger was to follow in the second half after Ajara Nchout scored to reduce the deficit. The forward's goal was disallowed for offside following a VAR review, 1 amid more protests.

England added a third through defender Alex Greenwood, who swept in a first-time effort from a well worked corner in the 58th minute to rub salt into the wounds.

The results: Last 16: England 3 (Houghton 14, White 45+4, Greenwood 58) bt Cameroon 0; France 2 (Gauvin 52, Henry 107) bt Brazil 1 (Thaisa 63).

## Becker's trophies go on online auction

From superstar to bankruptcy — a bizarre tale unfolds

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Trophies and personal souvenirs belonging to German tennis star Boris Becker is being auctioned online by British firm Wyles Hardy to partially clear the bankrupt champion's debts.

The youngest winner in Wimbledon history, who claimed the first of three titles aged just 17, is auctioning off 82 items, including medals, cups, watches and photographs.

The sale will end on July 11, Wyles Hardy said on its website.

## Memorabilia

Some of the trophies up for grabs include a replica of a Challenge Cup awarded to Becker following one of his Wimbledon wins, and the three-quarter size replica of the Renshaw Cup presented after he became the youngest ever Grand Slam singles champion.

His Wimbledon finalist medal from 1990, when he was beaten by Swede Stefan Edberg, and a replica of the US Open silver cup made by jeweller Tiffany for his 1989 victory over Ivan Lendl will also be included in the sale.

The indebted 51-year-old champion was declared bankrupt in 2017.

In June 2018, he claimed he had diplomatic status and therefore immunity, thus stopping the sale of his tro-



Fallen idol: Sale of Boris Becker's memorabilia is expected to cover only a part of his huge debts. •BRADLEY KANARIS/GETTY IMAGES

phies and personal souvenirs at the last minute.

The former World No. 1 claimed he had been appointed by the President of the Central African Republic as a sporting, cultural and humanitarian "attache" to the European Union.

But the Central African Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied the passport brandished by Becker was a fake one, coming from a batch of "blank passports stolen in 2014".

## Substantial bids

Becker finally ended this bizarre episode in December by waiving his right to immunity in a London court specialising in insolvency cases, leading the auction house to put the trophies back on the market.

The first attempt "attract-

ed very substantial bids," Mark Ford, one of the three trustees of Becker's bankruptcy estate, said in a statement. However, the sales will not be enough to cover debts valued at millions of pounds.

Becker has already had legal difficulties with the Spanish courts over unpaid debts for work carried out on his villa in Mallorca.

The pastor who married him in 2009 also took him to court in Switzerland and the German courts in 2002 gave him a two-year suspended sentence and a fine of €500,000 over €1.7 million in unpaid taxes.

The six-time Grand Slam winner, nicknamed 'Boom Boom' Becker for his devastating serve, won 49 titles and more than €20 million in prize money during his career.

## I-League clubs to approach court

Don't want AIFF to make ISL the country's top league

## FOOTBALL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Putting up a united front, seven I-League clubs said on Monday that they were ready to approach "appropriate courts for relief" if the All India Football Federation (AIFF) makes the ISL the country's top league.

Miffed at AIFF general-secretary Kushal Das' public acknowledgement of the ISL as the main league, representatives of Mohun Bagan,

East Bengal, Churchill Brothers, Minerva Punjab, Aizawl, Neroca and Gokulam Kerala held a meeting here.

Das' acknowledgement is expected to be sealed at the AIFF's executive committee meeting on July 3.

"With media reports indicating that the ISL being announced as the top division league post an Executive committee meeting scheduled for July 3, the I-League clubs are standing united stronger than ever," the clubs said in a joint

statement.

The AIFF, reacting to the joint statement of the I-League clubs, said it was "premature and unnecessary" to pre-judge any action and be commenting on the AIFF Executive Committee meeting on July 3 in advance.

"The AIFF, as a custodian of Indian football, has always endeavoured to balance the interests of all stakeholders, the Hero I-League and its clubs," added the statement.

## Record entries for South India Rally

Promoter Champions Yacht Club thrilled with the response

## MOTORSPORTS

RAYAN ROZARIO  
COIMBATORE

If Champions Yacht Club (CYC), the new promoters of the Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) for four wheelers are to be believed, the 41st South India Rally, the season's opening round scheduled at Chennai this weekend, will create a record of sorts with over 50 entries already registered for the event.

"We are thrilled with the response. There are more enquiries but the MMSC (Madras Motorsports Club) has its own limitations. We are requesting to add a few more



Vamsi Merla, Director of CYC.

to the list," Vamsi Merla, the CYC director, told *The Hindu* from Chennai.

"I am pleased as the list includes youngsters and women. And that adds up to our challenge," he said.

He said it will be a test for

both the man and machine as they have increased the stage kilometres.

"We don't want the participants to get away driving just a limited distance. We want them to display their speed and skill and at the same time learn how to preserve the car."

Vamsi was pleased with the dedication and effort taken by the MMSC for the event.

Manoj Dalal, the Clerk of Course of Chennai Rally, who was here for the MRF National championship, said there will be 11 stages in all.

"We have increased the distance by 10% and it's going to be fast flowing. I be-

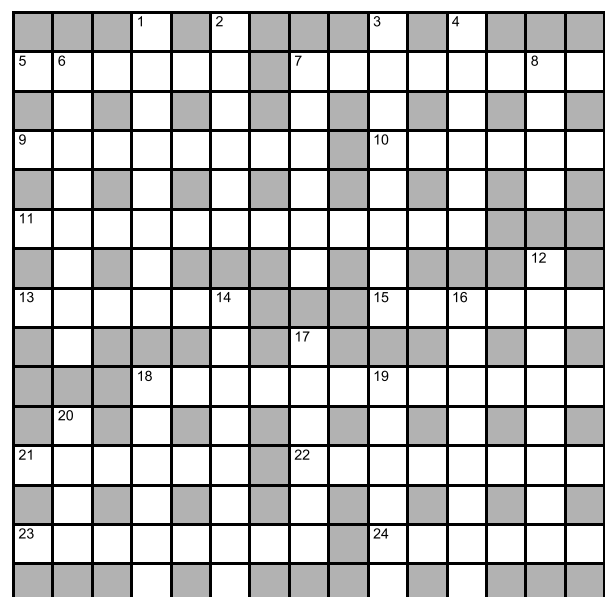
lieve this will see some better timings by the drivers."

He said the spectators will get to see some exciting drives.

"It is smooth dirt track with some good width. The finish part will be flat out on the tarmac. The Super Special Stage will be on tarmac and the rest will be on dirt. It's going to be exciting for all the guys. They are really going to enjoy it. There will be some tight corners too."

"The stages are ready and the final tulating has already been done. We got good support from B.S. Sujith Kumar (who did the road book), some Erode boys and many others.

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12661



## ACROSS

- 5 Takes responsibility for a party... gets points (6)  
7 Oaf of a man and boy consume everything around (8)  
9 Monkey has date fruit (8)  
10 Don't start to criticise guard (6)  
11 Marketing rep distributed timer (7,5)

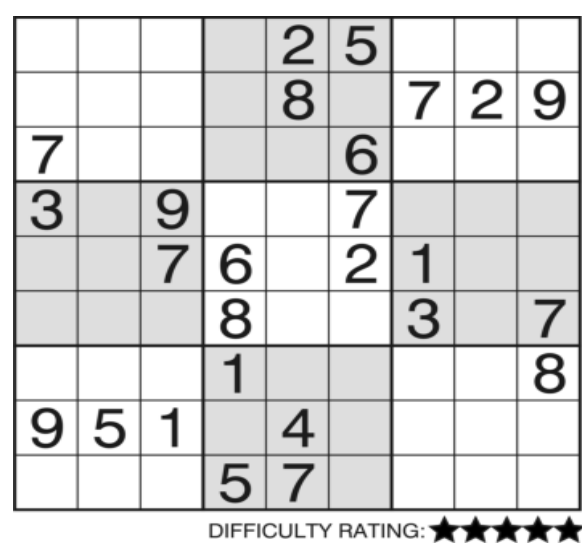
## DOWN

- 1 Posh posh companion's impression? Boring... (8)  
2 Give passes often to hot girl to enter (6)  
3 Finally, malfunctioning steamer's working better (8)

(set by Bruno)

- 13 Hey! That should be X not L! (6)  
15 Divorced President in Italian city went ahead and parted (6)  
18 Blazer left on board — sailor gets sleeve trimmed (6,6)  
21 Participants in ultrafast rally are like stars (6)  
22 John involved in mathematical operation to unravel time constant's structure (3,5)  
23 Save up credit first... then get a little smack, ecstasy, or crack (8)  
24 Wedding dance shortly allowing free entry (6)  
4 One that mistreated a table-cleaner's son — thrown out (6)  
6 Difficult Master's obtained — leaving school's emotional (8)  
7 Crazy Bruno's following a woman (6)  
8 Charisma of Lou Reed even can wane (4)  
12 Sugar in sambar? Aré! Me definitely throw up! (8)  
14 New growth — shoots — on maples (8)  
16 Footwear worn at the start of main event not secondary contest (8)  
17 Figure right now, true leader (and deputy) are missing (6)  
18 Work hard to hammer rivets (6)  
19 Candy's partly just junk and beer (6)  
20 Russian leader long ago — was beheaded and overthrown? (4)

## SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

## Solution to puzzle 12660

L	R	S	S	Y	A	D							
F	O	R	E	S	T	C	O	U	S	C	O	U	S
N	M	R	A	L	C	R							
A	E	R	O	N	A	E	L	I	X	I	R		
S	T	T	T	T	D	N							
T	O	L	E	R	A	T	E	C	E	A	G	E	
M	E	N	P	E	R	D	N						
H	E	N	P	E	C	K	P	E	T	T	I	S	
L	E	C	O	E									
E	M	B	A	L	M	I	N	O	I	G	E	N	
A	C	E	T	E	A	T							
R	E	V	E	R	T	I	N	S	O	M	N	I	
N	N	E	Z	I	B	N							
S	A	L	T	T	R	E	E	R	L	I	E	F	
D	A	Y	N	E	E	L							

## Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	7	1	8	6	4	9	5	2
6	9	5	2	1	7	3	8	4
4	2	8	9	5	3	1	7	6
2	8	6	1	9	5	4	3	7
7	3	9	6	4	2	5	1	8
5	1	4	3	7	8	2	6	9
8	4	7	5	3	9	6	2	1
1	5	2	4	8	6	7	9	3
9	6	3	7	2	1	8	4	5

## FAITH

## Strive for a pure mind

Malyavan, Ravana's maternal uncle, wishing to avert the imminent destruction of Lanka, points out to Ravana that he will be doomed if he allows himself to be subject to his indriyas. Rama, Lakshmana and others are mere characters who are not going to be the cause of his downfall. It is his own indriyas which will destroy him. Then Ravana tells Malyavan that though aware of dharma and adhama, it is not possible for him to change his character and his inherent nature. He would rather break into two than bend.

In a way, Ravana reflects the losing battle every jivatma constantly wages against the indriyas and the prime enemies in the form of kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya and so on. So it is to be assumed that attaining purity of mind is only going to be a distant dream for the jivatma? No, says Tondaradipodi Azhwar in his hymn, when he raises this issue of the peculiar plight of the jivatma, pointed out Velukkudi Sri Krishnan in a discourse. Though Azhwar speaks in the first person to the Lord in his candid self-appraisal, it is on behalf of all jivatmas. He confesses that he is the worst sinner with not an iota of purity in thought, word or deed. Yet he is confident that he can be rid of evil since the onus of cleansing his mind is on God.

On what grounds is he placing this responsibility on God? Why not, he asks, pointing out that God has pledged to save all the jivatmas, irrespective of their sinful nature, if only they acknowledge their faults and seek His help in this regard.

The message is clear, that unlike Ravana one should believe that one can change for the better and should have the will to change. With this bent of mind, one should appeal to God to rid him of evil tendencies.