

# 'We should have WC playoffs like the IPL'

Arun says the teams that finish first and second in the league phase deserve some incentive

## EXCLUSIVE

S. DINAKAR  
CHENNAI

Bharat Arun has been a quiet achiever as India's bowling coach, putting together an aggressive wicket-minded attack that can sting.

Despite India's shock exit in the ICC World Cup semifinal, chiefly caused by a batting collapse in the first 10 overs, Arun, in a conversation with *The Hindu*, felt there were many positives for Virat Kohli's men from the competition.

**On India topping the 10-team group stage:** We performed with consistency and aggression and were the team of the World Cup till the semifinal, topping in a gruelling format revived after 1992.

**On the semifinal defeat against New Zealand:** The whole team was heart-broken. Just 45 minutes of bad cricket saw us out. Also India batting on the second day hurt us. The ball always does things in the mornings in England and it moved. On day one, the pitch actually eased out and the momentum was with us.

**On the format for the knockout stages:** There should be some incentive for the teams that finish first and second in this long, demanding league phase. We should have playoffs like in the IPL.

**On the criticism directed at M.S. Dhoni:** It was very unfair. He has contributed so much to the Indian team, is a legend. In fact, on many oc-



Top bunch: B. Arun said many felt that India was the bowling side of the World Cup. ■ AP

casions, Virat Kohli bounces off ideas off Dhoni, respects him. In the semifinal, we were all confident till Dhoni was there. We could see he was lining himself up for the big hits in the final over. Sadly, the run out happened.

**On the harmony within the team-management and the support staff:** It's not that we agree on everything. We have our arguments and discussions on various aspects like the composition of the team and the strategy. Everyone voices his opinion. But, at the end of the day, the other person's view is respected and a collective deci-

sion is taken.

**On the relationship between skipper Kohli and vice-captain Rohit Sharma:** It has to be seen to be believed. Rohit often runs up to Kohli to discuss things. They get along very well, share great admiration for each other's ability. Kohli led the side well, is maturing as a captain and it's nice that he has Rohit for support. The spirit in the camp was wonderful throughout.

**On the Indian bowling in the World Cup:** Many felt we were the bowling side of the tournament. Jasprit Bumrah was brilliant with

his pace and variations. His hard-to-pick short-pitched deliveries skid on to the batsmen.

Bhuvneshwar [Kumar] showed character, moved the ball. Hardik Pandya was a revelation with his changes

## STAT SPHERE

- The Indian bowlers picked up 74 wickets in CWC2019, the fourth highest behind England (90), New Zealand (82) and Australia (76)
- Bumrah led the pack with 18 wickets, followed by Shami (14)
- Shami's wickets, which came

at an average of 13.78, was the best among bowlers with five wickets or more
- Bumrah recorded the best economy rate (1.50) in an innings. In his six overs against the West Indies, he conceded just nine, bowled a maiden and also took two wickets

**On wrist-spinners not having a great World Cup:** The conditions did not really suit them, it was cold. The batsmen also played them well, a lot off the back-foot.

**On the effective deliveries in the tournament:** The deliveries on a good length that moved. The slower off-cutter bouncers, the quick bouncer and the cross seam deliveries.

**On how the final concluded:** I agree with Sachin Tendulkar that one more Super Over could have been played. Why look only at boundaries when there are so many methods to make runs? Looking at the number of wickets lost is the best way to decide.

# West Indies tour: Bharat in the race for Test spot

Saha on comeback trail too; Pant likely first-choice 'keeper

G. VISWANATH  
MUMBAI

Ten days have passed with bated anticipation after M.S. Dhoni returned to the Old Trafford dressing room falling a run out-victim to Martin Gupthill in the World Cup semifinal against New Zealand.

The cricketing fraternity, somewhat disappointed with the way he batted in the World Cup, believed that he would announce his retirement from white-ball cricket after having bid adieu from the traditional Test cricket after the second Test of the 2014 series against Australia in Melbourne.

Those who have wished Dhoni well right through his spectacular career believe that he would not allow his procrastination to be a stumbling block to the Indian team selection.

With the BCCI president and secretary rendered irrelevant by certain actions of the Committee of Administrators (CoA), only the chief selector M.S.K. Prasad can talk it over with Dhoni about his future with the national team.

## Selection on Sunday

It may have already happened or will happen before the selection committee meets here on Sunday to pick the Indian team for the West Indies tour that involves three ODIs and T20Is each and two Tests, all from Aug. 3 to Sept. 3.

The committee is looking



Wicketkeeper-batsman K.S. Bharat. ■ FILE PHOTO

■ Bharat has played 11 unofficial Tests against the 'A' teams of West Indies, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and England Lions, scored 686 runs, held 41 catches and effected six stumpings

at a basket that's not really full, but offers options. One is Andhra's wicketkeeper-batsman K.S. Bharat. The rationale is that performances for India-A should be given meaning and recognition.

If there is an award for an India-A player of the year, the 25-year-old Bharat would be among the front-runners. Rishabh Pant, though, would be the first-choice wicketkeeper for the Test series. He scored an unbeaten

159 in the fourth and final Test against Australia in Sydney. In fact, Pant should figure in all three teams.

The Prasad-led selection committee has chosen Bengal's Wriddhiman Saha and Bharat in the India-A team for the three multi-day matches against the West Indies-A to be played in July-August in Antigua, Port of Spain and Tarouba.

Saha, 34, is trying to stage a comeback after an injury forced him out of the team after the first Test against South Africa at Cape Town in January 2018. Saha returned to active cricket during the IPL and, most importantly, in the Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament for Bengal.

In the last 12 months, Bharat has played 11 unofficial Tests against the 'A' teams of West Indies, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and England Lions, scored 686 runs with three centuries and two half-centuries, held 41 catches and effected six stumpings.

## Impressive record

Overall he has an impressive record of 65 First Class matches, 3798 runs with eight centuries, 20 fifties and 223 catches and 27 stumping and thus has made a strong claim for a Test squad spot.

He has scored three centuries against Australia-A (106 at Alur), England Lions (142 at Wayanad) and Sri Lanka-A (117 at Hubli), and these good numbers cannot be ignored.

# Stokes — New Zealander of the Year?

IANS  
WELLINGTON

England all-rounder Ben Stokes, who broke millions of Kiwi hearts in the recently concluded World Cup, has been nominated for the 'New Zealander of the Year' Award.

New Zealand-born Stokes has been nominated for the award along with Black Caps captain Kane Williamson, Newstalk ZB host Simon Barnett, former league star Manu Vatavei and one of the heroes of the Christchurch mosque attacks, Abdul Aziz, reports *New Zealand Herald*.

New Zealand chief judge Cameron Bennett said both Stokes and Williamson had received several nominations after the dramatic World Cup final.

"He might not have been playing for the Black Caps but, having been born in Christchurch, where his parents now live, and with Maori ancestry, there's clearly a few Kiwis about who think we can still claim him," Bennett said of Stokes.

# No suspension for over-rate offences: ICC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON

International cricket captains will no longer run the risk of being suspended for slow over-rates, with the ICC deciding instead to dock points and fine the entire side for any such violations, starting with the upcoming World Test Championship.

The recommendations of the ICC Cricket Committee were approved by its board in order to curb the menace of slow over-rates. The world Test championship, which runs from 2019 to 2021, gets underway with the Ashes, starting August 1. "In World Test Championship matches a team that is behind the required over rate at the end of a match will have two competition points deducted for each over it is behind," the ICC said in statement here.

# Tendulkar and Donald in ICC Hall of Fame



Sachin Tendulkar. ■ FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON

Indian batting icon Sachin Tendulkar has been inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame alongside South African pace legend Allan Donald. Joining Tendulkar and Donald in the Hall of Fame was two-time World Cup-winning Australian woman cricketer Cathryn Fitzpatrick.

"It's a huge honour for me," Tendulkar said at the induction ceremony held here on Sunday night. The 46-year-old former right-hand batsman is regarded the greatest to have played



Allan Donald. ■ LAURENCE GRIFFITHS/GETTY IMAGES

the game along with Sir Donald Bradman and remains the top run-accumulator in both Tests and ODIs. He has 34,357 runs across formats and is the only batsman to have 100 internationals hundreds under his belt.

The 52-year-old Donald is one of the finest bowlers to have played the game and had 330 Test and 272 ODI wickets to his credit before calling it quits in 2003.

Fitzpatrick is the second highest wicket-taker of all time in women's cricket with 180 ODI scalps and 60 in Tests. As a coach, she guided the Australian women's team to three World Cup titles.

# Double delight for Indian paddlers

Men's and women's teams get past England in contrasting styles

## C'WEALTH TT

AMOL KARHADKAR  
CUTTACK

India's men and women overcame England in contrasting finals to repeat their last year's team championship double-gold medal feat at Commonwealth Games by lifting the glittering trophies on the third day of the 21st Commonwealth table tennis championship.

While the women rolled over England 3-0 in an one-sided affair to win a historic first gold for India in the tournament's 48-year history, A. Sharath Kamal's boys made a stunning comeback to edge past England 3-2 and retained their team title.

## Challenging

The men's final turned out to be far more challenging than India anticipated. Veteran Sharath suffered a shock defeat to England's promising youngster Tom Jarvis. G. Sathiyam then led 2-0 against England's top paddler Sam Walker but the latter rallied to help England double the lead, leaving the gallery spell-bound with his powerful backhand winners.

Women, however, had it easy. After breaking eight times defending champion Singapore's run in the semifinals, Manika Batra, Archana Kamath and Madhurika Pat-



Total success: India's men's and women's teams pose with their rewards. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

kar sailed past the England girls without breaking sweat.

**The results: Team Championship: Men: Final: India bt England 3-2** (A. Sharath Kamal lost to Thomas Jarvis 7-11, 8-11, 4-11; G. Sathiyam lost to Samuel Walker 11-5, 11-9, 4-11, 8-11, 8-11; Harmeet Desai bt David McBeath 4-11, 11-5, 8-11, 11-8, 11-8; Sathiyam bt Jarvis 11-2, 6-11, 11-4, 11-4; Sharath bt Walker 15-13, 12-10, 11-6).

**Semifinals: India bt Singapore 3-0** (Sharath bt Pang Yu En Koen 11-5, 8-11, 11-8, 11-5; Sathiyam bt Chew Zheyu Clarence 11-6, 11-8, 13-11; Desai bt Beh

kar bt Wong Qi Shen 11-5, 11-2, 9-11, 11-6; Jarvis bt Ashraf Muhammad Rizal 12-14, 11-7, 11-6, 11-7; McBeath lost to Leong Chee Feng 11-9, 4-11, 11-5, 10-12, 7-11; Walker bt Rizal 8-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-2).

**Final standings:** India, England, Singapore, Malaysia, Nigeria, Wales, Australia, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, South Africa, Bangladesh, Scotland.

**Women: Final: India bt England 3-0** (Archana Kamath bt Ho Tin Tin 8-11, 13-11, 11-9, 11-9; Manika Batra bt Denise Payet 11-6,

# Manika pulls out of individual events

AMOL KARHADKAR  
CUTTACK

Despite leading India's women paddlers to a historic first gold medal, Manika Batra had mixed emotions while cheering her male counterparts in their final versus England, here.

After all, the bug has forced her to withdraw from all the individual

events.

"I am very sad because I really wanted to play and win but I didn't know that this (infection) will happen. But it's okay as I have to take care of my health as well," said Batra.

"I pushed myself in the teams (championship) and we won, so I am happy after winning a gold medal in teams."

Kun Ting 11-9, 10-12, 11-9, 11-8); **England bt Malaysia 3-1** (Walker bt Wong Qi Shen 11-5, 11-2, 9-11, 11-6; Jarvis bt Ashraf Muhammad Rizal 12-14, 11-7, 11-6, 11-7; McBeath lost to Leong Chee Feng 11-9, 4-11, 11-5, 10-12, 7-11; Walker bt Rizal 8-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-2).

**Final standings:** India, England, Singapore, Malaysia, Nigeria, Wales, Australia, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, South Africa, Bangladesh, Scotland.

**Women: Final: India bt England 3-0** (Archana Kamath bt Ho Tin Tin 8-11, 13-11, 11-9, 11-9; Manika Batra bt Denise Payet 11-6,

11-4, 11-3; Madhurika Patkar bt Emily Bolton 11-9, 11-7, 11-6).

**Semifinals: India bt Singapore 3-0** (Batra bt Wong Xin Ru 7-11, 11-9, 9-11, 11-3, 13-11; Kamath bt Goi Rui Xuan 7-11, 11-2, 11-8, 11-5; Patkar bt Lim Eunice oe 11-6, 11-7, 11-7); **England bt Nigeria 3-0** (Ho bt Cecilia Akpan 11-9, 11-3, 11-4; Payet bt Offiong Edem 10-12, 11-8, 11-6, 9-11, 11-6; Bolton bt Ajoke Ojomu 7-11, 11-7, 2-11, 11-5, 11-9).

**Final standings:** India, England, Singapore, Nigeria, Malaysia, Australia, Wales, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, Scotland, Bangladesh, South Africa.

# Lowry surges with a sizzling outward nine, Holmes consolidates

Shubhankar in line to make cut; no such luck for Woods, Mickelson; Frittelli's charge tempered by a double-bogey at the 17th



REUTERS  
PORTRUSH (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Ireland's Shane Lowry proved master of the Dunluce links for the second successive day to move into a share of the halfway lead with American J.B. Holmes at the British Open on Friday.

A flurry of birdies early in a sizzling outward nine of 31 looked like giving the 32-year-old from across the border the outright lead but a bogey at the 18th left him on eight under after successive rounds of 67.

Holmes, the overnight leader, had the better of the

weather earlier in the day and consolidated his challenge with a 68.

They will play together in the last group on Saturday in what promises to be a battle of the beards.

## Tough terrain

Once again the par-71 layout on the Antrim coast proved tough terrain for the world's best golfers, although there were some low numbers on a congested leaderboard.

English duo Tommy Fleetwood and Lee Westwood, both looking for their first Majors, made hay with rounds of 68 moving them to seven under while South African Justin Harding's posted the lowest round of the day, six birdies and an eagle helping him to a six-under 65 to move three off the lead.

Alongside Harding are Australian Cameron Smith,



Digging deep: Shane Lowry's push for sole lead suffered due to a bogey at the 18th that put him eight under after successive rounds of 67. ■ STUART FRANKLIN/GETTY IMAGES

who scored a 66, and England's Justin Rose after a 67. South Africa's Dylan Frit-

telli, who only secured his place last week, was also on six under after his charge

was tempered by a double-bogey at the 17th. Shubhankar Sharma has

**I'm disappointed with the bogey but I'm where I want to be and happy. I knew the rain was coming so I wanted to get a fast start. I'm very, very excited for tomorrow**

SHANE LOWRY

assured himself of the weekend action after signing for a one-over-par 72 in the second round. It will be the second time he would make the cut in as many starts at the Open. With 70-72, he was even par for 36 holes and T-51.

## Well-placed

Holmes left several other bigger-name Americans in the shade again although Brooks Koepka, the world number one, and 2017 winner Jordan

Spitheth, are well-placed to challenge on five under. There will be no trademark Tiger Woods charge on Saturday, however, after he missed the cut.

Woods looked more like a 15-time Major champion on Friday after his opening-round 78 but his one-under 70 was in vain.

Phil Mickelson was also cut, meaning it is the first time in the 83 Majors in which the two American heavyweights have both appeared that neither survived for the weekend.

Late in the day all eyes turned to local favourite Rory McIlroy who produced a thrilling counter-attack in a bid to make the cut after his nightmare 79 on Thursday.

After 12 holes McIlroy was five under for his round and just two shots off the one-over cut mark.