

Prannoy prevails over Lin Dan

Makes pre-quarterfinals; Ashwini & Sikki get a walkover in opening match

BADMINTON WORLDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BASEL (SWITZERLAND)
India's H.S. Prannoy stunned London Olympics gold medalist and multiple-time world champion Lin Dan in a hard-fought match to enter the pre-quarterfinals of the World badminton championships here on Tuesday.
The unseeded Indian beat the highly-decorated Chinese, seeded 11th, 21-11, 13-21, 21-7 in an hour and two minutes in the second round.
In the pre-quarterfinals, Prannoy will meet top seed Kento Momota of Japan who eased past Enrique Penalver of Spain 21-10, 21-7.



Super show: H.S. Prannoy was not intimidated by the reputation of the former world No. 1 Lin Dan, winning in three games. • REUTERS

Dominant
Prannoy completely dominated the first game and led all the way after 2-2. The Indian was ahead 10-5 and then raced to 19-11 before pocketing it. In five meetings between the two, Prannoy has emerged victorious thrice.
Lin, who had also won gold in the 2008 Olympics, apart from seven World titles, roared back in the second game.
They were tied 5-5 but

from there on, the Chinese legend did not give any chance to Prannoy.
Prannoy, however, was not going to be intimidated by the reputation of the former world No. 1.

Pulling away
The Indian reserved the best for the last and left Lin far behind after being 4-4 and wrapped up the match.
In another clash, B. Sai

Praneeth scored a 21-16, 21-15 victory over South Korea's Lee Dong Keun.
In women's doubles, Ashwini Ponappa and N. Sikki Reddy got a walkover from Chinese Taipei's Chang Ching Hui and Yang Ching Tun in their opening match.
The results:
Men (second round): H.S. Prannoy bt Lin Dan (Chn) 21-11, 13-21, 21-7; B. Sai Praneeth bt Lee Dong Keun (Kor) 21-16, 21-15;
Doubles (first round): M.R. Ar-

jun & Shlok Ramchandran bt Tobias Kuenzi & Oliver Schaller (Sui) 21-14, 21-16; Manu Attri & B. Sumeeth Reddy bt Gicquel Thom & Labar Ronan (Fra) 21-13, 21-13; Takuto Inoue & Yuki Kaneko (Jpn) bt Arun George & Sanyam Shukla 21-18, 21-11.
Women's doubles (first round): Ashwini Ponappa & N. Sikki Reddy w/o Chang Ching Hui & Yang Ching Tun (Tpe).
Hsu Ya Ching & Hu Ling Fang (Tpe) bt Pooja Dandu & Sanjana Santosh 21-15, 21-14.

Competition in Tests is up two-fold: Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NORTH SOUND (ANTIGUA)
Excited about playing in the inaugural World Test Championship, India captain Virat Kohli says the competition in the traditional format has "gone up two-fold" in recent years.
The inaugural edition will see the elite nations fight for top honours across 71 Test matches in 27 series over the next two years.
According to the star India batsman, "People have been talking about Test cricket not being relevant or dying down."
"For me, the competition has gone up two-fold the last couple of years. It's up to the players to take the challenge and go for victories."

WI needs to work on mental aspect: Lara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NORTH SOUND (ANTIGUA)
Brian Lara is impressed with the talent available in West Indies cricket but he wants the youngsters to work on the "mental aspect" of their game ahead of the Test series against India starting on Thursday.
Lara and Ramnaresh Sarwan have been invited by Cricket West Indies to conduct a session with the Test squad before the start of the two-match series.
"Where I feel I can make an impact is their mental approach to the game. The practical side is there for the young players but I feel mentally they can grow a little bit and learn a little bit more," Lara said.

Rain has the final say

DULEEP TROPHY
ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU
Rain and wet outfield continued to disrupt the Duleep Trophy match between India Green and India Blue, which ended in a dull draw at Just Cricket ground here on Tuesday.
No play was possible on the final day, much like the previous two days. Both teams shared a point each. The match witnessed only 49 overs of action on the first day, with India Blue moving to 112 for six.
The next outing, between India Red and India Blue, begins on Friday.

Bangar stakes claim for retention

SUPPORT STAFF

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI
While a majority of India players took it easy in Antigua on Tuesday morning – a day after the three-day warm-up game ahead of the first Test – most of the support staff members spent a hectic morning, staking a claim for retention in an interview with the national selection panel. Sanjay Bangar, the batting coach for five years, would have been the most anxious of the lot.
Bangar interacted with M.S.K. Prasad & Co., who sat at the BCCI headquarters, through video-conferencing. While Bangar's record – along with his fellow-assistant coaches, B. Arun for bowling and R. Sridhar for fielding – is impeccable, there are murmurs of a push for a change from a camp in the India dressing room.

Intriguing
It was intriguing that Ravi Shastri, a day after being reappointed as the head coach last week, didn't even make a mention of Bangar in an interview while highlighting the achievements of Arun and Sridhar. Shastri is also understood to have made a strong pitch for a change in batting coach –



Anxious moments: Incumbent Sanjay Bangar was interviewed for the post of batting coach on Tuesday. • REUTERS

and preferred an Indian for the role – during his interaction with the Cricket Advisory Committee last week.
However, it will be interesting to see if the selection panel decides to look beyond Bangar for a possible replacement from a dozen other candidates. *The Hindu* understands that whether to opt for a new batting coach will be finalised after Prasad's informal discussion with captain Kohli. Despite Shastri's reservation about him, Kohli has established an excellent rapport with Bangar.

Front-runner
If the selectors decide for a change in guard, Vikram Rathour, the former India opener, will be the front-runner, with Mumbai stal-

wart Amol Muzumdar likely to be an underdog. The duo was also interviewed last month for the National Cricket Academy batting coach position in Bengaluru.
Despite a question mark over Rathour's alleged conflict of interest due to his family relations with India U-19 chief selector Aashish Kapoor, Rathour is a top contender for the India job.
The selectors interacted with Sridhar and Jonty Rhodes via video-link, while India-A fielding coach Abhay Sharma and former Pakistan and Bangladesh fielding coach Julien Fountain appeared in person.
Physios and trainers will be interviewed on Wednesday and Thursday is reserved for the administrative manager's post.

There are no simple answers, but we must learn to care



BETWEEN WICKETS
SURESH MENON

The processes which lead a man to take his own life are at least as complex and difficult as those by which he continues to live. This is from Al Alvarez's study of suicide, *The Savage God*. To find a rationale for suicide – especially one involving a friend – is near-impossible. But we try. The shock is followed by the question: What could I have done? Family and close friends must feel the helplessness of that query with far greater force.
When the news of V.B. Chandrasekhar's death came, it wasn't his entertaining batting that flashed into my mind, but his smiling eyes and the look of a man satisfied you had enjoyed his spontaneous one-liner.
Once, during a function, he asked why I was going home early. "I have a little baby waiting," I said of my son, then a few months old. "So you want to go home and watch him grow?" he asked.
It is tempting to look for simple answers to the complicated question of why a man apparently in good health and much loved should

choose to self-destruct. As Mike Bearley wrote in the foreword to David Frith's book on cricket suicides, *Silence of the Heart*, "In the end, we know little.... human motivation is mysterious." Perhaps it was a financial problem, perhaps it was a combination of issues; nothing matters now. VB loved cricket, and cricket loved him back, welcoming him back in various capacities, as coach, selector, commentator, team owner. In each of those fields he left his mark.

Understanding failure
On the New Zealand tour of 1989-90, he began with scores of 92 (13 fours and four sixes), opening the batting with Navjot Sidhu, and made 71 in the next game, opening with W.V. Raman. Yet, when Sidhu

had to return home with injury, Chandrasekhar didn't open in the Tests. Manoj Prabhakar did, as Dilip Vengsarkar replaced Sidhu. In the end he finished his career with just seven One-Day Internationals and a single fifty. It may have helped him understand failure better, as he took young players under his wing.
"It seems so counter-intuitive," wrote Ed Smith, author and current England selector, "that professional sportsmen are psychologically at risk. Sport begins as a dream. Why, then, does the dream sometimes sour? The drive which motivates sportsmen is the same drive which leaves them perpetually dissatisfied. Having climbed one rung, sportsmen just want to focus on the next heave upwards – a ladder that never ends."



V.B. Chandrasekhar was many things to many people. • COURTESY TWITTER

Team India faces selection quandary

A difficult choice between Rohit and Rahane if it opts for a fifth bowler

INDIA IN WI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COOLIDGE (ANTIGUA)
The Indian team management will be fretting on possible combinations for the first Test against the West Indies with a difficult choice between Rohit Sharma and Ajinkya Rahane if it opts for a fifth specialist bowler.
Unless India goes with a safety-first four-bowler strategy which allows both Test and ODI vice-captain to figure in the scheme of things, one of them would be cooling heels and it could be Rahane going by his wretched form in red-ball cricket.

Moot point
The moot point will be whether the Kohli-Ravi Shastri duo goes for an additional sixth batsman or an extra bowler for the first Test starting on Thursday.
If the Indian team's think-tank employs conservative strategy, K.L. Rahul and Mayank Agarwal should be opening the innings but Rahul, it may be recalled, was dropped for the last two Test matches in Australia with Hanuma Vihari opening.
If one looks at the pattern



Pace power: While Ishant Sharma, right, is a certainty, Umesh Yadav's inclusion depends on the team's policy. • COURTESY BCCI

of playing XI selections, Vihari, who batted at No. 3 and scored a fifty in the warm-up game against West Indies-A, could once again open in the first Test if Rahul's poor Test record during the past one year is taken into account.
Pujara and Kohli are the two pillars at No. 3 and 4 respectively but the problem starts after that.

Unenviable task
With Rishabh Pant expected to come in at No. 6 and Ra-

vindra Jadeja with his all-round skills bringing in the necessary balance at No. 7 in the absence of an injured Hardik Pandya, Kohli may be left with an unenviable task of putting either Rahane or Rohit on the chopping block.
The only option to include both is to go for a four-bowler strategy with three pacers in Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma, along with R. Ashwin or Kuldeep Yadav as the lone spinner.

Smith out of third Test

Not enough time to recover: Langer

THE ASHES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Australia's star batsman Steve Smith has been ruled out of the third Ashes Test beginning on Thursday after suffering concussion, a decision which coach Justin Langer said was a "no-brainer".
The 30-year-old Smith, who has scored two centuries and 92 in his three innings in the first two Tests, was felled by a Jofra Archer bouncer in the first innings of the second Test at Lord's.
"When we followed the protocols, he was probably a couple of days off being fit to be selected," said Langer.
"It was really a no brainer. He felt a bit better yesterday [Monday] but he's not going to have enough time

to tick off everything he's got to do. It's not unlike England losing James Anderson. He's arguably their best bowler and we're going to lose arguably our best batsman for this Test," said Langer.
"It is always a blow, no doubt about that. When you take your best players out, it always has an impact."
"We have to make sure our senior players and the younger guys step up and fill what are almost unfillable shoes because he's the best player in the world."
The team doctor Richard Saw had the final say on whether Smith played or not, and he was seen speaking with him during team training on Tuesday. Smith was seen with his head in his hands and Langer looking glumly at the ground.



Big blow: Australia will miss Smith, who is yet to fully recover after being felled by an Archer bouncer. • AFP

Sreesanth's ban ends in August 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Tainted India pacer S. Sreesanth's ban for alleged spot-fixing will end next August, BCCI Ombudsman D.K. Jain has ordered, observing that the cricketer is well past his prime having

already served six years.
Reduced to seven years
In an order passed on August 7, Jain said "ends of justice" would be met by making it a seven-year suspension and letting him play next year.

'Itching to get back'

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
KOZHIKODE
S. Sreesanth is delighted that his wait is finally over and that he could return to cricket next year.

"I was expecting this, but was still keeping my fingers crossed," the seamer told *The Hindu*, reacting to the BCCI ombudsman D.K. Jain's order on Tuesday. "I am itching to get back to cricket."
He was in fact on his way to practice when he talked over phone from Kochi. "I had never given up hope and tried to keep myself in shape and train whenever I could," said Sreesanth, who took 87 wickets from 27 Tests before his life turned upside down following the IPL spot-fixing scandal in



S. Sreesanth. • FILE PHOTO

2013. "My first priority is to get back into my best shape."
He added he would cancel all his other commitments so that he could focus on cricket.
"I have to complete one Kannada film in which I am playing the hero; but its shooting will be over by October," he said.

Anti-concussion helmets: BCCI briefs players

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The BCCI has briefed its players on the importance of wearing anti-concussion helmets, but left the decision to use neck guard on the cricketers despite growing calls to make it mandatory.
Compulsory neck guards on helmets for Australian cricketers are "not far away", the national team's sports medicine chief said on Monday after Jofra
"Once the new rules on concussion came into effect, the BCCI briefed the captain and the coaching staff. We have told them about helmets with anti-concussion element – neck guards."
"A few players, including Shikhar Dhawan, use it but we can't force them. Helmet is also a matter of comfort," said a senior BCCI official, privy to the development. He informed that after the Phil Hughes tragedy, the BCCI had asked its players to speak to their respective helmet suppliers.