

Indian teams clubbed with defending champions

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 23

INDIA HAS been clubbed along with defending champions Argentina and world number one side Australia in Pool A of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics men's hockey competition.

The other teams in India's pool are Spain, New Zealand and hosts Japan. The Pool B is made up of Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, Canada and South Africa in the groupings announced by world governing body FIH on Saturday.

India, ranked fifth in the world, had qualified for the Tokyo Olympics after beating Russia 11-3 on aggregate in the qualifiers held in Bhubaneswar earlier this month.

The women's team has also been placed in Pool A along with defending champions Great Britain and world number one side the Netherlands. The other teams in Pool A are Germany, Ireland and South Africa.

The Pool B is made up of Australia, Argentina, New Zealand, Spain, China and hosts Japan. Ranked ninth in the world, the Indian women's team had qualified for the Tokyo Olympics after beating United States 6-5 on aggregate in the qualifiers held in Bhubaneswar earlier this month.

"To determine the composition of the pools, the same process has been applied as for the Olympic Games Rio 2016. With all participating teams being ranked among the top 16 teams of the current FIH World Rankings, fans can expect thrilling hockey encounters in Tokyo next year," the FIH said in a release.

The 2020 Tokyo Olympic hockey tournaments will be staged in the brand-new Oi Hockey Stadium from July 25 to August 7.

Men- POOLA: Spain, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and India; **POOL B:** Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, Canada and South Africa.

Women- POOLA: Great Britain, Netherlands, Germany, Ireland and South Africa; **POOL B:** Argentina, New Zealand, Spain, China and hosts Japan.

Jose begins new chapter with win

Son, Moura and Kane score as Spurs win 3-2 at West Ham in Mourinho's first game as manager

REUTERS
LONDON, NOVEMBER 23

JOSE MOURINHO got off to the best possible start as Tottenham Hotspur manager as his new side beat West Ham United 3-2 at London Stadium on Saturday — their first Premier League away win in 10 months.

First-half goals from Son Heung-min and Lucas Moura and another after the break from Harry Kane — his 175th for the club — inflicted West Ham's fifth league defeat in seven games and piled more pressure on manager Manuel Pellegrini whose side sit close to the drop zone.

Mourinho, however, will not be happy with the way Spurs conceded two late goals as substitute Michail Antonio and Angelo Ogbonna capitalised on familiar errors in a defence that has kept just one league clean sheet all season.

After Kane had an early effort ruled out for offside, Son put the visitors ahead on 36 minutes, sweeping by Papa Diop and firing past West Ham's unconvincing keeper Roberto for his sixth goal in as many games.

Mourinho, returning to English football after 11 months, punched the air in celebration and his mood improved further before the break when an outrageous scooped pass from Dele Alli freed Son on the left.

The South Korean's inviting cross was forced home at the back post by Moura, who was one of three changes on Mourinho's first teamsheet. Kane was completely unmarked to head home Tottenham's third on 49 minutes and move third on Spurs' list of all-time scorers, behind Jimmy Greaves (266) and Bobby Smith (208).

Substitute Antonio conjured an excellent individual effort to lift the home side on 74 minutes, with Ogbonna netting their second deep into stoppage-time after VAR had disallowed a Declan Rice effort.

But the final scoreline flattered West Ham, who looked second best for much of a game in which they made too many basic errors. Alli admitted the Spurs players had found Mauricio Pochettino's sudden departure last week difficult to deal with.

"It's been a very tough week for us emotionally," he said. "We've spent a long time with Pochettino and we were very sad but



Jose Mourinho speaks with Tottenham's Harry Kane and Harry Winks after their 3-2 win on Sunday. Reuters

we had a job to do. We had to go out for the fans and try and stay as positive as we can."

Alli justified Mourinho's faith with a fine performance and was hugged warmly by his manager as he left the field.

"I think I have been performing well so far this season but I need to get better than my old form and get to my best," said Alli.

"We have to carry on momentum and keep winning, we need to start that from now. There is still a lot to work on and we need to improve from now on."

Pellegrini was pleased by his team's fightback. "My players never give up. They keep fighting all the way to the end of the game. The moment we get a win under our

belts things will change," he said.

No stopping Reds

Premier League leaders Liverpool extended their unbeaten run to 30 games after a late goal by Roberto Firmino gave them a scrappy 2-1 win at Crystal Palace on Saturday. Firmino struck from close range in the 85th minute, shortly after Wilfried Zaha cancelled out Sadio Mane's opener for the visitors who looked toothless in the first half with Mohamed Salah on the bench nursing a sore ankle.

Liverpool stayed top on 37 points from 13 games, eight ahead of Leicester City who beat Brighton and Hove Albion 2-0.

Jordan Ayew and Gary Cahill missed chances for Palace before the home side had a 43rd-minute effort ruled out after a VAR check, with the replay showing Ayew pushed Dejan Lovren before James Tomkins headed the ball in at the far post.

The visitors looked sharper immediately after the break, with Mane firing wide before he netted a 49th-minute goal with a scrambled shot which goalkeeper Vicente Guaita got a hand to but could not keep the ball out.

Zaha equalised in the 82nd with a crisp low shot from 12 metres, only for Firmino to tuck the ball away from close range after Palace failed to clear the danger from a goalmouth

Vijender pips Adamu for 12th win on the trot

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI, NOVEMBER 23

INDIAN BOXING star Vijender Singh demolished Ghana's former Commonwealth champion Charles Adamu to claim his 12th successive win and ensure that his four-year unbeaten streak in the professional circuit remained intact.

The 34-year-old former Olympic bronze-medallist, who holds the WBBO Asia Pacific and Oriental super middleweight belts, prevailed in a unanimous verdict in an eight-round contest against the 42-year-old Adamu on Friday night.

The Indian's right hand was just too precise and powerful to handle for Adamu, who looked intimidated, kept a shell guard, and was thrown off-balance more than once.

"It was a good fight, Charles Adamu is a good fighter but I was fully prepared to tackle his punches and landed my punches perfectly on him. It's great to be here in Dubai and to get this win. It was really exciting," Vijender said after the bout.

"I wanted to finish this fight in three-four rounds, it went into late rounds but I am happy with how I performed," said the boxer from Bhiwani.

The Ghanaian also copped a point deduction in the fourth round for excessive bending. To Adamu's credit, he fought through despite the onslaught and ensured that the bout went the full distance.

Adamu came into this fight with an experience of 47 bouts, of which he had won 33 (26 knockouts). The Ghanaian is also an Olympian and won a bronze medal for his country in the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur during his amateur days.

But Adamu's wealth of experience didn't seem enough against an opponent, who was quicker and more powerful.

"I tried my best. I had made strategies after watching his videos but he was quite tough. I never expected him to be this good. I wish him the best for his coming bouts," Adamu said.

Vijender, who is promoted by Hall of Famer Bob Arum's Top Rank Promotions in the USA and IOS Boxing in India, is hoping to fight for a world title next year.

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