

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
BWF World Tour Finals: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 8.30 a.m. & 3.30 p.m.
Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
Pakistan v Sri Lanka: 1st Test, Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 10 a.m.
Australia v New Zealand: 1st Test, Sony Six (SD & HD), 10.30 a.m.
Hero I-League: DSport, 2 p.m.
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Europa League: Sony Ten 1,2, 3, Six & ESPN (SD & HD), 11.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Win keep Heat perfect at home

LOS ANGELES
Miami Heat rallied late to beat the Atlanta Hawks 135-121 on Tuesday and remain unbeaten at home this NBA season.
The results: Philadelphia 97 bt Denver 92; Miami 135 bt Atlanta 121 (OT); Portland 115 bt New York 87; Charlotte 114 bt Washington 107. **AFP**

It's Formidables vs Maharaja

KOLKATA
Former champion Formidables from Delhi and city-based Maharaja on Wednesday entered the final of the team event in the Winter National bridge championships here.
The results (semifinals): Formidables bt Railways 'A' 118-100; Maharaja bt Rampage 163-107.

For Panghal, 'Big Bout' a build-up for Olympic qualifier

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

World championships silver medalist Amit Panghal is using the inaugural Big Bout Indian Boxing League as a preparatory event for the Asian Olympic qualifier to be held in Wuhan, China, in February.
Even while donning the Gujarat Giants colours in Big Bout in Delhi, Panghal is focused on the bigger task at hand.
“The main aim was to treat this (Big Bout) as a training exposure and open up for the bigger competition (Olympic qualifier). I am getting different types of opponents, including a few from overseas. This kind of experience is going to be very helpful in my preparations for the Olympic qualifiers,” Panghal told *The Hindu*.

Asked if he would like to turn professional at a later stage of his career, Panghal said, “Right now I have not thought about that. I will continue as an amateur boxer till the Olympics. After that, if I feel it's good, I may switch to professional boxing.”
Panghal said he had been working on improving his game ahead of the Wuhan test. “I need to work on my game a little bit, especially on speed and reach (to tackle taller boxers). I focused on these areas before coming here. I have to be more than 100 per cent prepared for the Olympic qualifier. After the Big Bout, I will go back to training to fine tune these areas.”

The Military World Games in Wuhan earlier this year was a rare event from where Panghal returned empty handed.

However, he looked at the brighter side. “I can't say much about the departmental games. These boxers (like the one who beat me) don't know much about technique. The opponent was not a difficult one to handle. I beat him 5-0 on an earlier occasion. I will think about it because I may meet him again in future.”

Jalaj sends Delhi into a spin

The offie's six-for effort forces the visitors to follow-on

A. VINOD
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

He has been Kerala's bowling trump card for sometime now. And, Jalaj Saxena did not disappoint as his six-wicket haul forced Delhi to surrender a huge 383-run first innings lead on the third day of the Ranji Trophy match, at the St. Xavier's Stadium, Thumba, on Wednesday.

With a day left, Delhi might have loosened the stranglehold enjoyed by the host a wee bit thanks to a fightback shaped by its openers in the final session of play, but still will have to bat through all the three sessions on Thursday to stop Kerala from registering a win, if not by an innings.

The visitors, following-on consequent to being shot out for 142, were at an identical score in their second essay with nine wickets intact.

241 in arrears
To make Kerala bat again or force a draw, Delhi will be required to wipe out the arrears of 241 runs on a wicket which offered a bit more of spin on the third day than in the first two. If it gets worse,



Wrecker-in-chief: Jalaj Saxena exploited the conditions to send the Delhi batsmen to their doom. **•SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

the tie could well have an interesting end.

The help from the slow-turner was enough for Jalaj to put a seed of doubt in the minds of the rival batsmen after Delhi resumed at 23 for two. Dhruv Shorey, the Delhi captain, and his deputy Nitish Rana did their best to plough back their side but in vain.

Their exit marked a virtual procession back to the pavilion as Jalaj scalped wickets in quick succession.

The spinner completed his five-for well before lunch (taken at 107 for eight) before returning to end the partnership that developed between Vikas Mishra and Navdeep Saini.

Jalaj finished with figures

of six for 63, while Sijimon Joseph had a haul of two for 7.

Forced to bat again, the sagging morale of the Delhi team was given a lift by openers Anuj Rawat and Kunal Chandela, who shared a 130-run stand, before the Kerala skipper Sachin Baby, trying his luck with the ball, struck with his third delivery by re-

RANJI TROPHY SCORES, ROUND 1, DAY 3			
GROUP A			
Andhra 211 & 100/2 in 37 overs (C.R. Gnaneshwar 42 batting) vs Vidarbha 441 in 147.3 overs (Ganesh Satish 237, Mohit Kale 82, C.V. Stephen 5/110).		Singh 122, Anmol Malhotra 76, Shubham Sharma 4/82).	
Hyderabad 233 & 239/6 in 83 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 96, Akshath Reddy 45, B. Sandeep 41) vs Gujarat 313 in 88 overs (Manprit Juneja 94, Rujul Bhatt 65, Mehdi Hassan 4/78).		GROUP B	
Rajasthan 257 & 157/8 in 70 overs (Mahipal Lomror 43) vs Punjab 358 in 98.5 overs (Gurkeerat Mann 68, Mandeep		Mumbai 431 & 409/4 decl. in 66.2 overs (Prithvi Shaw 202, Jay Bista 68, Suryakumar Yadav 102 n.o.) vs Baroda 307 in 70.1 overs (Kedar Devdhar 160 n.o., Vishnu Solanki 48, Shams Mulani 6/99) & 74/3 in 16.4 overs (Viraj Bhosale 41).	
		Himachal 120 & 182 lost to Saurashtra 141 & 165/5 in 45.5 overs (Harvik Desai 46, Prerak Mankad 47 n.o.).	
		Points: Saurashtra 6, Himachal	
		GROUP C	
		Services 124 & 279 in 94.1 overs (Rajat Paliwal 89, Vikas Hathwala 51, Arup Das 5/44) vs Assam 162 & 74/5 in 31 overs.	
		Chhattisgarh 134 & 78 in 36.4 overs (Ashutosh Singh 43, Rajesh Mohanty 4/19, Suryakant Pradhan 4/34) lost to Odisha 215.	
		Odisha 7, Chhattisgarh 0.	
		Karnataka 336 & 89/5 in 40 overs vs Tamil Nadu 307 in 109.3 overs (Abhinav Mukund 47, Dinesh Karthik 113, K. Gowtham 6/110).	
		Railways 253 & 270 in 76.5 overs (Dinesh Mor 102, Amit Mishra 43 n.o., Yash Dayal 4/73, Shivam Mavi 4/19) vs Uttar Pradesh 175 & 23/0 in 4.4 overs.	
		GROUP D	
		Haryana 401 vs Maharashtra 247 in 96 overs (Naushad Shaikh 60, Harshal Patel 4/70) & 61/5 in 19 overs.	
		Tripura 289 vs Jharkhand 136 & 358/5 in 98 overs (Nazim Siddiqui 40, Saurabh Tiwary 103 batting, Ishank Jaggi 105 ret'd. hurt).	
		Jammu & Kashmir 182 & 304 bt Uttarakhand 84 & 149 in 46 overs (Dikshanshu Negi 55 n.o., Ram Dayal 5/58). J&K 6, Uttarakhand 0.	
		PLATE	
		Bihar 173 & 196 in 71.4 overs (Vikash Ranjan 85 n.o., Vinay Kumar 4/57) lost to Pondicherry 300 & 70/0 in 11.2 overs (Paras Dogra 42 n.o.).	
		Pondicherry 7,	
		Bihar 0.	
		Arunachal Pradesh 147 & 183 in 54.3 overs (Rahul Dalal 81, Gurinder Singh 6/50) lost to Chandigarh 503/2 decl.	
		Chandigarh 7, Arunachal Pradesh 0.	
		Sikkim 136 & 331/8 in 98 overs (Yashpal Singh 84, Iqbal Abdulla 99 batting) vs Goa 436/6 decl.	
		Mizoram 65 & 290 lost to Manipur 289 & 69/4 in 17.5 overs.	
		Manipur 6, Mizoram 0.	
		Meghalaya 285 & 142 in 48.1 overs (Imliwati Lemtur 6/54) bt Nagaland 136 & 181 in 62 overs (Aosashi Longchar 44, Sanjay Yadav 4/60).	
		Meghalaya 6, Nagaland 0.	

Pro League second edition in January
Indian men's team to participate this time

HOCKEY

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

The second edition of the FIH Pro League will kick off in January.

At an interaction with select Indian mediapersons here on Tuesday, FIH CEO Thierry Weil admitted there had been teething problems, but insisted things would only get better.

Hockey India had pulled out of the 2019 edition but the men's team will participate in 2020.

“The first season was a success not only measured by FIH but by the players as well. The main feedback we received was how great it was to play against the best teams in the world at home but also how tiring all that travel had been. We have



Thierry Weil. **•FILE PHOTO**

now tried to change the schedule for 2020 and cut the travel in half,” Weil said.

In addition, the FIH has dropped the Grand Finale in 2020. “This is to give teams six to eight weeks to prepare for the Olympics. But we have not planned to bring it back in 2021. National associations agree it is not realistic to commit (to hosting the finale) not knowing if their

team will actually participate in the Pro League,” Weil said.

Pakistan is a prime example, with the team committing to the inaugural edition only to pull out citing financial issues.

Weil insisted that all participating nations had committed to continuing in the Pro League beyond 2020, but the actual scenario would be known only later.

Asked if the Pro League, where the top nine teams play each other twice a year between January and June, would be able to draw crowds, Weil said: “The Pro League is like a quarterfinal or semifinal of a major event like the World Cup every weekend. It's now our responsibility to make people understand that these are not just friendly games,” he said.

The Hindu's Kamesh is best sports scribe



Kamesh Srinivasan, of *The Hindu*, receives the Best Sports Journalist award on Wednesday. **•SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

SPORTS BUREAU
NEW DELHI

Kamesh Srinivasan of *The Hindu* was bestowed the Best Sports Journalist award at the FCCI India Sports Awards 2019 here on Wednesday. The awards acknowledge and recognize the contribution of sports persons and various stakeholders for the year. The jury for the awards included Justice

(Retd) Mukul Mudgal.
The awardees: Best National Sports Federation: National Rifle Association of India.
Sports person (female): Rani Rampal (hockey).
Sports person (male): Saurabh Chaudhary (shooting).
Para-athlete: Sandeep Chaudhary (javelin).
Special recognition para-athlete: Manasi Joshi (badminton).
Breakthrough sports person: Amit Panghal.

Special recognition breakthrough sports person: Esow Althen (cycling).
Coach or support staff: Satyanarayana.
Lifetime achievement (administrator): Govindaraj Kempareddy.
Lifetime achievement: Pankaj Advani (cue sport).
Best State promoting sports: Odisha.
Best sports journalist: Kamesh Srinivasan.

Bagan too good for TRAU

I-LEAGUE

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Mohun Bagan rode on Fran Gonzalez's brace to beat a below par TRAU FC 4-0 and record its first win of the season in the I-League at the Kalyani Stadium on Wednesday.

Bagan's victory helped it jump from ninth to fourth, providing relief to coach Kibu Vicuna. Bagan applied pressure from the beginning and found the target as early as the fifth minute when Gonzalez slotted home off a goalmouth melee from a Joseba Beitia corner from the left.

Energetic Suhair

Bagan came up with some fine moves, thanks to the energetic V.P. Suhair. Gurjinder Kumar and Daniel Cy-

rus kept the rival at bay even as Ashutosh Mehta took up multiple roles on the field.

The host came close to scoring on quite a few occasions. In the 19th minute, Julien Colinas missed a sitter after getting a pass from Nongdamba Norem inside the area.

In the 38th minute, Bagan doubled the lead when Ashutosh, who received a superb long ball, crossed to Suhair who made no mistake.

Minutes after resumption, Gonzalez scored again, his right-footer catching the TRAU defence napping. Subha Ghosh completed the tally in the 90th minute.

TRAU hardly threatened the opponent in the first half and missed two golden opportunities in the second.

The result: Mohun Bagan 4 (Gonzalez 5 & 46, Suhair 38, Subha 90) bt TRAU FC 0.

NEUFC-CFC match under a cloud

ISL

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA
GUWAHATI

The rising political violence in the region has put the ISL contest, scheduled between NorthEast United FC and Chennaiyin FC here on Thursday, under a cloud.

The unrest saw the pre-match media conference on Wednesday afternoon getting cancelled.

The ISL management has preferred to watch the situation and wait for updates from the local organiser before deciding on the fate of the match.

The host practised in the morning much before the trouble started while the visitors trained in the afternoon under a security cover and also returned to the team hotel without any hassle.

After having been denied