

# West Indies gets down to business

Pollard at the forefront of a practice session at a venue where he made a mark a decade ago

## WI IN INDIA

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM  
HYDERABAD

Kieron Pollard returns to the venue – the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium here – where he announced himself as one of the most explosive batsmen in the T20 format when he scored a spectacular 18-ball 54 for Trinidad & Tobago against New South Wales in the Champions League T20 Championship a decade ago. Pollard was at the forefront of a practice session on Tuesday afternoon ahead of the West Indies’ opening game of the three-match T20I series against Virat Kohli-led India to be played here on December 6.

**Enjoying themselves**  
The smiling visages of the West Indian cricketers was again a reminder that most of them continue to enjoy the game which they obviously love so much. They just joked around, had a few brief chats and shared thoughts. Pollard walked across to the HCA curator Y.L. Chandrasekhar, to get a feel of what kind of a pitch would be in place for the big game on Friday. After a long warm-up session with the emphasis on



**Energetic bunch:** The West Indians will want to prove that they can surprise the more accomplished Indian team in the T20I series beginning on December 6. ■ K.V.S. GIRI

physical conditioning, the players were off to a more serious business of training in the nets under the watchful eyes of the head coach Phil Simmons. Interestingly, Hyderabad Cricket Association media

liaison officer Vikram Man Singh was the manager of the West Indies team which won the 2016 T20 World Cup in Kolkata and he shared those memories with members of that winning team.

HCA secretary R. Vijayanand said that every effort is being made to make the match a big success even as overcast conditions prevailed on Tuesday after the heavy rains on Monday night.

“The first priority will be to ensure a spectator-friendly ambience inside the stadium. This is the first match for our new team of office-bearers led by Mohammad Azharuddin. And, we want to make it truly memorable.”

# Williamson and Taylor score unbeaten centuries

Help the Kiwis pull off a draw in the second Test against England; hosts clinch series 1-0

## ENGLAND IN NZ

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
HAMILTON

Centuries from Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor ensured New Zealand drew the rain-hit second Test against England here on Tuesday, sealing a 1-0 series win. The weather turned sour soon after lunch on the fifth day when New Zealand, having taken advantage of some sloppy fielding, was 241 for two in the second innings, 140 ahead with Taylor on 105 and Williamson on 104.

**Improves record**  
With the weather denying England a second turn at bat, it ensured New Zealand’s series win after its innings victory in the first Test, and improved its record to eight wins, a draw and one loss (to South Africa) in the past 10 series. Williamson brought up his 21st Test century with a four off Joe Root in the third over



**Seasoned campaigners:** Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor’s unbroken partnership kept England at bay on the final day. ■ AP

after lunch, while Taylor reached century number 19 with a flourish in Root’s next over when he smacked a four and two sixes off consecutive balls.

Two balls after Taylor had raised his bat and poked his tongue out in his signature celebration, the rain arrived to wash out England’s faint hope of forcing a result alth-

ough that chance had already been damaged by dropped catches. New Zealand resumed at 96 for two with England hunting early wickets, but its plans went

off track when Ollie Pope and Joe Denly spilled simple chances from Williamson.

The New Zealand skipper was on 39 when wicketkeeper Pope put down a regulation offering, much to bowler Ben Stokes’ annoyance, and on 62 Denly inexplicably dropped an even easier chance. Williamson gently chipped a slower delivery from Jofra Archer straight to Denly at short midwicket and, as the bowler leapt in celebration and Williamson made an apologetic gesture to Taylor, the ball popped out of Denly’s hands.

Williamson had another life when he should have been run out on 97 but Sam Curran’s shy at the stumps was so far off line that the batsmen picked up an extra run.

Even without the rain, Root’s chances of pulling off a victory seemed very remote as the England bowlers toiled with an ageing ball on an unresponsive wicket.

## SCOREBOARD

**New Zealand – 1st innings:** 375.  
**England – 1st innings:** 476.  
**New Zealand – 2nd innings:** T. Latham c Root b Woakes 18, J. Raval lbw b Curran 0, K. Williamson (not out) 104, R. Taylor (not out) 105; Extras (b-2, lb-3, w-3, nb-1, pen-5): 14; Total (for two wkts. in 75 overs): 241.  
**Fall of wickets:** 1-2, 2-28.  
**England bowling:** Broad 9-0-28-0, Curran 16-2-56-1, Archer 12-1-27-0, Woakes 11-4-12-1, Stokes 14-1-58-0, Denly 9-1-27-0, Root 4-1-23-0.  
**Man-of-the-Match:** Joe Root.  
**Player-of-the-Series:** Neil Wagner.  
*Match drawn. New Zealand wins series 1-0.*

# Ganguly visits Sardar Patel Stadium

Venue set to have a record capacity of 1.10 lakh

SHAYAN ACHARYA  
MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) chief Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah visited the new Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad on Tuesday. During his two-hour visit to the stadium – set to be the world’s largest stadium with a capacity to host 1.10 lakh fans – Ganguly took a stock of things, interacting with the officials of the Gujarat Cricket Association and enquiring about the latest developments. “He (Ganguly) had quite

an elaborate discussion with the officials of the State association. He had a look at the facilities,” one of the officials told *Sportstar*. After razing down the old structure at the Motera, around ₹700 crore is being spent on building the new stadium, which is scheduled to be inaugurated in March next year.

**Friendly fixture likely**  
There is a possibility of World XI playing a friendly fixture with Asia XI as an inaugural tie, but that is subject to the approval of the In-

ternational Cricket Council. After commencing the work in January 2017, the Gujarat Cricket Association officials are hopeful of finishing the work well in time. Spread over 63 acres, the stadium will have a clubhouse with 50 rooms and a swimming pool. “There will also be 73 corporate boxes and an indoor cricket academy along with practice grounds for the cricketers. The work is in progress,” the official, who has been involved with the project since the beginning, said.



**Aerial view:** The Sardar Patel Stadium, Motera, where construction is in full swing. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

# Pavitra’s waiting game succeeds

Seethal Shaji downs Rutuja Devkar

## BOXING

STAN RAYAN  
KANNUR

Heena Tokas opened with a wild flurry of punches and continued that streak for a major part of her lightweight bout against Pavitra of Railways in the fourth Elite National women’s boxing championship at the Mundayad indoor stadium here on Tuesday. But the seasoned Pavitra, a former Asian silver medalist who had been to the Worlds a few years ago, waited patiently, waited for openings and when they came, she landed some strong punches on Delhi’s former junior international Heena.

**Better reach**  
The Railways boxer had a better reach and could land punches that mattered and hold her guard when Heena’s hits came her way. “I felt the third round turned the bout in my favour,” said the 32-old Pavitra after the 4-1 verdict. “This is the first time I’m fighting her.” Meanwhile, Kerala’s Seethal Shaji, also tall and wiry, appeared to struggle a bit early against Maharashtra’s Rutuja Devkar in the light-heavyweight category (81kg). But midway through the bout, Seethal produced a couple of hard ones that forced the referee to give Rutuja a standing-eight count twice and a little later stop the contest. **Important results:** Bantam (54kg): Nissy Laissy Thampy

■ Pavitra is a former Asian silver medalist  
■ She bided her time for openings before landing some strong punches on Heena  
(Ker) bt V. Vinodhini (TN) 4-1;  
**Feather (57kg):** Y. Sandhyarani Devi (Pol) bt Prativa Jana (Ben) RSC-1.  
Sonam Poonia (Raj) bt R. Divya (Kar) RSC-1; G. Prathiba (TN) bt Neha Kumari (Jha) RSC-1.  
Roshni Subba (Sik) bt Uggi-nna Ganeswari (AP) RSC-3; Hema Danu (Utk) bt Laxmee Mehra (Mah) 4-1.  
T.C. Lalremruati (Miz) bt E.S. Sanjana (Tel) RSC-2; Tongbram Premi Devi (Man) bt R.K. Sinsha (Ker) 3-2.  
**Light (60kg):** Pavitra (Rly) bt Heena Tokas (Del) 4-1; Suman

Kumari (Raj) bt Aruna Korukonda (AP) RSC-1; Poonam Kaithwas (Mah) bt D. Bhavya (Kar) RSC; Divya Ganesh (Ker) bt Lakshmi Prathyusha Kola (Tel) RSC-1.  
**Light-welter (64kg):** Aarti Rawal (Del) bt Seema Kumari (Bih) 5-0; Heena Chaudhary (J&K) bt Durga Devi (Pon) RSC.  
Siwi (Har) bt Mallanathula Venkata Sai (AP) RSC; Lalbuatsaihi (Pol) bt Joshmy Jose (Ker) 5-0; Gajal Mariya (Kar) bt Nilam Devi Laishram (Man) 5-0.  
**Middle (75kg):** K.A. Indrajha (Ker) bt Gitimoni Gogoi (Assm) RSC; Nupur (Har) bt Shweta (Raj) 5-0.  
**Light-heavy (81kg):** Seethal Shaji (Ker) bt Rutuja Devkar (Mah) RSC.  
**Heavy (+81kg):** M. Yamini (TN) bt Nayana (Kar) RSC.



**Packing a punch:** Seethal Shaji, right, unleashed a couple of hard ones on Rutuja Devkar. ■ S.K. MOHAN

# New Zealand wins Spirit of Cricket award

IANS  
MELBOURNE

The New Zealand cricket team has been awarded with the MCC’s Christopher Martin-Jenkins Spirit of Cricket Award for 2019 for its sporting conduct in the aftermath of the World Cup final against England. After losing to England in a thrilling final held on July 14 at the Lord’s –

regarded as one of the most exciting ODI matches of all time – Kane Williamson’s team displayed an exceptional level of sportsmanship, humility and selflessness in defeat. MCC president Kumar Sangakkara said: “The New Zealand team are worthy winners of this award. In the heat of battle they displayed a level of

sportsmanship that was fitting for such a fantastic final, and indeed tournament.” “It is a testament to their squad that even after a match that will live long in the memory for the cricket that was played, we are still talking about the spirit of cricket. Their actions deserve this recognition.” The Black Caps were widely praised for their

sportsmanship and their exemplary conduct towards opposition players throughout the tournament. The award has previously been won by Wayne Madsen of Derbyshire, Sussex’s Luke Wright, Brendon McCullum of New Zealand, Tom Fell of Worcestershire and England’s Anya Shrubsole.

# The attempt to dilute the Lodha panel recommendations is troubling



## BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

“Tenures are finished, tenures are finished. You cannot go beyond tenure,” said Sourav Ganguly. He was speaking of the national selection committee, and may have been unaware of the irony. For his own tenure ends next year, but he himself wants to go beyond tenure. The president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India seems more keen to sign on to the past than to the future. This is a pity, because Ganguly is capable of shaking out the old and bringing in the new. He might, however, have gi-

ven up some of the strength needed to do that by aligning with the old-timers who asked not what they could do for cricket but what cricket could do for them. **Glimpse into mindset**  
Whether the Supreme Court allows the BCCI to dilute its rulings or not, the proposed changes give us a glimpse into the mindset of the administrators. And it hasn’t changed in decades. In effect these are:  
1. We are in power, and we want to remain in power.  
2. Remaining in power calls for compromises with others who also want to remain in power, as well as politicians who can smoothen the path to permanency.  
3. We would like to make our own rules, even if some of these go against decency and common sense.  
4. There is too much money in the game for sports administration to be

left to professional CEOs and Directors. 5. We will make a fetish of “elections” and say “the people have spoken”, as though it is a state or national election, although in reality it is a small minority of people. 6. We will pretend, as a group, that cricket and cricketers are on top of the agenda, and if we say it often enough, we will be believed. 7. Anyone who doesn’t fit into the scheme of things will have to be eased out, squeezed out or bought. 8. We will (and this is the latest) exhibit greater patience than the Supreme Court and tire that body out. After all, the highest court in the land has more important things to deal with than deciding the arithmetic of a “cooling-off” period. It is too early to say which of these Ganguly has signed up to, but the attempt to dilute the Lodha panel recommendations is troubling. Ganguly, as the new face of an old system, is a com-

promise he might not like to be identified with. It might also be the start of another round of SC v BCCI battles Indian cricket could do without. If all this sounds excessively cynical, you only have to follow the events of the recent past. A successful player and captain becomes the Board president to much acclaim and fresh hopes (cricket fans are the most optimistic of people). Perhaps he will clean up the administration. Perhaps he will change a system built on favours and political manoeuvres. He is young. He has no compulsion to be seen with the India captain and click selfies with him. He knows the strengths and weaknesses of the system from inside. He understands where things could go wrong. He will not play favourites since that was his reputation when he was the national team’s captain. Five years ago, he was in the Supreme Court-appointed Justice Mudgal

Committee which began the investigations into spot-fixing in the IPL, so he has seen cricket from many sides. Perhaps I am overstating it here. Perhaps Ganguly simply needs more time to set the house in order and it is for this selfish reason that he needs an extension till 2024. Perhaps India is not ready yet for the professional at the top of the administrative tree who is susceptible to regular appraisals, performance-based increments – with dismissal from the job being the other side of the coin. The current CEO, who began well, and held things together in the confusing days when no one knew who was responsible for what, has had his wings clipped. **Fundamental divide**  
There is a fundamental divide between players and administrators on what constitutes success. Players look at performance, and security. Administrators

tend to see everything in terms of revenue and the influence (and visibility) it brings. Which explains why both sides can claim to be successful at their jobs, and changes – even if by the Supreme Court – are dismissed as interference. Ganguly has made much of the conflict of interest issue which, he says, has kept former players away from the Cricket Advisory Committee. This committee has little to do apart from picking the selectors and the coach, and can be safely scrapped. The Apex Council can do that job. In the BCCI’s ideal scenario, the Supreme Court would withdraw, the officials would be allowed to go back to the bad old days and the huge amount of time, money and effort spent in reforming cricket administration would be written off as a bad dream. Then, nothing would have changed in decades. The only difference would be that the subtlety has gone out of the manoeuvres.