

Rohit's super sixes trump Williamson's effort

India clinches maiden T20I series win in New Zealand, via Super Over, in sensational finish

REUTERS HAMILTON
Rohit Sharma belted two sixes off the final two deliveries of the Super Over to give India victory in the third T20I against New Zealand here on Wednesday. The visitors clinched the series 3-0 with two games to spare.
Rohit finished on 15 not out after he hit two sixes off Tim Southee to lead India to 20 after the Kiwis had scored 17 off Jasprit Bumrah (Kane Williamson 11, Martin Gupthill 5).

Dramatic final over
New Zealand captain Williamson had almost single-handedly led his side to a win in the regulation 20 overs when he blasted 95 from 48 balls but was dismissed by Mohammed Shami with three balls remaining in the final over and two runs needed for victory.

INDIA IN NZ

Shami, however, didn't concede a run after that – a run came through a bye off the penultimate ball – and bowled Ross Taylor off the final delivery with one needed off one.
Earlier, India had scored 179 for five after Rohit (65) and Rahul gave it a blistering start. Rohit reached his 20th T20I half-century inside the first six overs as the openers put on 77 in the first seven.

Rahul was dismissed off the final ball of the ninth over, but with the score at 89 for one and 11 overs remaining, India was well placed to score over 200 before New Zealand clamped down in the second half of the innings. Hamish Bennett, who got clubbed for three sixes and two fours by Rohit in the sixth over, dismissed the Indian opener in the 11th and, two balls later, got rid of Shivam Dube as the torrent of runs slowed down.
New Zealand's reply was steady but unspectacular until the second half of the innings when Williamson made a gallant bid in an attempt to keep the series alive.
His 95 included eight fours and six sixes and with



Incredible turnaround: Rohit Sharma's two sixes off the final two deliveries of the Super Over brought India an unlikely win after the Kiwis were comfortably placed. **AFP**

four balls remaining, New Zealand only needed two to win.
"I thought we were gone at one stage. I told our coach that they deserved to win. The way Kane was batting, on 95. Feel bad for him, I know what it's like to play those knocks when things don't go your way. On the last ball, we had a discussion and we came to a conclusion that we had to hit the stumps," said India captain Kohli.

Reliving the drama

THE FINAL OVER
Runs needed: **9**



Bowler: Shami
1st ball: **6**
2nd ball: **1**
3rd ball: **Wkt**
4th ball: **0**
5th ball: **1 bye**
6th ball: **Wicket**
MATCH TIED



SUPER OVER: NZ INNINGS	
Batsmen: Williamson and Gupthill	
Bowler: Bumrah	
1st ball: 1 (Williamson)	
2nd ball: 1 (Gupthill)	
3rd ball: 6 (Williamson)	
4th ball: 4 (Williamson)	
5th ball: 1 bye	
6th ball: 4 (Gupthill)	
Runs: 17	
INDIA INNINGS	
Batsmen: Rohit and Rahul	
Bowler: Southee	
1st ball: 2 (Rohit)	
2nd ball: 1 (Rohit)	
3rd ball: 4 (Rahul)	
4th ball: 1 (Rahul)	
5th ball: 6 (Rohit)	
6th ball: 6 (Rohit)	
Runs: 20	
NZ 17 for no loss lost to India 20 for no loss	

STATOSPHERE

1 This is India's first bilateral T20I series win in New Zealand after two unsuccessful attempts
2009: NZ won 2-0 (2)
2019: NZ won 2-1 (3)
2020: India leads 3-0* (5)

1 India has played a T20I Super Over for the first time and the team's 20 runs (for no loss) are the most scored by a chasing side in T20I Super Over history

1 Rohit is the first Indian to score a fifty within the PowerPlay in T20Is, eclipsing Dhawan's 48

3 Gupthill's two sixes off Bumrah is only the third time a batsman has hit him for two sixes in a T20I and the

first such instance in four years (31 matches)

4 Rohit is the fourth Indian to amass 10,000 international runs as an opener, after Gavaskar, Tendulkar and Sehwag



Williamson (left) and Southee

5 This is New Zealand's fifth defeat via a Super Over in T20Is

■ T20I vs WI, Auckland, 2008 (lost)

■ T20I vs Aus, Christchurch, 2010 (won)

■ T20I vs SL, Pallekele, 2012 (lost)

■ T20I vs WI, Pallekele, 2012 (lost)

■ T20I vs Eng, Auckland, 2019 (lost)

■ T20I vs Ind, Hamilton, 2020 (lost)

3 Gupthill (83 inns) has become the third player to join the 2500-run club in T20Is, behind Kohli (68) and Rohit (92)

Rohit, India's most-capped T20 player (327 matches), didn't score a run in Super Overs before this match

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
Rohit Sharma c Southee b Bennett 65 (40b, 6x4, 3x6), K.L. Rahul c Munro b de Grandhomme 27 (19b, 2x4, 1x6), Shivam Dube c Sodhi b Bennett 3 (7b), Virat Kohli c Southee b Bennett 38 (27b, 2x4, 1x6), Shreyas Iyer st. Seifert b Santner 17 (16b, 1x6), Manish Pandey (not out) 14 (6b, 1x4, 1x6), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 10 (5b, 1x6); Extras (b-1, lb-2, w-2): 5; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 179.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-89 (Rahul, 8.6 overs), 2-94 (Rohit, 10.4), 3-96 (Dube, 10.6), 4-142 (Shreyas, 16.6), 5-160 (Kohli, 18.5).
NEW ZEALAND BOWLING
Southee 4-0-39-0, Bennett 4-0-54-3, Kuggeleijn 2-0-10-0, Santner 4-0-37-1, Sodhi 4-0-23-0, de Grandhomme 2-0-13-1.

NEW ZEALAND
Martin Gupthill c sub (Samson) b Shardul 31 (21b, 2x4, 3x6), Colin Munro st. Rahul b Jadeja 14 (16b, 2x4), Kane Williamson c

Rahul b Shami 95 (48b, 8x4, 6x6), Mitchell Santner b Chahal 9 (11b, 1x4), Colin de Grandhomme c Dube b Shardul 5 (12b), Ross Taylor b Shami 17 (10b, 1x4, 1x6), Tim Seifert (not out) 0 (2b); Extras (b-6, lb-2): 8; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 179.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-47 (Gupthill, 5.4), 2-52 (Munro, 6.2), 3-88 (Santner, 10.4), 4-137 (de Grandhomme, 15.6), 5-178 (Williamson, 19.3), 6-179 (Taylor, 19.6).

INDIA BOWLING
Shardul 3-0-21-2, Shami 4-0-32-2, Bumrah 4-0-45-0, Chahal 4-0-36-1, Jadeja 4-0-23-1, Dube 1-0-14-0.
Toss: New Zealand.
Match tied.
Super Over: New Zealand 17 for no loss, India 20 for no loss.
Man-of-the-Match: Rohit.
India takes a 3-0 lead in the five-match series.
Fourth T20I: January 31 (Friday), Wellington, 12.30 p.m.

Never thought about Super Over: Rohit

"The way they were batting, it looked like they would easily win"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA HAMILTON
Caught unaware about the Super Over scenario, Rohit Sharma took five minutes to "find" his abdomen guard after the third T20I against New Zealand had ended in a tie here on Wednesday.
Rohit said the team had almost given up with New Zealand going great guns at one point.
"Everything was packed. All my stuff was inside my bag. I had to get it out. It literally took me five minutes to find my abdomen guard because I didn't know where it was. I mean we never thought it would go to the Super Over, the way they were batting at one point. It looked like they could easily win the game," Rohit said.

No training possible
Rohit said there is no training possible for Super Over eventualities.

In fact, the Indian team wasn't aware of the Super Over and came to know only after the match had finished in a tie. "I don't know if you can train for a Super Over.
"We've got a T20 specialist in Bumrah. Super Over or whether he bowls in a T20 match is the same for him. There's no training required there for him. But for the batters, you generally see who's in good nick on that

Super Overs aren't really our friends.
To be honest we would have liked to get across the line earlier and not in the Super Over. It's a shame we couldn't get past the line.
— KANE WILLIAMSON, NZ captain

particular day and you assess and try and get that guy to bat. Probably if I hadn't got the 60 today, it wouldn't have been me going to face the Super Over."

"Bowlers under pressure"
Talking about the moment when he hit those successive Super Over sixes, Rohit said it is always the bowler who is under pressure in such situations.

"From what I've seen in Super Overs, whatever you are chasing, it's the bowler who is under pressure. That's my understanding. That's why when I walked out to bat, I was thinking about whether I should move around in the crease or stay still. There were two or three thoughts like that but, in the end, I decided that I will stay still. Let him make the mistake.

"That was my thought process. And, he bowled it in my zone, and I smashed it."



Pumped up: Virat Kohli can't hide his emotions after India snatched a tie from a losing position in the main match. **AFP**



All set for a classic 50!

Djokovic and Federer will cross swords for the 50th time when they meet in the semifinals of the Australian Open on Thursday

H2H:
Djokovic leads **26-23**

AUSTRALIAN OPEN:
Djokovic 3-1 ahead

LAST MEETING: 2019:
ATP Finals:
Federer won **6-4, 6-3**

How they stack up down under

FEDERER: AGE: 38; AUSTRALIAN OPEN:
Winner (2004, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2017, 2018)

- The Swiss master is playing in his 20th Australian Open and is featuring in a record 15th semifinal at Melbourne Park, underlying his remarkable consistency. But he hasn't had a smooth run this time - he was two points away from defeat against Millman in the third round and had to save an incredible seven match points against Sandgren in the quarterfinals. Will the 38-year-old survive a Novak barrage?

DJOKOVIC: AGE: 32; AUSTRALIAN OPEN:
Winner (2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019)

- Djokovic routinely rates the Oz Open as his favourite Major - his Slam collection began here in 2008 - and the Rod Laver Arena is his most successful court as he has won a record seven titles. Regarded as perhaps the best returner in the game, he has dropped just one set en route to the last four and is firm favourite to win a 17th Grand Slam

Between 2004 and 2020, Federer reached the Australian Open semifinals 15 times - every year except 2015 (lost to Seppi, R3) and 2019 (lost to Tsitsipas, R4)

Whenever Djokovic has got past the quarterfinals at Melbourne, he has gone on to win the title. His record in semifinal/final is 7-0

FEDERER IN AUSTRALIAN OPEN FINAL PHASE

SEMIFINALS:	WON	LOST	FINALS:	WON	LOST
	7	7		6	1

DJOKOVIC IN AUSTRALIAN OPEN (FROM 2011):

PLAYED	WON	LOST	WIN%
58	55	3	95

Federer will become the oldest Australian Open finalist since Ken Rosewall in 1977

Thiem leaves top seed Nadal shell-shocked

Zverev rallies after losing first set, knocks out former champion Wawrinka; Djokovic-Federer blockbuster today

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE MELBOURNE
Dominic Thiem shocked top seed Rafael Nadal and Alexander Zverev ousted former champion Stan Wawrinka as tennis' young pretenders stole a march on the old guard to reach the Australian Open semifinals on Wednesday.



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Austria's Thiem, 26, beat Nadal 7-6(3), 7-6(4), 4-6, 7-6(6) - his first win in six attempts at Grand Slams, including two French Open finals - to end the 33-year-old's bid to equal Roger Federer's record 20 Major titles.
Earlier Zverev, 22, beat 2014 champion Wawrinka, 34, to go into a semifinal with Thiem, meaning that one of them will reach Sunday's final against Roger Federer or Novak Djokovic, who have won 12 of the last 14 Australian Open titles.

Recovery
Thiem had Nadal's measure in the first two sets and he recovered from dropping the third to win the fourth-set tie-breaker, getting off the floor after falling to win

Ice-cool Thiem too hot for Nadal

Thiem, who reached the semifinals of the Australian Open for the first time, will meet Zverev

Rod Laver Arena was braced up for a slugfest and the Nadal-Thiem contest provided just that. Much like their only previous hard-court meeting at the quarterfinals of the 2018 US Open, where the Spaniard came through in a riveting five-setter, this one stretched beyond four hours. This time around, however, it was the Austrian - an upgraded hard-court challenger - who had the final say. While the World No. 1 flinched, the fifth seed never blinked. With his powerful serves and stunning backhand returns working like magic, Thiem dominated the tie-breakers. The cool and confident Austrian also managed to unsettle the 'fighter' in Nadal, though the World No. 1 managed to claw back from the brink with Thiem serving for the match at 5-3 in the fourth set. The gritty 19-time Grand Slam champion dragged the match to another tie-breaker, but that how far he could get.

SCORELINE:
7-6(3), 7-6(4), 4-6, 7-6(6)
DURATION:
Four hours and 10 minutes



I just wanted to stay in the match. I got the break and it came to 5-4, which was a special situation for me, serving for the match against Rafa, for my first semifinal at the Australian Open. It was such a mentally tough situation, I couldn't handle it!
DOMINIC THIEM

You cannot imagine what this means to me, I hope this will be the first of many... I did win the World Tour Finals. If I get to the final, it will be the greatest day of my life, but I like titles
ALEXANDER ZVEREV



THURSDAY'S PICKS	
MEN	
2-Djokovic v 3-Federer (2 p.m.)	
WOMEN	
1-Barty v 14-Kenin (8.30 a.m. IST) followed by 4-Halep v Muguruza	
MIXED DOUBLES	
Bopanna-Kichenok v 5-Mektic-Krejickova (6.50 a.m.)	
LIVE ON SONY SIX & SONY TEN 2 (SD & HD), 5:30 A.M. & 2 P.M.	
COMPILED BY LALITH KALIDAS	

too focused," he said.

Halep breezes through
Wimbledon champion Simona Halep has also benefited from a more relaxed approach as she swept aside Anett Kontaveit 6-1, 6-1 to reach the semifinals without dropping a set.

The Romanian fourth seed said she was finally feeling comfortable on the biggest stage.
"I just feel more confident and I feel like I'm able to do it," said Halep, who is going after her third Major title. "It's just a feeling that you don't see this trophy as impossible anymore."

Halep's semifinal is against Garbine Muguruza, who continued her impressive return to form by beating Russian 30th seed Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 7-5, 6-3. "I'm excited to play my first semifinal here," said the unseeded former World No. 1, who won the 2016 French Open and 2017 Wimbledon.

Zverev renews pledge
Alexander Zverev renewed a pledge on Wednesday to donate the \$2.83 million Australian Open winner's cheque to bushfire relief if he lifts the title, after sweeping into the semifinals.

THE RESULTS	
QUARTERFINALS	
Men: 7-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt 15-Stan Wawrinka (Sui) 1-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2; 5-Dominic Thiem (Aut) bt 1-Rafael Nadal (Esp) 7-6 (3), 7-6(4), 4-6, 7-6(6).	
Women: 4-Simona Halep (Rou) bt 28-Anett Kontaveit (Est) 6-1, 6-1; Garbine Muguruza (Esp) bt 30-Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (Rus) 7-5, 6-3.	