

Saini and Shardul prove too hot for Sri Lanka

The two pacers restrict the visitors to 142; Rahul, Dhawan, Shreyas and Kohli take India past the finish line in style

SL IN INDIA
ASHWIN ACHAL
INDORE
India made short work of the insipid Sri Lankans, cruising to a seven-wicket victory in the second T20I at the Holkar Stadium here on Tuesday.

Chasing a sub-par 143-run target, India rode on handy contributions from K.L. Rahul (45, 32b, 6x4), Shikhar Dhawan (32, 29b, 2x4), Shreyas Iyer (34, 26b, 3x4, 1x6) and skipper Virat Kohli (30 not out, 17b, 1x4, 2x6) to get the job done with 15 balls to spare.

Rahul was especially good with the drive, dispatching Lahiru Kumara and Lasith Malinga with a straight bat. A wild slog off spinner Wamindu Hasaranga, however, ended his stay.

Sedate Dhawan
His partner Dhawan, who is fighting to keep his place in the side, was more sedate in his approach. He was not quite fluent, but stuck around long enough to make a mark. The Delhi southpaw moved to 32, before Hasaranga trapped him leg-before on a review.

When the television umpire declared Dhawan out, the crowd cheered, as Virat Kohli, the main attraction, walked in.

The captain had an easy task ahead of him, with India needing 57 from 52 balls. Kohli patiently went about his business, picking up singles and twos initially.

Fireworks
Shreyas provided the fireworks, smashing Hasaranga for two fours and a six in the 16th over. The 51-run third-wicket stand between Shreyas and Kohli sealed the issue in favour of the Men in



Dance of delight: Navdeep Saini is cock-a-hoop after casting Danushka Gunathilaka. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

Blue. Sri Lanka was hampered by an injury to left-arm speedster Isuru Udana, who landed awkwardly on his knee while fielding. Udana, the leader of the pace pack, was forced to walk off the field and did not bowl in the chase.

After winning the toss, India did well to restrict Sri Lanka to 142. The Sri Lankan batsmen fired in spurts, but failed to get a big one. Opener Avishka Fernando started impressively, striking a couple of perfect cover drives.

Lovely yorker
Avishka fell in spinner Washington Sundar's first over – a mishit falling in the safe hands of Navdeep Saini at mid-off. His partner Danushka Gunathilaka looked

unsettled during his 21-ball stay, before Saini disarranged his stumps with a yorker. The visitors depended heavily on Kusal Perera, who came to the crease at 54 for two. Perera was lucky

early on when Shreyas picked the wrong end to attempt a run-out.

Perera got going with a mighty slog-sweep off Washington that went for a six. Not long after, he executed a

shot of great ingenuity. A reverse-sweep to a length ball outside off from Kuldeep sailed into the stands, earning appreciation from even the partisan home crowd.

Kuldeep had the last

laugh, however, removing Perera off the very next delivery. The batsman could not get to the pitch of the ball, yet went through with the stroke. Shikhar Dhawan tip-toed inside the long-off fence to pull off a good catch.

From here, Sri Lanka crumbled in quick time. Jasprit Bumrah took his first, and only, wicket with a clever slower ball, while Shardul Thakur picked up three in one over.

Bumrah struggles
Bumrah, playing his first match in four months, was not quite at his best. He started proceedings with a wide down leg, and continued to struggle with his direction.

The Gujarat fast bowler was most disappointing in the 20th over, bowling over-pitched deliveries to No. 8 batsman Hasaranga.

While Bumrah eased his way back into international cricket, Saini hit his straps. He bowled at great pace, consistently touching the 145-kmph mark.

Saini finished with two for 18 in four overs, effectively applying the brakes on the Sri Lankan scoring rate and walking away with the Man-of-the-Match honours.

SCOREBOARD			
SRI LANKA			
Danushka Gunathilaka b Saini 20 (21b, 3x4), Avishka Fernando c Saini b Washington 22 (16b, 5x4), Kusal Perera c Dhawan b Kuldeep 34 (28b, 3x6), Oshada Fernando st. Pant b Kuldeep 10 (9b, 1x4), Bhanuka Rajapaksa c Pant b Saini 9 (12b, 1x4), Dasun Shanaka b Bumrah 7 (8b), Dhananjaya de Silva c Dube b Shardul 17 (13b, 2x4), Wamindu Hasaranga (not out) 16 (10b, 3x4), Isuru Udana c Saini b Shardul 1 (2b), Lasith Malinga c Kuldeep b Shardul 0			
(1b), Lahiru Kumara (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (b-1, lb-1, w-4): 6; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 142.			
FALL OF WICKETS			
1-38 (Avishka, 4.5 overs), 2-54 (Gunathilaka, 7.4), 3-82 (Oshada, 11.3), 4-97 (Perera, 13.2), 5-104 (Rajapaksa, 14.5), 6-117 (Shanaka, 16.6), 7-128 (Dhananjaya, 18.2), 8-130 (Udana, 18.5), 9-130 (Malinga, 18.6).			
INDIA BOWLING			
Bumrah 4-0-32-1, Shardul 4-0-23-3, Saini 4-0-18-2, Washington 4-0-29-1, Kuldeep 4-0-38-2.			
INDIA			
K.L. Rahul b Hasaranga 45 (32b, 6x4), Shikhar Dhawan lbw b Hasaranga 32 (29b, 2x4), Shreyas Iyer c Shanaka b Kumara 34 (26b, 3x4, 1x6), Virat Kohli (not out) 30 (17b, 1x4, 2x6), Rishabh Pant (not out) 1 (1b); Extras (b-1, lb-1): 2; Total (for three wkts. in 17.3 overs): 144.			
FALL OF WICKETS			
1-71 (Rahul, 9.1), 2-86 (Dhawan, 11.2), 3-137 (Shreyas, 17.1).			
SRI LANKA BOWLING			
Malinga 4-0-41-0, Kumara 3.3-0-30-1, Dhananjaya 2-0-15-0, Shanaka 4-0-26-0, Hasaranga 4-0-30-2.			
Toss: India.			
Man-of-the-Match: Navdeep Saini.			
India won by seven wickets with 15 balls to spare and take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.			
Third and final T20I: January 10, Pune, 7 p.m.			

Stokes mops up South African tail, inspires England to series-levelling win

ENGLAND IN SA
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
CAPE TOWN
Ben Stokes produced an explosive spell of bowling as England beat South Africa by 189 runs inside the last hour of the fifth day of the second Test at Newlands on Tuesday. The win levelled the four-match World Test Championship series.

South Africa was bowled out for 248, with the last wicket falling when only 8.2 overs were left in the match.

Stokes took the last three wickets in the space of 14 balls to clinch the victory. He finished with three for 35.

South Africa defied the England bowlers for most of the day. Only three wickets fell before tea as South Africa defended grimly after starting the day on 126 for two after being set an improbable 438 to win.

Opening batsman Pieter Malan, making his debut, made 84 before he fell to Sam Curran with the second new ball.



The juggler! Zak Crawley pouches Anrich Nortje on the second attempt, off Ben Stokes' bowling. ■ REUTERS

SCOREBOARD			
England — 1st innings: 269.			
South Africa — 1st innings: 223.			
England — 2nd innings: 391/8 decl.			
South Africa — 2nd innings: P. Malan c Stokes b Curran 84, D. Elgar c Buttler b Denly 34, Z. Hamza c Buttler b Anderson 18, K. Maharaj lbw b Anderson 2, F. du Plessis c Denly b Bess 19, H. van der Dussen c Anderson b Broad 17, Q. de Kock c Crawley b Denly 50, V. Philander c Pope b Stokes 8, D. Pretorius c Root b Stokes 0, A. Nortje c Crawley b			
Stokes 0, K. Rabada (not out) 3; Extras (b-4, lb-2, nb-5, w-2): 13; Total (in 137.4 overs): 248.			
Fall of wickets: 1-71, 2-123, 3-129, 4-164, 5-171, 6-237, 7-237, 8-241, 9-241.			
England bowling: Anderson 18-9-23-2, Broad 23-8-37-1, Bess 33-14-57-1, Curran 16-4-37-1, Denly 18-4-42-2, Root 6-0-11-0, Stokes 23.4-8-35-3.			
Man-of-the-Match: Stokes.			
England won by 189 runs to make it 1-1 in the four-match series.			

IN BRIEF
Langer to take a break
SYDNEY
Australia coach Justin Langer is taking a break and will not travel to India, where his senior assistant Andrew McDonald will lead the side in the three-match series ODI series, starting January 14. PTI

India-B and India-C register wins
CUTTACK
India-B registered a 35-run win over India-A in their Women's Challenger Trophy contest here on Tuesday.

The scores: On Tuesday: India-B 139/4 in 20 overs (V. Vanitha 30, Smriti Mandhana 34, Sneha Rana 2/26) bt India-A 104/7 in 20 overs (Priya Punia 34, Deepti Sharma 33, Anuja Patil 2/19, Sushree Dibyadarshini 2/18).

On Monday: India-C 123/7 in 20 overs (Shafali Verma 38, Deepti Sharma 2/20) bt India-A 113/6 in 20 overs (Priya Punia 25, Deepti Sharma 34 n.o.).

India colts enter final
DURBAN
India under-19 qualified for the final with a 120-run win over New Zealand in the Quadrangular Trophy on Tuesday. India will meet South Africa in the final on Thursday.

The scores: India under-19 252/7 in 50 overs (Siddhesh Veer 71, Tilak Verma 59, Shashwat Rawat 39, Shubhang Hegde 26 n.o.) bt New Zealand under-19 132 in 35.5 overs (Jesse Tashkoff 29, B. Wheeler-Greenall 50, Sushant Mishra 3/35, A. Ankolekar 3/16).

Kyrgios outlasts Tsitsipas

ATP CUP
REUTERS
SYDNEY
A well-behaved Nick Kyrgios earned a hard-fought 7-6(7), 6-7(3), 7-6(5) win over World No. 6 Stefanos Tsitsipas in the ATP Cup on Tuesday. Australia took the tie, with John Millman winning the other singles against Greece's Michail Pervolarakis 4-6, 6-1, 7-6(1).

The results:
In Sydney: Group C: Britain bt Moldova 3-0 [Cameron Norrie bt Alexander Cozbinov 6-2, 6-2; Dan Evans bt Radu Albot 6-2, 6-2; Jamie Murray & Joe Salisbury bt Radu Albot & Alexander Cozbinov 6-2, 6-3].
Belgium bt Bulgaria 2-1 [David Goffin bt Grigor Dimitrov 4-6, 6-2, 6-2; Steve Darcis lost to Dinitar Kuzmanov 6-0, 6-3; Sander Gille & Joran Vliegen bt Dimitrov & Alexandar Lazarov 3-6, 6-4, (10-7)]



Pulling through: Nick Kyrgios prevailed over Stefanos Tsitsipas in three hard-fought sets. ■ AFP

In Brisbane: Group F: Canada bt Germany 2-1 [Felix Auger-Aliassime lost to Jan-Lennard Struff 6-1, 6-4; Denis Shapovalov bt Alexander Zverev 6-2, 6-2; Shapovalov & Auger-Aliassime bt Kevin Krawietz & Andreas Mies 6-3, 7-6(4)].
Australia bt Greece 3-0 [John Millman bt Michail Pervolarakis 4-6, 6-1, 7-6(1); Nick Kyrgios bt Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-6(7), 6-7(3), 7-6(5); Chris Guccione & John Peers bt Markos Kalovelonis & Petros Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-4].
In Perth: Group D: Russia bt Norway 3-0 [Karen Khachanov bt Viktor Durasovic 6-2, 6-1; Daniil Medvedev bt Casper Ruud 6-3, 7-6(6); Teymuraz Gabashvili & Konstantin Kravchuk bt Rudd & Durasovic 7-6(4), 6-4].
Italy bt USA 3-0 [Stefano Travaglia bt Taylor Fritz 7-6(3), 7-6(1); Fabio Fognini bt John Isner 6-4, 7-6(5); Fognini & Simone Bolelli bt Austin Krajicek & Rajeev Ram 6-4, 6-7 (5), 10-3].

Riders find the going tough

Sebastian Buhler has a consistent run

DAKAR RALLY

K. KEERTHIVASAN
NEOM
Dakar Rally continues to be a tough puzzle to crack for most of the riders for the third successive day here on Tuesday.

Not just the dust and rocky terrains, the navigation proved to be tricky for everyone as a particular waypoint created a lot of confusion for the riders, and many riders lost time looking for the way.

The Hero MotoSports Team Rally riders, too, found the going quite difficult, but they seem to be getting the hang of it.

The best rider for Hero turned out to be Sebastian Buhler. He had a really consistent run to finish on 26th position in the stage and 22nd overall as per the provisional rankings.

The best rider for Hero the other day, Paulo Goncalves had a technical issue. He stopped at the 30th km as the bike didn't start that forced him to spend around five hours to sort out the issue. At the time of filing report, it is learnt that he hasn't finished the race.

Braving a wrist injury
C.S. Santosh braved a wrist injury and tough conditions to finish 51st. Joaquim Ro-



Making the most of it: The best rider for Hero MotoSports Team, Sebastian Buhler is 22nd overall as per the provisional rankings. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

drigues whose results won't have any bearing on the overall results, rode without any pressure to finish 17th.

Buhler was quite happy with his finish. "I enjoyed today's race a lot. It has a very fast nice tracks and the bike was also running perfectly. At around 400km, there was a waypoint that was very difficult to find.

"A lot of riders got confused and lost time. I think I am riding good and hope to continue in the same way."

Santosh said he was hopeful of finding a good rhythm in the coming days. "Today was a long stage full of dust.

Regular match-practice helped, says Shardul



Well begun: With K.L. Rahul giving India a bright start, Sri Lanka's total proved inadequate. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

ASHWIN ACHAL
INDORE
Fast bowler Shardul Thakur stated that regular match-practice has helped him sharpen his white-ball skills. Shardul picked up three wickets – all in one over – in India's comfortable victory over Sri Lanka in the second T20I here on Tuesday.

"Playing two continuous years of domestic cricket and IPL has helped me with the white-ball. The more you play, the more you learn. And recently, our bowling coach Bharat Arun has been very helpful too," Shradul said.

The Mumbai cricketer added that the Holkar Stadium pitch favoured batsmen, which made Sri Lanka's total of 142 inadequate. "It was a

170-180 run pitch. It was not difficult to score runs at any stage," Shradul said.

Sri Lankan coach Mickey Arthur blamed the batting for the defeat. "We played too many shots, without rotating the strike. There were too many dot balls. If you get regular singles and twos, it puts the bowlers off their rhythm," Arthur said.

Udana unlikely
Arthur stated that injured left-arm fast bowler Isuru Udana is unlikely to feature in the third T20I. "It was unfortunate that Udana could not bowl today. Udana was in great pain in the dressing room. We hope to get him ready for our next tour, but even that looks a bit of a stretch," Arthur said.

STAT SPHERE

1

Kohli is the fastest to 1000 runs as captain in T20Is (30 innings)

1

The India skipper has become the leading run-scorer (2663) in T20Is

9/9

With Tuesday's victory, India has kept its all-time record across formats at the Holkar Stadium – 2 Tests, 5 ODIs and 2 T20Is

52

Bumrah's wicket-tally, joint top for India in T20Is alongside Chahal and Ashwin

Setback for Shaw

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
Prithvi Shaw has been all but ruled out of the limited-over leg of India-A's tour of New Zealand after hurting his shoulder in the field during Mumbai's Ranji Trophy loss against Karnataka last week.

A BCCI statement on Tuesday ruled Shaw out of the two warm-up games, scheduled for January 15 and 17 before the three unofficial ODI series that starts on January 21.

"Team India batsman

Prithvi Shaw suffered from rotator cuff and labrum injury to his left shoulder while fielding on day one (January 3, 2020) of the Paytm Ranji Trophy match between Mumbai and Karnataka," stated Jay Shah, the BCCI secretary.

The BCCI medical panel is hoping for Shaw to recover just in time for the two four-day games against New Zealand A, starting January 29.

His replacement is yet to be announced.