

India has the last laugh as Super Over jinx haunts Kiwis again

After Manish takes the visitors to 165, the hosts make a mess of the chase with just 11 runs needed off two overs; Kohli's men go 4-0 up in series



Judicious mix: Manish Pandey accelerated the scoring without taking undue risks, as wickets fell around him, to give India a competitive total. • GETTY IMAGES

Action Replay

THE FINAL OVER
Runs needed: **7**

Bowler: Shardul

1st ball: **W**

2nd ball: **4**

3rd ball: **Wkt**

4th ball: **1**

5th ball: **W**

6th ball: **1 run + Wkt**

MATCH TIED



SUPER OVER: NZ

Batsmen: Seifert, Munro and Taylor
Bowler: Bumrah

1st ball: **2** (Seifert)
2nd ball: **4** (Seifert)
3rd ball: **2** (Seifert)
4th ball: **W** (Seifert)
5th ball: **4** (Munro)
6th ball: **1** (Munro)

RUNS: 13

SUPER OVER: IND

Batsmen: Kohli, Rahul, Samson
Bowler: Southee

1st ball: **6** (Rahul)
2nd ball: **4** (Rahul)
3rd ball: **W** (Rahul)
4th ball: **2** (Kohli)
5th ball: **4** (Kohli)

RUNS: 16

INDIA IN NZ

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WELLINGTON

India snatched the fourth T20I against New Zealand on Friday after yet another Super Over was needed to separate the two sides as the scores were tied following the regulation 20 overs.

New Zealand, batting first in the decider, made 13 with Tim Seifert dropped twice before he was eventually dismissed.

In reply, India captain Virat Kohli hit the winning runs with a ball to spare.

The third match had also ended in a Super Over with Rohit Sharma hitting sixes off the last two balls to take India home.

"What's happened in the

last two games is unbelievable," Kohli said.

"It feels good when you are out of the game and then somehow find a way to come back and that shows the character of the team."

The win puts India 4-0 up in the five-match series, with New Zealand stand-in captain Tim Southee not happy that his side could not wrap the game up in the 20 overs.

"It's very tough, especially in the position we got ourselves into and then to give them a chance at the end, they're going to grab it with both hands," he said.

The Kiwis, chasing India's 165 for eight, went into their last over only needing seven runs to win and with seven wickets in hand.

However, they were restricted to six runs and lost

four wickets to finish 165 for seven and set up the Super Over.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
K.L. Rahul c Santner b Sodhi 39 (26b, 3x4, 2x6), Sanju Samson c Santner b Kuggeleijn 8 (5b, 1x6), Virat Kohli c Santner b Bennett 11 (9b, 2x4), Shreyas Iyer c Seifert b Sodhi 1 (7b), Shivam Dube c Bruce b Sodhi 12 (9b, 2x4), Manish Pandey (not out) 50 (36b, 3x4), Washington Sundar b Santner 0 (3b), Shardul Thakur c Southee b Bennett 20 (15b, 2x4), Yuzvendra Chahal c Seifert b Southee 1 (2b), Nitin Saini (not out) 11 (9b, 2x4); Extras (b-2, lb-3, nb-1, w-6): 12; Total (for eight wickets in 20 overs): 165.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-14 (Samson, 1.3 overs), 2-48 (Kohli, 4.3), 3-52 (Shreyas, 6.3), 4-75 (Rahul, 8.4), 5-84 (Dube,

New Zealand had already suffered a setback with tallismanic captain Kane Williamson unable to play, having not fully recovered from a shoulder injury suffered while fielding in game three.

Backbone
It was left to lusty hitting by Colin Munro and Seifert to provide the backbone of the innings with Munro making 64 and Seifert out in the final over for 57.

India, sent in to bat, made 165 for eight on a flat track with the innings anchored by an unbeaten 50 from Manish Pandey and his partnerships with Thakur and Navdeep Saini.

India was six for 88 in the 12th over before Pandey and Thakur arrested the slide with a 43-run stand as Thakur contributed 20.

Saini, who was not out 11 in his first appearance on tour, put on 22 with Pandey off the last 13 deliveries.

Team news

■ Here's how the dugouts changed for the fourth T20I:

■ **INDIA**

■ **In:** Samson, Washington and Saini

■ **Out:** Rohit, Jadeja and Shami (all rested)

■ **NEW ZEALAND**

■ **In:** Bruce, Mitchell

■ **Out:** de Grandhomme, Williamson (injury)

In a slow start to its reply, New Zealand was 23 for one after five overs.

But in the sixth over, Munro found his timing with a six and two fours to get the scoreboard moving.

Munro and Seifert put on 72 off 44 deliveries before the former was run out in a smart piece of relay fielding involving Thakur and Kohli who threw down the stumps.

STAT SPHERE

1 Rahul (117 inns) has become the quickest Indian to complete 4000 T20I runs, eclipsing Kohli (138). Rahul is the fourth fastest to the feat, behind Gayle (107), Shaun Marsh (113) and Azam (115)

2 Munro (411) surpassed Finch (405) for most T20I runs against India. Maxwell (353), Williamson (325) and WI's Lewis (322) follow in that order

3 Rahul has notched up seven half-centuries in T20Is since the start of 2019, second only to Stirling (9). The Ireland opener, however, has played seven more games than the Indian opener

4 India has a chance to become the first team to win a T20I bilateral series 5-0

5 This is the fifth consecutive T20I Super Over defeat for the Kiwis with Southee at the bowling crease

6 Batting first in T20Is, India has defended a total of 165 or more 27 out of 36 times, losing just nine. None of them has, however, come against NZ

7/8 This is New Zealand's eighth Super Over contest in white-ball cricket and it has lost seven of them

9 133* No. of runs Manish has scored in his last six T20I innings without being dismissed even once (2*, 22*, 31*, 14*, 14*, 50*)

10 The fans couldn't have asked for a better finish in two consecutive games. We hadn't played super-over before, and now we have played two back to back

VIRAT KOHLI

It shows character of the team, says Kohli

'Two Super Over finishes have taught me to bounce back when chance comes'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WELLINGTON

India captain Virat Kohli, on Friday, said he has learnt an important lesson in the back-to-back Super Over finishes against New Zealand.

"There's something new I've learnt in the last couple of games: when the opposition is playing well, you stay calm till the end and try to come back," Kohli said.

He said having come out victorious in two consecutive Super Overs for the first time proves the character of the team.

"We couldn't have asked for more exciting games, we've never played Super Overs before and now we've

won two. It shows the character of the team," Kohli said.

Looking at 5-0: Manish
Crediting India's win to the never-say-die attitude, middle-order batsman Manish Pandey said the team would push to an unprecedented 5-0 series whitewash in the fifth T20I.

"It has been our motto, not only for these two matches, that till the time the last ball is bowled, we won't give up any match.

"If you play with that intent you will get matches like these where you might get a Super Over, and you win from there," he said.



Twist to the tale: The Indian players are a delighted lot after forcing the game into a Super Over. • GETTY IMAGES

Thiem surmounts the Zverev challenge

Gives himself another chance to break the stranglehold of the Big Three

AUSTRALIAN OPEN
AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
MELBOURNE

A tireless Dominic Thiem came from a set down to outlast German Alexander Zverev and make his first Australian Open final on Friday, booking a showdown with seven-time champion Novak Djokovic, a man he called the "king".

The 26-year-old fifth seed, the first player from Austria ever to reach the Melbourne decider, battled past seventh-ranked Zverev 3-6, 6-4, 7-6(3), 7-6(4) on a sweltering evening.

"It was an unreal match, two tie-breakers, so tough and so close. It was almost impossible to break him," said Thiem. "Being in the Australian Open final is unreal. What a start to the season for me."

Defending champion Djokovic awaits him after the second seed ended Roger Federer's dreams in straight sets on Thursday to make his eighth Melbourne Park final. "He's the king of Australia," Thiem said of the Serb.

But there is a glimmer of hope for Thiem. Djokovic is 6-4 in their head-to-heads, but the Austrian has won four of the last five.

That experience paid divi-

Kenin and Muguruza upset odds in Melbourne

Emerging star Sofia Kenin, 21, is targeting a first major title at the Australian Open after vanquishing home favourite Ashleigh Barty, while Garbine Muguruza is appearing in her first Grand Slam final since her Wimbledon victory in 2017

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Muguruza leads 1-0
2019: 6-0, 2-6, 6-2, Beijing

ROUTE TO FINAL

M. Trevisan	R1	S. Rogers
A. Li	R2	A. Tomljanovic
S. Zhang	R3	E. Svitolina
C. Gauff	R4	K. Bertens
O. Jabeur	QF	A. Pichenkova
A. Barty	SF	S. Halep
7-6, 7-5		7-6, 7-5

MELBOURNE RECORD
2019 18 17 16 R2
R2 R1 - - -
First Grand Slam final. Won three WTA titles in 2019

GRAND SLAM BEST
Australian Open* Q-final
R. Garros Won 2016
Wimbledon Won 2017
U.S. Open R4
WTA titles 3

MELBOURNE RECORD
2019 18 17 16 R4
R4 R2 QF R3
Could become only third unseeded woman to win Melbourne title

Sources: WTA, Australian Open Pictures: Getty Images *Prior to 2020 © GRAPHIC NEWS

ends as he coolly closed out the match after three hours and 42 minutes to give himself another chance to break the stranglehold of the Big Three and win his first Grand Slam.

Lights failure
A jittery Thiem was broken in the opening game, saving two break points before sending a backhand wide to immediately be on the back foot.

Both players were nervous and the German failed to consolidate, broken

straight back.

Their momentum was interrupted when rain began falling and the roof needed closing, but it was only a brief intermission and Zverev resumed to hold for 2-2.

Thiem was still struggling with his first serve and a double fault handed the German a chance to go 4-3 in front and he grabbed it.

Zverev took command, putting 90% of his booming first serves in, and broke again to seal the set as the Austrian error-count mounted.

But the 22-year-old lost focus and two double faults in game three of the second set handed Thiem a 2-1 lead.

Zverev managed to break back but he was too erratic as Thiem broke again and clung on, firing an ace to take set two.

Bizarrely, play was halted for nine minutes one game into the third set when a light went out above the baseline and it bothered Zverev.

When they resumed, Thiem held serve and then broke with an epic backhand winner as Zverev again lost concentration and the momentum appeared to shift.

Thiem is one of the best returners in the game and was getting almost every ball back. He looked to be on his way, but Zverev refused to surrender and broke again to even it up.

It went to a tiebreak where Thiem turned on the style to take a stranglehold on the match.

THE RESULTS

Final
Women's doubles: 2-Timea Babos & Kristina Mladenovic bt 1-Hsieh Su-wei & Barbora Strycova 6-2, 6-1.

Semifinal
Men's singles: 5-Dominic Thiem bt 7-Alexander Zverev 3-6, 6-4, 7-6(3), 7-6(4).

Austrian wins battle of young guns

At the start of the new decade, tennis' tyrants - the Big 3 - were prophesied to lose their grip on the world stage! That hasn't come true as Djokovic continues to be a dominant force while Nadal still owns the red dirt of Paris.

Federer is a regular visitor to the business-end of the Majors though his last triumph came at Melbourne in 2018. Meanwhile, the young superstars, Thiem and Zverev, continue to chip away, hoping to gatecrash the party some day.

After blowing out Nadal in the quarterfinal, the Austrian was expected to emerge on top in his clash with German friend. And the fifth seed did just that, but not before walking a tight-rope.

Zverev, who had dropped only a set before the semifinal, began brightly as he took the first set 6-3. The gritty Thiem, who had made quite a few unforced errors in the opening set, tightened his game and gave little away. He also started to find his A-game, putting his opponent on the backfoot with his relentless returns and remarkable consistency - two big weapons that had helped him tame the Spanish bull (Nadal). Once he found a way through in the second set, Thiem showed yet again that he was the master of tie-breakers.

SCORELINE: 3-6, 6-4, 7-6(3), 7-6(4)
DURATION: Three hours 42 minutes

SATURDAY'S PICKS
WOMEN'S SINGLES FINAL
14-Kenin v Muguruza (2 p.m) followed by
MIXED DOUBLES FINAL
5-Mektic & Krejickova v 14-Jamie Murray & Mattek-Sands
LIVE ON SONY SIX & SONY TEN 2 (SD & HD), 2 P.M.
COMPILED BY LALITH KALIDAS

I was in bed about 5 a.m. two days ago so it wasn't easy to recover. But once the adrenalin kicked in, I still had some trouble in the first set. Both our first semifinal here - it was a tough start for me
DOMINIC THIEM

I think he [Thiem] has a chance [in the final against Djokovic]. He is playing the best tennis of his life
ALEXANDER ZVEREV

Cleaver and Chapman lift NZ-A

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHRISTCHURCH

Dane Cleaver smashed an unbeaten century as New Zealand-A put India-A in a tight spot by amassing 385 for five in its first innings on the second day of the first unofficial Test here on Friday.

After Will Young (54) completed his half-century, the host suffered a mini-collapse, losing three wickets cheaply but Cleaver (111 off 194 balls) and Mark Chapman (85 off 187 balls) resurrected the innings, adding an unbeaten 209 runs for the sixth wicket.

At stumps, the duo was at the crease with New Zealand taking an overall lead of 169 runs.

Resuming at 105 for two, overnight batsmen Young (54) and Ajaz Patel (38) added 66 runs before the former was sent back in the 49th over by S Sandeep Warrier.

Young's 50 was laced with six boundaries, while Patel hit four fours and three sixes in his 66-ball innings.

The scores:
India-A 216 in 54.1 overs vs New Zealand-A 385/5 in 114 overs (Dane Cleaver 111, Mark Chapman 85).