

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
South Africa vs Australia: 3rd ODI, Sony Six (SD & HD), 1.30 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 6 p.m., 8.30 p.m. & 11 p.m.
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m., 10.30 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Sunday)
ISL: Star Sports 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Davis Cup: Croatia vs India, D Sport, 7.30 p.m.
Legends World Series T20: India vs West Indies, Colors Cineplex & Colors Kannada Cinema (SD & HD), 7 p.m.
Bundesliga: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 8 p.m. & 10.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Leonard sizzles in Rockets rout

LOS ANGELES
Reigning play-off MVP Kawhi Leonard scored a team high 25 points as Los Angeles Clippers won its sixth straight game with a 120-105 rout of Houston Rockets on Thursday.

The results: Nuggets 114 bt Hornets 112; Clippers 120 bt Rockets 105; 76ers 125 bt Kings 108; Raptors 121 bt Warriors 113. AGENCIES



Hazard undergoes successful surgery

MADRID
Real Madrid star and Belgian international Eden Hazard has undergone successful surgery on his broken right foot, the Spanish La Liga leader said on Thursday. "Eden Hazard has successfully undergone surgery today in Dallas on a fracture in the fibula of his right foot. The operation was supervised by Real Madrid Medical Services. Hazard will now remain under observation until he gets the all clear to being his rehabilitation process," Real Madrid said in a statement. AFP



Mane urges Liverpool to be fired up

LONDON
Sadio Mane has urged Liverpool to use the worst week of its season as fuel to power the Premier League leader a step closer to the title when it faces Bournemouth on Saturday. "We have another important game on Saturday and then on Wednesday, so we will be ready and we will be back again. We just have to keep working hard and keep going if we want to be great champions," he said. AFP



Murray hopes to return in Miami Open

LONDON
Andy Murray hopes to make his latest comeback at this month's Miami Open as the former World No. 1 battles to recover from his injury woes. "I'm training to try and get ready for Miami. I've done so much rehab these last few months that, in terms of my strength and everything, all of the muscles around the hip are working well, it's just I hadn't played tennis," Murray told Amazon Prime Video. AFP

Chennaiyin FC favourite to make the final

FC Goa has uphill task after big reverse in the first leg

ISL

K. KEERTHIVASAN
FATORDA

Under head coach Owen Coyle, Chennaiyin FC (CFC) has turned things around in a manner seldom witnessed in the short history of ISL.

From being ninth in the table after the first six matches, CFC has fought back in style and remained unbeaten in its last nine games – a club record.

With a 4-1 cushion over FC Goa from the semifinal first leg in Chennai, CFC is brimming with confidence and will be the favourite in the second leg at the Nehru Stadium here on Saturday. Goa now needs to win by a margin of more than three goals to make it to the summit



Training hard: Chennaiyin FC players are put through their paces during a practice session. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

clash. The 53-year-old Coyle sounded optimistic of the away team's chances of making it to the final.

"In the last eight games, we took more points than anybody.

"We know we have good

players, we have shown the desire and fire. We didn't lose in the last five away

games where we have shown

different aspects to our play," he said. CFC forward Andre Schembri described the change in club's fortunes to

the change in management. "There was a change in management, a change of philosophy and a change of mindset, and a change of culture," he said.

Fight to finish

Meanwhile, Goa's interim coach Clifford Miranda insisted that though it might appear difficult his team would fight till the finish.

"To overcome the deficit, we have to fight till the final whistle. But this particular game has a different dynamic. We have our back to the wall. We will try everything we have," he said.

Goa has been strengthened with the return of three key players – Hugo Boumous, Brandon Fernandes and Edu Bedia – all

of whom missed the first leg. Miranda was happy to have them back.

"Their absence was felt not in terms of scores but as a group. It is a different environment when you have all the players," he said.

Remain confident

Boumous exhorted his teammates to remain confident.

"We need to be confident. It's not easy but we can do it. There is no dearth of motivation, we have to manage the mental side and keep calm during the game," he said.

CFC will be eager to ride on the momentum while the home team would depend on the team's innate attacking strengths and home support.

We are not short of talent: Atapattu

'Grooming and polishing the talent is something we haven't done properly'

SHAYAN ACHARYA
MUMBAI

Marvan Atapattu belongs to a generation when Sri Lanka dominated international cricket. Be it the ODIs or Tests, the island nation had enough talent in its ranks to battle the odds.

But over the years, things have changed.

With some senior players retiring, Sri Lanka has been largely inconsistent. And Atapattu believes that there has to be proper planning, right from the grassroots level.

"Let's put it very simply – the term transition doesn't work with me. It's lack of planning. I think there are too many things, too many cooks.

"We are not short of talent, but then, grooming and polishing the talent is something that we haven't done properly," Atapattu told *Sportstar* on Friday.

In the city for the UnAcademy Road Safety World Series, the former Sri Lanka captain was concerned about his team's recent performances on the big stage.

Long process

"We have not been good except in the last one-day series. Of course, in Tests, we aren't doing too badly. It's a long process. Cricketers don't just sort of come from nowhere. They need to be groomed, given a very strong foundation in terms of technique and personality.

"You do that and the sustainability of a cricketer last longer. And that is what Sri Lanka has to sort of think and do the right things from the grassroots level," the 49-year-old said.

Attitude is important

Asked what would be his advice to the younger lot of Sri Lankan cricketers, he said: "Attitude is very important. You have got to have that attitude where you are ready to improve yourself every day.

"It's a learning curve for

Another win keeps Harika in joint lead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LAUSANNE

Indian Grandmaster D. Harika posted a second straight win, beating Nana Dzagnidze in the fourth round to remain in joint lead at the FIDE Women's Grand Prix chess tournament here.

Harika, the World No.9, has three points after four rounds and shares the lead with Aleksandra Goryachkina of Russia, who beat Antoneta Stefanova (Bulgaria).

Harika outlasted her Georgian opponent late on Thursday in 27 moves in a queen pawn opening capitalising on an error in the 25th move. She faces the 21-year-old Goryachkina in the fifth round. In a surprise result,

Marvan Atapattu.
■SHAYAN ACHARYA

It's a long process. Cricketers don't just sort of come from nowhere

everybody, be it batsman or bowler. You need to keep that in mind. You need learn something new every day."

Belonging to a generation when Sri Lankan cricket was all about batting superstars, it does hurt Atapattu to see the inconsistency in the side's batting line-up today.

"It hurts. In my opinion, it only shows your upbringing as a cricketer. Your foundation and technique, your mental ability, how much pressure you can handle. We were lucky in our generation that we had very good coaches at the start of our careers," Atapattu said.

Seniors helped

"We had some good senior cricketers to look up to. They gave us advice on how to handle pressure on the international stage; so we were lucky. That's the main difference that I see in batsmanship."

With the T20 World Cup lined up this year, does he expect Lasith Malunga to lead Sri Lanka?

"I really don't know what the plans are. I am a believer that you should not question the selectors when they are in the job. But when they are out of the job, they can be questioned and they are answerable," he said.

Zhanasaya Abdumalik of Kazakhstan (Elo 2471) defeated former world champion and higher-rated Alexandra Kosteniuk (Russia, Elo 2504) in 37 moves.

World champion Ju Wenjun of China was held to a draw by Anna Muzychuk (Ukraine) on Thursday. She is in 11th spot with 1.5 points.

The results: (fourth round): D. Harika 3 bt Nana Dzagnidze (Geo) 2; Ju Wenjun (Chn) 1.5 drew with Anna Muzychuk (Ukr) 2.5; Marie Sebag (Fra) 1.5 drew with Mariya Muzychuk (Ukr) 2; Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus) 3 bt Antoneta Stefanova (Bul) 1.5; Zhanasaya Abdumalik (Kaz) 2 bt Alexandra Kosteniuk (Rus) 0.5; Alina Kashlinskaya (Rus) 2.5 drew with Pia Cramling (Swe) 2.

It's yesterday once more!

Legends of the game come together for a good cause

SHAYAN ACHARYA
MUMBAI

Sudhir Kumar Gautam was back in the stands as Sachin Tendulkar walked in to bat in the nets. He waved the tri-colour, blew the conch and cheered.

Tendulkar paused for a few seconds, looked at his favourite fan and went about his business. For the next half an hour, the Brabourne Stadium witnessed the icon going hammer and tongs at the nets bowlers.

It rekindled memories. Every time Tendulkar struck a drive or went for a pull, it was a flashback to the good old times of Indian cricket. His teammates – Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammad Kaif, Irfan Pathan, Sanjay Bangar – all watched in awe as the Master sweated it out in the nets.

Who would say it's been seven long years since Tendulkar retired from international cricket! At 46, he still looked hungry for runs.

A few metres away, one of his old friends – Muttiah Muralitharan – was spinning it out in the nets. As the spin wizard came up with the unplayable *doosras*, his teammates in Sri Lanka Legends, had a tough time.

And adding to their woes, on came Chaminda Vaas. Breathing fire, the former



Flashback: Watching Sachin Tendulkar in the nets, it seemed he had never been away from the game.

■PRASHANT NAKWE

Lankan ace looked as if he was preparing for an international fixture.

Over the next couple of weeks many such freeze frames are likely to go viral as some of the legends of

world cricket pad up for the UnAcademy Road Safety World Series.

A tournament for a cause, the event will see five teams – India Legends, South Africa Legends, West Indies Le-

gends, Sri Lanka Legends and Australia Legends – slugging it out for the title.

And, as Yuvraj pointed out, there will be a lot to play for.

"The body tires, but then it's good to regroup with the legends of Indian cricket. The tournament is for a good cause – road safety.

A lot of people will be watching us, so we are looking forward to giving our best," Yuvraj, who quit the game last year, said.

Like many of his old friends, Yuvraj is looking forward to playing under the captaincy of Tendulkar.

In the opening fixture on Saturday, Tendulkar's India Legends will play Brian Lara-led West Indies Legends at the Wankhede Stadium and the organisers claim that all tickets for the game are sold out.

"It's a wonderful feeling to be back as players. It's going to be reminiscing old times and playing matches in between," former India cricketer Sanjay Bangar said as he watched Tendulkar.

The shutterbugs gathered near the pitch, their lenses solely focused on Tendulkar. And, as he walked back to the dressing room after a long session, the huge demands for selfies said it all – it's yesterday once more!

Blue Moon claims Manas Sarovar Trophy

BENGALURU: Blue Moon (I. Chisty up), won the Manas Sarovar Trophy, the main event of the races held here on Friday (March 6). The winner is owned by M.R. Stud Farms Pvt Ltd rep. by Mr. N. Chandrashekar Rai and trained by Dheeraj V.

1 KARWAR PLATE (DIV. II), (1,400m), rated 00 to 20: ECO FRIENDLY (M. Naveen) 1, Silent Ruler (Antony) 2, Shaktiman (S. John) 3 and Astron (Arshad) 4. 5, 3/4 and Nose. 1m, 26.85s. ₹42 (w), 18, 15 and 22 (p), SHP: 42, THP: 49, FP: 121, Q: 48, Trinella: 1,389 and 815, Exacta: 3,090 and 843. Favourite: Silent Ruler. Owners: Mr. Sharat Kumar, Mr. Naresh Kumar Pawar & Mr. R.D. Singh. Trainer: Sharat Kumar.

2 MARCH PLATE (1,200m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms): ANSALDO (Jugadeesh) 1, Perfect Perfecto (T.S. Jodha) 2, Excellent Queen (David Egan) 3 and Phoenix Surprise (Antony) 4. Not run: Morganite and Sweet Kiss. Nk, 2 and 3/4. 1m, 13.96s. ₹66 (w), 13, 19 and 11 (p), SHP: 48, THP: 68, FP: 614, Q: 252, Trinella: 1,339 and 311, Exacta: 17,303 and 11,123. Favourite: Excellent Queen. Owners: Mr. P. Prasanna Kumar, Mr. K. Manoj Kumar & Mr. Rajan Aggarwal. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

3 ICEBREAKER PLATE (1,600m), rated 15 to 35: FICTIONEER (S. John) 1, Chantelle (R. Marshall) 2, Custom Cut (Trevor) 3 and My Vision (Nazerul) 4. Snk, Lnk and 2-1/2. 1m, 39.26s. ₹24 (w), 14, 17 and 16 (p), SHP: 49, THP: 37, FP: 167, Q: 107, Trinella: 493 and 165, Exacta: 971 and 326. Favourite: Fictioneer. Owners: Mr. N. Swaroop Kumar, Mr. Manjunath Urs M.C., Mr. K. Manoj Kumar, Mr. Sajay Kumar Puttanna & Mr. P. Prasanna Kumar. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

4 KARWAR PLATE (DIV. I), (1,400m), rated 00 to 20: AD-ELA (Chetan G) 1, Sir Piggot (Rayan) 2, Lovely Sierra (Selvaraj) 3 and Altair (M. Naveen) 4. 3/4, Nose and 2-1/4. 1m, 27.41s. ₹42 (w), 17, 26 and 25 (p), SHP: 57, THP: 72, FP: 273, Q: 113, Trinella: 3,316 and 2,211, Exacta: 19,897 and 8,527. Favourite: Sir Piggot. Owner: Mr. K.L. Gautam Kotwal. Trainer: Neil Darashah.

5 BECKETT PLATE (1,600m), MRC (Trevor) 1, Brooklyn Supreme (Chetan K) 2, Astral Force

(Antony) 3 and Dreams United (Arshad) 4. 1-1/2, 3/4 and 2. 1m, 37.96s. ₹42 (w), 20, 57 and 13 (p), SHP: 140, THP: 64, FP: 1,086, Q: 705, Trinella: 2,012 and 475, Exacta: 65,161 (carried over) and 6,981. Favourite: Incitatus. Owner and trainer: Mr. Neil Darashah.

6 DR. K.T.B. MENON MEMORIAL TROPHY (DIV. I), (1,200m), rated 30 to 50: WINALL (Antony) 1, Debonair (Arshad) 2, Sandarina (Trevor) 3 and Harmonia (Arvind Kumar) 4. 3, 1/2 and 1. 1m, 12.50s. ₹79 (w), 21, 19 and 14 (p), SHP: 61, THP: 51, FP: 543, Q: 356, Trinella: 2,260 and 830, Exacta: 81,223 and 13,924. Favourite: Sandarina. Owner: Mr. Kersi H. Vachha. Trainer: Arjun Mangalorkar.

7 MANAS SAROVAR TROPHY (1,400m), rated 60 & above: BLUE MOON (I. Chisty) 1, Set To Win (M. Naveen) 2, Attorney General (S. John) 3 and Commodus (Trevor) 4. Not run: Depth Charge. Lnk, Lnk and 2-1/4. 1m, 25.40s. ₹30 (w), 13, 14 and 17 (p), SHP: 42, THP: 47, FP: 228, Q: 62, Trinella: 890 and 542, Exacta: 1,190 and 333. Favourite: Blue Moon. Owner: M R Stud Farms Pvt Ltd rep. by Mr. N. Chandrashekar Rai. Trainer: Dheeraj V.

8 DR. K.T.B. MENON MEMORIAL TROPHY (DIV. II), (1,200m), rated 30 to 50: UP FRONT (Vaibhav) 1, Slice Of Heaven (R. Marshall) 2, Port Of Beauty (Antony) 3 and Stroke Of Genius (Rayan) 4. Not run: On The Trot. 1/2, 1-1/2 and 1-1/4. 1m, 13.07s. ₹33 (w), 13, 21 and 14 (p), SHP: 59, THP: 45, FP: 300, Q: 155, Trinella: 474 and 139, Exacta: 33,953 and 7,275. Favourite: Port Of Beauty. Owner: Mr. S. Pathy. Trainer: Irfan Ghata.

9 HONAVAR PLATE (1,200m), rated 15 to 35, 5-y-o & over: ISPELLDANGERTOALL (M. Naveen) 1, Perfect King (Arshad) 2, Nerva (Nazerul) 3 and Zehmaseeb (T.S. Jodha) 4. 3/4, 1 and 4-1/2. 1m, 13.30s. ₹15 (w), 32, 16 and 40 (p), SHP: 45, THP: 81, FP: 384, Q: 195, Trinella: 8,973 and 2,447, Exacta: 85,518 and 36,650. Favourite: Perfect King. Owner: Mr. K.L. Gangadhar. Trainer: Samar Singh. Jackpot: ₹5,06,930 (carried over); Runner-up: 4,828 (45 tkts.); Treble (Q): 1,180 (eight tkts.); (ii): 10,732 (one tkts.); (iii): 4,509 (seven tkts.).

Zavaray Poonawalla takes over as TAI chairman

VINAYAK M. ZODGE
MUMBAI

Zavaray Poonawalla, chairman, RWITC, was elected as the chairman of the Turf Authorities of India (TAI), by the chairmen of the other five turf clubs, at a meeting held on March 2 at Mysuru.

Poonawalla, who was handed over the baton in a colourful ceremony, assured the racing fraternity that he will strive his best to help racing in India in whatever capacity he can and work to get the GST reforms done.

"In this new atmosphere of friendship amongst the six turf authorities and to see that racing comes out of its dark moments in the quickest possible manner, we have pledged to help each other and look at personal advantage for our own centres," said Poonawalla.

"All clubs have pledged their indulgence and total support to the Bangalore Turf Club who is going to Supreme Court in the month of May to save the race course land from a takeover effort



New role: Zavaray Poonawalla after taking over as the new TAI chairman in Mysuru recently. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

by the Karnataka Government.

"This is the way forward in the new friendly atmosphere, which is one of my main endeavours, and it certainly will help racing to progress.

"For example, as regards regional totes and subsequently national tote, the Madras, Mysore and RWITC

chairmen have decided to accommodate each other by setting aside whatever difficulty that may arise in the combined regional tote. Hitherto these things were not happening.

"I hope to see a brighter side to racing by everyone being united," stated Poonawalla.

Balaji, Jeevan duo in semifinals

SPORTS BUREAU
MONTERREY (MEXICO)

The fifth-seeded pair of Sriram Balaji and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan came through a tough quarterfinals to beat Italians Federico Gaio and Paolo Lorenzi 2-6, 6-3, [15-13] in the \$108,320 Challenger tennis tournament here.

The Indians were scheduled to play fourth seeds Orlando Luiz and Rafael Matos of Brazil in the semifinals.

In the ITF women's tournament in Cairo, Zeel Desai beat third seed Wang Meiling of China.

The results: \$108,320 Challenger, Monterrey, Mexico: Dou-

bles (quarterfinals): Sriram Balaji & Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan bt Federico Gaio & Paolo Lorenzi (Ita) 2-6, 6-3, [15-13].

\$15,000 ITF women, Cairo: Quarterfinals: Zeel Desai bt Wang Meiling (Chn) 4-6, 6-1, 6-4. **Doubles (semifinals):** Stefania Rogozinska Dzik (Pol) & Zeel bt Lee Sora (Kor) & Caroline Romeo (Fra) 3-6, 7-5, [10-7].