



I feel that (Virat) Kohli is one of those players whom you are better of saying nothing to and you sort of allow him to hopefully a little bit sleepy at start of innings make a mistake."

MICHAEL CLARKE
FORMER AUSTRALIA SKIPPER

BRIEFLY

Players are 'easy target' in pay rows, reckons Solskjaer

Manchester: Manchester United coach Ole Gunnar Solskjaer insisted on Tuesday it was unfair to single out footballers over the issue of pay cuts during the coronavirus pandemic and said they are an "easy target". England's wealthy top-flight stars have come under fire over their lack of action, with British Health Secretary Matt Hancock calling for them to take a cut and "play their part". The Premier League has urged players to accept wage reductions of 30 percent but ongoing talks have hit a stumbling block. Professional Footballers' Association boss Gordon Taylor said his members had "agreed to play their part" and Solskjaer said it was time to stop criticising players. "For me football is an easy target sometimes," Solskjaer told Sky Sports.

"For me it's unfair to call on any individual or footballers as a group because I already know players do a great amount of work in the community, and players are doing a lot to help this situation. "It's not easy for anyone, and to be called out is not fair for me."

UFC close to securing private island for fights

California: UFC President Dana White has said the mixed martial arts promotion is close to securing a "private island" to stage bouts for international fighters during the COVID-19 pandemic. The flu-like virus has infected 1.27 million people globally and caused over 70,000 deaths and brought the sports world to a standstill, but the UFC plans to stick to its schedule albeit without fans in attendance.

The organisation, which was forced to postpone three events, will resume its calendar with UFC 249 on April 18 and White said he had also found a new venue for that event after the Barclays Center in New York was ruled out.

AGENCIES

From the brink to the podium

Had it not been for husband-coach Bobby coaxing her into a Paris trip, Anju wouldn't have made it to the 2003 World Championships

NIHAL KOSHIE

AT THE end of a month and a half of training and competition, Anju Bobby George hit her nadir at an inopportune time — three weeks before the 2003 World Championships scheduled at the end of August.

Anju and her coach-husband Robert Bobby George, had made Spain their base as they travelled across Europe to participate in six competitions before the big one. A month-long stint with world-record holder Mike Powell in California, to iron out some technical issues, had gone well and medals came in meets at Madrid and Stockholm. But in Berlin, the last one on her schedule, Anju's form evaporated and she could jump just 6.29 metres. The distance was poor but the bigger concern was her body: 'bloated, sore' in her own words. The doctor's diagnosis thereafter should have killed the dream of a world championship medal.

"My body was literally double the size, I felt heavy. The doctor looked at me and asked me to take six weeks off. Fatigue because of the cycle of competing, training, travelling had taken its toll," Anju says.

What Robert and Anju hadn't accounted for was the severe heatwave in Europe. Spain was scorching. Anju threw in the towel. "I told Bobby (Robert) that I want to return to India. It would be a shame if I did badly at the Worlds. I was worried people would make fun of us as we had spent so much money and time for the Worlds," she recalls.

Robert dangled a carrot. He coaxed his wife to travel to the city of love. "Bobby asked me 'have you ever seen Paris?' And I said 'no'. So he said, 'let us go see that city. Come, it will be fun. Forget about the world championships for now.' I agreed and we travelled."

Robert's tactic worked as he knew he could eventually get Anju to jump three weeks later at the Stade de France. Anju went on to win the bronze, the only medal by an Indian athlete at a senior world championships. Till then in track and field, fourth-places finishes on the world stage were glorified for decades, an extra coat of heroism added with every retelling. It meant that the nation's collective belief had been numbed into thinking that for Indians, just missing out was as good as a medal.

THOSE MONTHS. THOSE MINUTES

As the world battles the Covid-19 outbreak, sport is staring at an unfathomable future.

The Indian Express looks back at the sporting moments which have given the country reasons to rejoice in the past

JULY-AUGUST 2003
"Bobby asked me 'have you ever seen Paris?' I said 'no'. He said, 'let's go.'"
AUGUST 30
I didn't get a take-off and it was a flat jump, but I gave it my all."

In Paris, Anju rested for the first two days, while Robert took a stroll at the athletes' village and — at that point unknown to Anju — to collect accreditation cards. When after two days, the swelling in her body hadn't reduced, Robert asked her to jog in a park to see if some light exercise would help. "You can't travel back to India if your joints are swollen. So try warming up," he told Anju. The next step was to get her to see the village. She stayed there with the other athletes. Robert had to wait another day till his accreditation came through to join her.

Anju's mood perked up and soon she was ready to jump and train, but without stretching herself. She also went to the gymnasium to lift weights. "I was lifting more than my maximum in snatch and clean (and jerk). Things were falling in place. But I didn't realise it immediately. At that point, I was not planning to participate."



Anju is the only Indian athlete to win a medal at a senior world championships.

Soon he was talking up Anju's medal chances. France's Eunice Barber and Russia's Tatyana Kotova were the ones she had to watch out for with American Jade Johnson and Italy's defending champion Fiona May strong contenders as well. "On the day of the qualification round, Bobby told me you need to reach the final, that is the first step. Once I reached the final, he started talking about the medal. I had gained a lot of confidence by then and started believing that I would win a medal," she says.

After the first round, Anju was leading, but by the fourth had slipped to provisional fourth place. "My third jump was a huge one, perhaps a 7-metre jump but after first raising the white flag, the official showed a red one. I had overstepped by one millimetre."

The fourth attempt came amidst high drama. May, the Italian, could not find her check mark. "I remember she was furious and upset. I was to jump next. When I looked, my check mark was also missing. Maybe someone moved it. Luckily, just as a precaution, I had left a wet towel a little away to mark the point where I would begin my run-up. So I relied on the towel and had to do a little guesswork."

A near miss

A distance of 6.56 metres in the fourth attempt meant Anju had to claw her way back into a medal position in the next attempt, else going all out in the sixth and final jump would put her under immense pressure. "Before the fifth, I prayed to all the gods. Yet one of my spikes hit the knee on my other leg. I lost momentum and had just four strides to regain it. I didn't get a take-off and it was a flat jump, but I gave it my all. And I got 6.70 metres. I didn't know how much I had jumped."

Anju was in third position with one round to go. As things panned out, Johnson who was capable of knocking off Anju from the podium managed just 6.53m in the final round and could not improve on her 6.63m. Barber and Kotova took the top two spots.

"It was a proud feeling. The headline in my room would not stop ringing. Indian embassy officials handed me a congratulatory message from the President of India. An Indian flag was hoisted in our part of the athletes' village."

California calling

Following a medal at the previous year's Asian Games and CWG, the husband-wife pair decided to go to the best to make an impact at the world level. They turned to Powell, who coached at the Fullerton University in California. They contacted him through Robert's brother and some friends, and he agreed. The first step was getting an 'ok' from the sports ministry for travel and funds. Robert and Anju went to Delhi and stayed the whole of March before the foreign training stint was cleared. They were upbeat until they saw the training centre at the university after travelling halfway across the globe.

"I first thought it was some basic facility which we first saw and there would be a better runway and pit. But I was disappointed

CROSSWORD 4086



- | ACROSS | DOWN |
|---|--|
| 1 Best whipped or put in iced sweet dish (6) | 1 Marvellous surroundings for quiet meal (6) |
| 4 Kept a record that's scratched (6) | 2 Gathers assortment of pears (5) |
| 9 High level? (7) | 3 Mountain woman who was tempted to take things easy (7) |
| 10 A left arm which may be raised (5) | 5 Measure of restriction (5) |
| 11 Follow directions and engage in litigation (5) | 6 One who insists on facts is later confused (7) |
| 12 Watching the way things go? (7) | 7 Mother a long time hurt (6) |
| 13 They draw it across not round (11) | 8 It has lots to attract buyers (7,4) |
| 18 Doesn't let one forget about cares (7) | 14 An arsenal our soldiers surround (7) |
| 20 Plain net (5) | 15 Perfume made to provoke? (7) |
| 22 A group of companies given credit (5) | 16 Gave an address to read out (6) |
| 23 It ends a flight in two ways (7) | 17 Mineral almost exhausted in this state (6) |
| 24 Dishy redhead turns out to be rather sarcastic (6) | 19 Marks or pounds? (5) |
| 25 Individual rep's order gets no return (6) | 21 Ties up about ten and departs (5) |

Solutions Crossword 4085: Across: 1 Dowager, 5 Taste, 8 Getting on a bit, 9 Scoop, 10 Torrent, 11 Sitter, 12 Gratis, 15 Endures, 17 Means, 19 Court disaster, 20 Lotto, 21 Entered, Down: 1 Degas, 2 Without a doubt, 3 Glimpse, 4 Rights, 5 Tenor, 6 Subject matter, 7 Estates, 11 Stencil, 13 Rampant, 14 Aspire, 16 Ratio, 18 Shred.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.

Words may be false and full of art; ___ are the natural language of the ___ - Thomas Shadwell (5...5)

ETAER	AKNSHT
NUISS	IRTWGH

SOLUTION: ETAER, SNUIS, WRIGHT, ANSWER: Words may be false and full of art; Signs are the natural language of the heart.

SUDOKU 4173

Difficulty Level 2s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

4	8	2	7					
	8	4	9	3	6			
		6		1				
3	4			1	2			
6								4
7	2					3	8	
		9	5					
	9	2	3	4	5			
2	7	8			9			

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4172

6	5	3	8	1	9	7	4	2
4	9	1	6	7	2	5	3	8
8	7	2	4	3	5	1	9	6
7	3	8	2	9	6	4	1	5
9	6	5	3	4	1	2	8	7
2	1	4	7	5	8	9	6	3
1	4	6	5	8	7	3	2	9
3	2	7	9	6	4	8	5	1
5	8	9	1	2	3	6	7	4