

Magnificent Pant powers team to series win after Gill-Pujara show

BRISBANE, Jan 19:

They say heroes are ordinary people doing extraordinary stuff. If one wanted to see a live demonstration of it, Gabba was the place to be where Australia's cricketing pride and invincibility was torn to shreds by a bunch of Indian rookies who didn't seem to care for either history or reputations.

A target of 328 lay in front of them and with all the broken bones and bruised bodies in the dressing room, it would have been perfectly understandable to chase a draw to retain that coveted Border-Gavaskar trophy.

But they wanted more and that's precisely what they walked away with.

So what if their regular captain was on paternity leave? So what if their pace spearhead and premier all-rounder were out injured? So what if the crowd in Sydney had caused some mental scars with their racist chants?

So what? Asked a lot which had seen adversity of a more intense kind in their personal lives. They knew all about it and on the field, they showed how to stand up to it.

On Tuesday, a minefield of talent called Rishabh Pant (89 not out off 138 balls) channelled his inner 'Mad Max' to scare the daylights out of the Australians with his breathtaking strokeplay. He couldn't care less for the history that the home team had not lost at 'Fortress Gabba' in the past 32 years.

He was out to change it. "Every session we discovered a new hero," said the nation's favourite cricket hero Sachin Tendulkar, aptly capturing what a cricket-mad country felt especially after the agony of watching them

fold for 36 in the Adelaide opener.

Coach Ravi Shastri knew how momentous it was. He would know, he was part of the ride and he made no bones about it.

"It is the toughest tour ever. Nothing surpasses this. After 36 all

response.

"I looked good because everyone contributed," he said.

The result has the potential to end Tim Paine's reign as Australia captain having lost back-to-back home series against India.



Mohammad Siraj along with Rishabh Pant celebrating victory against Australia in fourth and final Test match at the Gabba in Brisbane, Australia on Tuesday. (UNI)

out, this is unreal," Shastri said, admitting that at the end of it all, he had tears in his eyes.

If Shastri's intense declaration reflected his flamboyance, stand-in captain Ajinkya Rahane's reticence shone through in his

"Whether it was with bat, ball or field, every time we had a chance to go ahead in the game, we let it slip," Paine said after the rather poor performance by his team.

The highlights package of

Pant's battle with Nathan Lyon can be enjoyed repeatedly in times to come as he demolished the 100-Test man in company of debutant Washington Sundar (22), who hooked the world's best fast bowler, Pat Cummins, for a six.

No one moved from their seats as Pant cut, drove, and paddle-swept to make a statement to his detractors while gifting India one of their finest overseas wins during the dying moments of the final session with an off-driven boundary.

While Shubman Gill (91 off

directed at the likes of Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah by the crowd during the Sydney Test.

The series will be remembered for ages and the impact that Ajinkya Rahane's team had on the cricketing fraternity and the fans in general will be written in golden words when a fresh history of Test cricket after 2000 is written.

In terms of relevance, a series win without Virat Kohli, Mohammed Shami, Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin and Jasprit Bumrah not being available

| SCOREBOARD | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Australia 1st Innings | 369 |
| India 1st Innings | 336 |
| Australia 2nd Innings | 294 |
| India 2nd Innings | |
| Rohit Sharma | c Paine b Cummins 7 |
| Shubman Gill | c Steven Smith b Lyon 91 |
| Cheteshwar Pujara | lbw b Cummins 56 |
| Ajinkya Rahane | c Paine b Cummins 24 |
| Rishabh Pant | not out 89 |
| Mayank Agarwal | c Wade b Cummins 9 |
| Washington Sundar | b Lyon 22 |
| Shardul Thakur | c Lyon b Hazlewood 2 |
| Navdeep Saini | not out 0 |
| Extras: (B-18, LB-8, NB-3) | 29 |
| Total (7 wickets, 97 overs) | 329 |
| Fall of Wickets: 18-1, 132-2, 167-3, 228-4, 265-5, 318-6, 325-7. | |
| : Mitchell Starc 16-0-75-0, Josh Hazlewood 22-5-74-1, Pat Cummins 24-10-55-4, Cameron Green 3-1-10-0, Nathan Lyon 31-7-85-2, Marnus Labuschagne 1-0-4-0. | |

146 balls) announced his arrival on the global stage, Cheteshwar Pujara (56 off 211 balls) surpassed all the pain barriers en route his slowest Test fifty that held the game in balance for Pant to launch a final assault.

The Australian team wouldn't feel too good about not being able to win a Test match with an opposition that was finding it difficult to field a fit first XI a day prior to the Test match.

Add to it, the visitors were also left quite hurt by the racial slurs

at various points, is zillion times more significant than the 2-1 win in 2018-19 when the opposition didn't have Steve Smith and David Warner in its ranks.

First time, people celebrated draws, became empathetic to players with limited abilities and believed in their team.

The stands were near-about empty at the Gabba thanks to the COVID-19 crowd restrictions but make no mistake that Test cricket seemed well and truly alive and kicking. (PTI)



Apni Party president honouring awardee of Roller-skates at Jammu on Tuesday.

Altaf urges Govt to advertise vacant posts of sportsmen

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: Apni Party president Syed Mohammed Altaf Bukhari has urged Govt to advertise vacant posts of sports persons in different departments.

"The Govt should advertise all vacant posts of sportsmen and conduct recruitment on the said posts. Many of the sportsmen who have received J&K as well as national awards in sports activities have been waiting for the Govt to advertise the posts which have been reserved for them in Govt departments," Altaf Bukhari said.

On this occasion, the issues and demands of the sports persons in J&K were highlighted by awardee in roller-skates and Apni Party youth leader Hiteshwar Singh, while interacting with the Party president

Altaf Bukhari. Meanwhile, Bukhari honoured Hiteshwar Singh for his dedication towards the profession.

On this occasion, Apni Party General Secretary Vijay Bakaya, General Secretary Vikram Malhotra, Provincial President Jammu Manjit Singh, provincial vice president Syed Asgar Ali, SC J&K coordinator Bodh Raj Bhagat, OBC State Coordinator Madan Lal Chalotra, ex-MLA Faqir Nath, ex-MLA Prem Lal, Media Coordinator Raqeeq Ahmed Khan, Ajaz Kazmi, Gourav Kapoor, Dr Rohit Gupta, Hans Raj Dogra and others.

In this programme, all the leaders hailed the young sports person and appealed to the Govt to advertise the vacant posts of sportsmen in different Govt departments.

Kohli returns for England Test series along with Hardik Pandya, Ishant Sharma

NEW DELHI, Jan 19:

Virat Kohli returned to lead India against England in the upcoming home Test series while the selectors also recalled all-rounder Hardik Pandya and pacer Ishant Sharma to bolster the squad, announced by the BCCI today.

Kohli, who headed back to India on a paternity leave after the Adelaide Test, was named in the 18-man squad along with pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who missed the final Test in Brisbane against Australia due to an abdominal strain.

The squad was named only for the first two Tests of the four-match series, starting on February 5 in Chennai.

Senior pacer Ishant had missed the Australia tour due to the side strain he suffered during the IPL in the UAE while Pandya only played the ODIs and T20Is Down Under.

Tamil Nadu paceman T Natarajan was dropped as the selection panel added Axar Patel, a left-arm spinner and useful batsman down the order, to the squad as he would be more effective to counter England on Indian pitches.

The 26-year-old Patel is yet to make his Test debut while he last played for India in T20Is in February 2018 against South

Africa. He has also played 38 ODI matches.

He is an apt replacement for Ravindra Jadeja.

Ajinkya Rahane, who led India in three Tests in Australia after Kohli's departure, was named as the vice-captain.

Expectedly, the selection panel retained youngster

Shubman Gill and Washington Sundar, rewarding for their excellent performance in Australia.

Pacer Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur, whose all-round ability helped India immensely in Brisbane, also kept their places along with Mayank Agarwal, who struggled for runs. (PTI)

Sudeva, Real Kashmir play out 1-1 draw in I-League

KALYANI, Jan 19:

Real Kashmir FC were held to a 1-1 draw by debutants Sudeva Delhi FC at the Kalyani Municipal Stadium here today.

A wonder strike by Shaiborlang Kharpun from 35 yards was cancelled out by Mason Robertson in the 75th minute, as both the teams shared the spoils of battle in a cagey match where chances were rare.

Real Kashmir had a chance in the 10th minute when Danish Farooq pounced on a loose ball and ran towards the byline to whip in a cross. His delivery missed the Kashmir forwards as well as the opposition goalkeeper as the ball went out of play.

In the 12th minute, a header off a free-kick went wide of the Sudeva goal as Real Kashmir hunted for an early lead.

With Real Kashmir dominat-

ing possession in the final third, Sudeva looked to stop their forwards by committing bodies in defence. The Delhi outfit sat back and soaked pressure, clearing away loose balls and rarely found a sniff of the Kashmir goal.

Kean Lewis, who had been a bright spark for Sudeva in the last two matches, was well marked by the opposition defence, making life extremely difficult for the winger on the flank.

In the 19th minute, Sudeva had their first shot on target when Shaiborlang Kharpun's first-time attempt brought out a decent save from the opposition custodian.

Dangerous in counter-attack, Sudeva tried to once again breach the citadel, this time from distance in the 21st minute. However, their attempts were still kept out by the goalkeeper. (PTI)

Fate of faulty Pavilion of Subhash Stadium still hanging in balance

*Enquiry agency yet to respond repeated queries of JKSC

Goldi Sharma

JAMMU, Jan 19: The fate of faulty pavilion of Subhash Stadium Udhampur has been hanging in balance from the last six years due to alleged corruption and malpractice done by local contractor in construction of the pavilion.

The then Government of erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir had constituted a high level committee to look into the issue of faulty designing and alleged corruption in construction of the structure to Roorkee based agency-Central Building Research Institute, CSIR-CBRI.

In this regard, the Roorkee based agency had visited the site few years back and found that the building was unsafe for any types of activities and submitted its report to the committee which was framed by then Government to enquire malpractice done by the local contractor and executing agency-Public Works Department to construct the pavilion of the Stadium at Udhampur.

"The Roorkee base agency also suggested some remedies including either re-designing of the pavilion or its demolition and construct new ones," said official of the premier sports body-Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council (JKSC), adding that the Council suggested the Roorkee based agency for redesigning of the structure.

"There were six reminders which were sent by JKSC officials to Roorkee based agency and the last one was sent to them in the first week of the this months and same communiqués were in possession of Excelsior, but nobody from the CSIR-CBRI has been responded so far, resulting the

construction of pavilion is delaying unlimited," said higher official while wishing anonymity.

The officials further said that the construction works of pavilion of worth Rs 6.32 crores was allotted to Public Works Department in 2014 and the executing agency sublet the same works to local contractors for execution.

"After the start of construc-

redesigning the pavilion rather than demolition the half constructed pavilion, so that the public exchequer can be saved. "The Council also offered their consulting fee for redesigning but after lapse of sufficient time, the agency failed to produce remedies the said half constructed pavilion so far.

When contacted to Deputy



A view of Subhash Stadium, which is declared unsafe by Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee, located in Udhampur district of Jammu division on Tuesday. (UNI)

tion at the proposed site, the officials of construction wing of the Council visited the spot during their routine check-up and inspected the outer structure of the pavilion and found that the malpractice made by local contractors in construction of the said structure and matter was raised before the PWD and the Government immediately," he said.

Thereafter, the JKSC and the Government had stopped the construction works and constituted a high level committee to enquire alleged violation of designing by the contractors. Since then, the officials of J&K have been repeatedly sending reminders to Roorkee based agency for redesigning the pavilion, so that spending money of public exchequers can be saved but nobody has been reply so far.

Another official of JKSC informed Excelsior that even the Council had suggested the Roorkee based agency for

Commissioner, Piyush Singla said that he has raised the issue with premier body of sports-JKSC and its response is still awaited. "However it is prerogative of the Council to demolish it or redesigning the structure but it should be constructed early, so that the players as well as spectators can take the benefit of the structure for which it was constructed," he said.

The official of the Council further said that no doubt, there was malpractice done by local contractors in construction of it but we will follow the procedures and rules suggested by the high level committee, appointed by the Government to find out violation done by the contractor. "Now, it is the prerogative of the Roorkee based agency whether it will suggest redesigning or demolition of the structure, thereafter we will take the final call and take up the matter with the Government," he suggested.

Ice Hockey Tourney under Khelo India concludes at Kargil

* Drass, Shargole Zone emerge winners

Excelsior Correspondent

KARGIL, Jan 19: The District Level Ice Hockey Tournament under Khelo India Ladakh Winter Games, 2021 concluded at Ice Hockey Rink Biamathang Kargil here today.

the final match a historic event.

Feroz Khan said that the registration of 28 teams for upcoming CEC Cup is a validation that Ice Hockey has thoroughly achieved remarkable growth in recent years. He further added that during the coming 2 years 2

He further said that the semi finalists and finalists of the tournament in men's category and the finalists of women's category will be participating in the UT level tournament. He also demanded for providing of land for construction of Youth Hostel



Winners of Ice Hockey Tournament displaying their trophies and certificates at Kargil. — Excelsior/Basharat Ladakhi

The Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor (CEC), LAHDC, Kargil Feroz Ahmad Khan was the chief guest on the occasion.

Executive Councillor (EC) for Works Mubarak Shah Nagvi, Councillor Chuliskambo Altaf Hussain, District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO), Kargil Muhammad Hussain Rehnuma, In-charge Head of Office AIR Kargil Naresh Gupta besides officers and officers of Youth Services and Sports Department were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, CEC Feroz Ahmed Khan expressed happiness over participation of good number of youths from all across Kargil district in Ice Hockey tournaments and called the participation of the two women teams in

Ice Hockey Rinks each will be constructed in all Panchayats to provide opportunity to youths to play Ice Hockey so that the game gets popularized all across Kargil.

The CEC assured that LAHDC Kargil will provide best facilities to the teams from Kargil who will participate in upcoming UT level tournament. Stressing on a collateral effort to make Ice Hockey a successful sport in Kargil, Feroz Khan reiterated that participation of all stake holders, clubs and associations is necessary.

DYSSO Kargil Muhammad Hussain Rehnuma congratulated the winner and runner-up teams of the tournament and informed that 36 teams with 350 athletes from different zones participated in the tournaments at Zonal levels.

Nine players selected for U15 Boys National Football Camp

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: Nine players of J&K UT have been selected in Football for upcoming Under-15 Boys National Camp which is scheduled to be held shortly at Kalinga Stadium Guest House, Bhubaneswar.

The selected players were Jahangir Ahmad Shagoo, Arun Sharma, Mufaid Mukhtar, Annas Ahmad Bhat, Ishav Sagotra, Tajumil Islam, Paras Mehra, Sahil Khurshed Malik and Parth Dewan.

The players were selected during the selection trials which were held both in Jammu and Srinagar under panel of experts from AIFF. The trials were organised by J&K Football Association and All India Football Federation.

The players are requested to be in readiness for participation in the camp and contact the office bearers of the J&K Football Association, Abi Guzar at Srinagar for further details about the camp on these numbers: 9419001811 & 9419998543.

RTI activist levels ‘corruption charges’ against Hockey J&K

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: RTI activist and veteran Hockey players of Jammu and Kashmir today levelled 'serious charges of corruption and misappropriation of funds' against Hockey J&K which was allotted by J&K Sports Council for organising sports activities.

It was stated by RTI activist,

received year wise details of funds released by Sports Council to Hockey J&K & also detail of expenditure through RTI but the Sports Council never bothered to get the account audited from the Association. "I thoroughly read the information received under RTI from the JKSC and found that utterly misuse of funds by the Hockey J&K," he said, adding that nearly Rs 1.50 lakh

In this regard a committee was framed by then Chief Sports Officer on dated 30/06/2017 vide letter No.SC/79/2986 and appointed Ranjit Kalra, member of Sports Council to enquire into these allegations and was asked to furnish confidential report within 15 days and same was submitted before the then Secretary Sports Council, Wahid Parrey.

"To get favour from the political dispensation and to defend themselves from any action by the Council, Rajinder Singh Kuku, who is all in all of Hockey J&K had appointed Kanta Andotra as acting president of Hockey J&K, so that he can use the influence of then Cabinet Minister Ch Lal Singh to hush up the cases and ultimately he succeeded to pressurise then Secretary Wahid Parrey for hushing up the matter," he further alleged.

Singh further said that Hockey J&K has miserably failed to produce any national level player during the last 15 years.

Balvinder urged upon the UT Administration to direct ACB or CBI for investigating the functioning of all Sports Association of J&K especially Hockey J&K for misappropriation of funds and de-affiliated them which found guilty.



Veteran hockey players during a press conference at Press Club, Jammu on Tuesday.

Balvinder Singh and other veteran Hockey players during press conference, organised at Press Club, here today.

RTI activist accompanied by veteran Hockey players and Hockey lovers including Iqbal Singh, Manjeet Singh, Harbans Singh, Ravinder Singh, Waryam Singh, Janak Singh, Sharanjit Singh nd Beant Singh.

Singh said that he has

has been spent by the Association to conduct its organisation election in 2017.

"However, numerous complaints were received by the Council from the various Clubs regarding refreshment of Rs 20 were provided to players during matches rather than Rs 100 but nobody seems bothered about them in the Council," Balvinder alleged during press briefing.

CL Chrangoo Memorial Tourney ASCC, Royal Hawk emerge winners

Excelsior Sports Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: ASCC and Royal Hawk emerged winners in the ongoing CL Chrangoo Memorial Cricket Tournament by defeating its rival convincingly namely Chanpora CC and Elite Cricket Club with eight wickets and big margin of 60 runs respectively, being played at Country Cricket Ground Amb Gharota, here today.

Chanpora CC won the toss and elected to bat first. Chanpora CC made 169 runs by losing seven wickets. Umar made 67 runs, whereas Feroz and Salik contributed 32 and 36 runs respectively. From bowling side, Mehran took two wickets, Irfan and Nadeem bagged one wicket each.

In reply, ASCC chased the target by losing only two wickets. Asif made unbeaten 79 runs

while Nayeem scored 71 runs. From bowling side, Suhail bagged two wickets. Man of the match was declared by Asif for his outstanding batting.

In another match, Royal Hawk defeated Elite CC by big margin of 60 runs. Batting first Royal Hawk made 152 runs by losing nine wickets in stipulated 20 overs. Amir made unbeaten 78 runs, whereas Yawar scored 29 runs. From bowling side, Ishfaq took five wickets and Abid and Umar Mir bagged two wickets each.

While chasing the target, the Elite CC bundled out at 92 runs and lost the match by 60 runs. Umar made 21 runs and Ishfaq made 31 runs. From bowling side, Rayees took four wickets, Shoaib clinched three wickets and Shakir bagged one wicket.

Man of the match was awarded to Amir Mushtaq.

COVID screening of players held

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: The J&K Taekwondo Association (JKTA) today held COVID-19 screening of all the players, coaches and officials for upcoming 23rd J&K UT Championships 2020-21, which is scheduled to be held on January 20, here.

The Championship will be held under the following guidelines, issued by the Health Department. Athletes from nearly 16 districts are going to participate in the championship, whereas the players' registration will be held on the spot to avoid congestion.

The Association also claimed that the championship will be held by using modern PSS scoring system.