

Devine Intervention: New Zealander's incredible 36-ball 99 powers RCB to 8 wkts win

MUMBAI, Mar 18: Sophie Devine lit up the Mumbai skyline with an astonishing 36-ball 99 as Royal Challengers Bangalore made short work of a 189-run target for an eight-wicket victory over Gujarat Giants in the Women's Premier League here on Saturday. It rained sixes from the broad willow of Devine as RCB breezed past the target with as many as 27 balls to spare and keep their slim playoff hopes alive with a second successive victory. Devine, who has also represented New Zealand in hockey before starting out in cricket as a bowler often batting at number 11, played an innings that will go down as one of the finest in the history of the T20 format. During her stay in the middle, Devine struck eight towering sixes and nine fours. Earlier, South Africa's star batter Laura Wolvaardt top-scored with a scintillating 42-ball 68 before a 22-run final over

powered Gujarat Giants to 188 for four. Ashleigh Gardner (41 off 26 balls) also played a brisk knock before Harleen Deol (12 not out) and Dayalan Hemalatha (16 not out) ended GG's innings by smashing a clueless Megan Schutt for two sixes and two fours. Chasing a stiff target, RCB were off to a rollicking start with the opening duo of skipper Smriti Mandhana (37) and Sophie Devine sending the GG bowlers on a leather hunt with their breathtaking batting. While there were innumerable sixes and fours, the highlight was Devine's maximum against left-arm spinner Tanuja Kanwar, smoking her over the midwicket for the tournament's biggest six at 94 metres. A four and two more sixes followed from the willow of Devine as RCB raced to 125 for no loss in only the ninth over. This was an over after the New Zealander Devine smashed Harleen Deol for an 86-metre six over to bring up her half-century

off a mere 20 balls. The 100 was up in the eighth over and what looked like an imposing total at the beginning of the RCB innings now looked very much within reach. While Mandhana, who also meted out harsh treatment to Kanwar by hitting her for a six and two fours in an 18-run first over, got out after 37-ball 31, there was no stopping Devine as she punished Ashwani Kumari with a six and a four. Finally, it was Kim Garth who brought an end to Devine's knock, but by then, she had already paced the way for RCB's victory. Earlier, batting first after Sneha Rana won the toss, both Sophia Dunkley and Laura Wolvaardt showed positive intent at the start, hitting two boundaries each in the first two overs. However, a ball after pulling Sophie Devine over midwicket for a four, Dunkley's leg stump was knocked over after the batter had shuffled across too much to play the scoop shot over fine leg to a good length delivery. (PTI)

UT level J&K Fencing C'ship concludes

Excelsior Sports Correspondent JAMMU, Mar 18: UT level J&K Fencing Championship concluded at Indoor Fencing Hall, MA Stadium, organized by Adhoc Committee of J&K Amateur Fencing Association in collaboration with J&K Sports Council, here today. Rajiv Sharma, Member J&K Sports Council was the chief guest on the closing ceremony while Yash Paul Sharma, Professor was the guest of honour in presence of Satish Gupta, Manager Indoor Hall, Colonel Vikram Singh Jamwal, former international fencer, Anil Gupta, Ajay Gupta, Kabaddi coach, Adv Supriya Chouhan and Maninder Pal Singh, Member Adhoc Committee. The championship was held under the supervision of Shotu Lal (Fencing Instructor JKSC) and Rachna Jamwal, (Fencing Coach JKSC). The matches were conducted by Mokshi Sharma, Ajay Khartol, Maninder Pal Singh, Tony Mattoo, Suniya Mattoo, Javed Ahmed, Mohd. Tariq, Ranchan Sabarwal, Rahul Sharma, Vir Sangram, Teja Singh, Abdul Rafiq, Ankush Gupta and Vishal Thapar. In under 12 foil boys, Rohan-Gold, Vihan-Silver and Arav Salaria & Amogh-Bronze, in U/12 epee boys, Sheikh Mohd.-Gold, Mohd. Arahan-Silver, Rayaan Verma & Maahin Manzoor-Bronze, in U/12 sabre boys, Aaryaveer Varinder-Gold, Arindam Manhas-Silver, Ranvir Lakhotra and Mohd Moieen ud-Din-Bronze, in foil girls, Myra

Singh-Gold, Priyanshi-Silver & Naairah Wasim & Ekshita Singh-Bronze, in epee girls U/12, Beigh Madeena-Gold, Syed Eshal-Silver, Arshuman Javed & Salma Mubeen-Bronze and in sabre girls, Shriya Bali-Gold, Arshiya Jamwal-Silver, Anab Qadir & Shristi Wazir-Bronze. In U-14 sabre girls, Antalya Jamwal-Gold, Sabrina-Silver, Eknor & Parul-Bronze, in U/17 epee boys, Sohit Thakur-Gold, Yuvraj Singh-Silver, Ranvir & Rinku Manhas-Bronze, in U/17 foil girls, Vanya-Gold, Shriya-Silver, Samiksha & Vanshika-Bronze, and in U/17 sabre girls, Chavi-Gold, Subhanaya-Silver, Palvi & Bhavya-Bronze. In U/20 foil boys, Aadhar-Gold, Dhruv-Silver, Rashid & Anzar-Bronze, in U/20 epee boys, Sufian-Gold, Aditya-Silver, Jasdev & Aryan Sethi-Bronze, in U/20 sabre boys, Harshit Kohli-Gold, Sachin-

Silver, Tarun Salaria & Vatsal-Bronze, in U/20 foil girls, Suhani-Gold, Simarleen-Silver, Mansi & Renu-Bronze, in U/20 epee, Samreen-Gold, Preeti-Silver, Twinkle & Nil-Bronze, in U/20 sabre, Shreya Gupta-Gold, Ananya Sharma-Silver, Palak & Simran-Bronze. In senior foil boys, Gourav Thakur-Gold, Rahul-Silver, Gulshan Mehra & Surya Partap-Bronze, in epee, Vir Sangram-Gold, Vikrant Charak-Silver, Ajay Kumar & Sawan-Bronze, in senior sabre, Udayvir Singh-Gold, Lakshay-Silver, Vansh Mahajan & Harsh Anand-Bronze, in senior foil girls, Riya Bakshi-Gold, Vanshika Bandral-Silver, Mansi Spolia & Ashu Rani-Bronze, in senior epee girls, Gazal Suri-Gold, Pihul Rajput-Silver, Aditika Salamat-Bronze, and in senior sabre, Rishika-Gold, Roshani-Silver, Mokshika & Mokshi Sharma-Bronze.



Secretary YS&S, Sarmad Hafeez addressing media at Jammu on Sunday.

J&K all set to host Sr. National TT C'ship in Jammu: Secretary

Excelsior Sports Correspondent JAMMU, Mar 18: J&K is all set to host 84th Senior National Table Tennis Championship here from March 20. A brief press briefing regarding the event was held in the conference hall of KC Residency Jammu which was presided over by the Secretary Youth Services and Sports department, Sarmad Hafeez. Secretary YSS was flanked by Sanjay Wahi, president JKTTA and N. Ganeshan, competition manager. The championship is being organized by J&K Table Tennis Association (JKTTA) in close coordination with J&K Sports Council.

stars and Arjun Awardees like Monalisa Mehta, S.Raman and Kamlesh Mehta are going to witness the event. President Sanjay Wahi said that many prominent paddlers of the country shall take part in the event including star players like Sharan Kamal, Manika Batra and Sathiana Ganaesekaran who collectively bagged 6 Gold medals in recent Common Wealth Games. "The championship carries a total cash prize of Rs 16 lakh and for the first time the bounty shall be equally distributed among the winners from women and men categories," said N. Ganeshan, competition manager. Around 33 men and 32 women teams besides 65 technical officials from all over the country are going to take part in singles, doubles, mixed doubles, and team championship events. Ajay Sharma while addressing the locals through media requested all in and around Jammu to visit the venue and support the participants. Prominent persons including Rakesh Mangotra, Special Secretary YSS, Rajeev Sharma Member JKSC, Dr Zaffar Iqbal Chief Accounts Officer, Parul Khajuria Under Secretary, YSS, Sheikh Riyaz Ahmad Administrative Officer J and office bearers of the Association were present during the event.

UPW end Mumbai Indians' winning run in WPL

NAVI MUMBAI, Mar 18: UP Warriorz snapped formidable Mumbai Indians' winning run in the Women's Premier League with a five-wicket victory, after the Uttar Pradesh side extracted more out of a tricky pitch here today. On a surface where the ball turned a lot and was also holding up, England's star left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone (3/15) led the way with her excellent bowling as UP Warriorz bundled out Mumbai Indians for 127.

total on this surface, MI found another reason to celebrate when Yastika Bhatia completed a fantastic one-handed diving catch behind the wicket off the bowling of Nat Sciver-Brunt to send back Kiran Navgire for 12, for which she consumed 16 balls. UPW were in a spot of bother at 27 for 3 in the beginning of seventh over, when Grace Harris got off the mark with a boundary. Even as MI picked up three wickets quickly but they were

also guilty of dropping three catches, which proved to be crucial in the end. In the company of Harris, Tahlia McGrath stroked her way to a 25-ball 38 before Amelia Kerr had her caught and bowled. But Harris hit two successive fours on three occasions, after McGrath's dismissal, to reduce the gap. There was another twist after Kerr dismissed Harris at a crucial juncture, but UPW held their nerves to emerge winners. (PTI)



Group photograph of winners and participants with the dignitaries at Jammu on Sunday.

Varun lifts boy's title of District Climbing C'ship

Excelsior Sports Correspondent JAMMU, Mar 18: Varun Singh of Bhaderwah won the coveted boys title in the Doda District Sport Climbing Championship, concluded at Sprawling Buds ICSE School Bantalab, here today. In a close contest with upcoming climbers Goveerind Singh of Doda who is studying in Jammu in Oriental Academy Sr. Secondary School and Piyush Kumar, Varun displayed good technique and temperament to clinch the title. Goveerind and Piyush bagged 2nd and 3rd positions respectively. In the sub junior girls, there was a good contest among Aradhya Thakur, Monika Rajput and Aditi Chouhan in which Aradhya emerged victorious, while Monika and Aditi clinched 2nd and 3rd positions respectively. In the sub junior boys, the budding climbers competed like seasoned climbers and won the applause of the crowd, wherein Milan Bin Akhter, a diminutive climber from Doda, Bhavish Singh and

Ishan Rattan claimed the first three positions respectively. In all 57 climbers including 18 girls competed for honours in the championship. However, competitions in categories of men, women and girls were not held for lack of adequate participation. Arti Sharma, Chairperson of Sprawling Buds ICSE School was the chief guest who distributed medals and mementoes among the winners in presence of Ram Khajuria, senior vice president; Sumit Khajuria, vice president and Shawetika Khajuria, general secretary of Mountaineering Association of J&K and Director of the host School Seema Sharma. The day-long competition was organized by the Mountaineering Association of J&K under the technical supervision of Shilpa Charak and Arun Deep Singh, both international climbers. The other officials were Sahil Kumar, Kabish Bhatti, Vansh Raina, Pratham Padha, Prema and Ankit Kumar. The competition was sponsored by J&K Sports Council.

BN Mullik Football C'ship continues; final of women teams today *Excelsior Sports Correspondent* SRINAGAR, Mar 18: In the ongoing 71st B.N Mullik Memorial All India Police Football Championship, the battle between women's teams has reached the last stage as the final match will be played tomorrow between Assam Rifles and SSB at Synthetic Turf Ground where ADGP Kashmir will be the chief guest on the occasion. On this thrilling day of football, four teams of Men played at two venues i.e; Kashmir University & Synthetic Turf Ground secured their place in the semi-finals of the tournament. The matches were full of excitement, with fans cheering their teams on from the sidelines. Overall, it was a fantastic day with several breathtaking moments of football. At Bakshi Stadium, two semi-final matches between women's teams SSB Vs Odisha & Assam Rifles Vs CRPF were played. DIG Armed Kashmir Shahid Mehraj and Commandant IRP 6th Bn Shafiq Ahmed were the chief guests at these events. In the first match, the SSB Women's team faced off against the Odisha Women's team. The SSB team put in a dominant performance, scoring four (04) goals and keeping a clean sheet to secure their spot in the final of the championship. The 2nd match at the venue saw the Assam Rifles Women's team take on the CRPF Women's team. The Assam Rifles Women's team started strong and managed to maintain their lead throughout the game, ultimately winning 5-1 and securing their spot in the finals. The tug-of-war between these two teams will be worth watching in the finals. As we approach the finals, we wish both teams the very best of luck. May the best team win and may this match be remembered for years to come. The quarter-finals of the Men's Football teams were played on two venues viz



DC Vishesh Mahajan and SSP Abdul Qayoom inaugurating 'Youth Festival' at Doda on Sunday.

Youth Festival organized at Doda

Excelsior Correspondent DODA, Mar 18: Youth Festival (Doda Youth-2023) was organized at Sports Stadium, here today. The Doda Youth-2023 was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Vishesh Mahajan along with Senior Superintendent of Police Doda Abdul Qayoom in presence of officials from civil and police administration, wherein thousands of youth from across the district converged at the venue site. Moreover, an interaction of successful entrepreneurs, businessmen, motivational speakers and counsellors was held which was highly appreciated by the youth during the festival. They shared their success stories and ideas behind their success. Some of the speakers from outside UT of J&K reached here to motivate and enlighten the youth, while some of them interacted through virtual mode. Idea pitching challenge - an initiative under 'Adbhut Doda' gained a grand success, wherein 23 innovative ideas were received online from the youth from all the pockets of the district. The ideas were explained by the creative youth and discussed with the team of successful people and officials of Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) to transform the ideas into gainful activities, contributing to the society and the nation. The best ideas declared by a jury of three judges were awarded to the Administration during the festival. A local online service provider company, 'Doda Hub' was launched at the Youth 2023 platform, where ITI trained technicians/ plumbers/ electricians and other trade experts shall be available for their paid services 24x7, initially for Doda town. More than 316 numbers of youth were provided on the spot jobs by various non-governmental agencies pertaining to education, insurance, banking and industries, besides sanction and disbursement letters under PMEGP and other schemes were also distributed among selected budding entrepreneurs. The DC Doda said that the youth is our hope and the administration is committed to create better opportunities for them and empower them for a better future and for the development of the nation. The whole event was conceptualized by ADDC Doda Pran Singh along with ADC Dr R K Bhatti, GM DIC/ Deputy Director Employment Doda Idrees Lone (Nodal Officer), ACR Doda Sanjeev Kumar, ACD Doda Phulail Singh and others.

Team posing with Divisional Sports Officer and others at Jammu on Sunday.



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Kabaddi Team left for 69th Senior National C'ship for women

Excelsior Sports Correspondent JAMMU, Mar 18: J&K UT Kabaddi team today left for participation in the 69th Senior National Kabaddi Championship for women which is going to be held from March 23 to 26 at Mahendergarh, Haryana. It was disclosed by general secretary of the Association, Surinder Mohan Gupta. The UT team will participate under the banner of J&K Amateur Kabaddi Association and J&K Sports Council. Ashok Singh, Divisional Sports Officer, Jammu distributed sports kits among the selected players in the presence of Dr. Jagandeep Singh, Physiotherapist of Sports Council, Surinder

Mohan-gen. secretary, Ajay Gupta, in-charge, Kabaddi Stadium, Kajal Devi, Kabaddi coach, Archana Kaushal and Joginder Kumar of the Sports Council. Ashok Singh, Divisional Sports Officer and his team also screened the team, today. President Anil Gupta blessed the UT Kabaddi teams for the championship. Team: Sunita Devi, Dinakshi Sharma, Suman Kumari, Sonia Devi, Sweetsy Devi, Siya Saini, Rajni Rani, Anita Sharma, Muskan Majeed, Aisha Hameed, Ilfa Majeed and Taniya Choudhary, while Archana Kaushal is the manager and Kajal Devi is the coach of the team.

When MI batted, as many as 18 of the 20 overs were bowled by spinners, a WPL record. In reply, UPW faced some obstacles before competing the task with three balls to spare. Grace Harris (39) and Tahlia McGrath (38) were the main contributors with the bat for UPW, while Deepthi Sharma (13 not out) and player of the match Ecclestone (16 not out) also played vital knocks. UPW lost Devika Vaidya with just one run on the board at the start of the second over. While the successful bowler was Hayley Matthews, most of the credit for the dismissal must go to Harmanpreet Kaur, who pulled off a sensational catch at first slip after the batter got a thick outside edge. Issy Wong picked up the big wicket of UPW captain Alyssa Healy (8), trapping her in front of the wicket. The on-field umpire was not convinced despite the huge appeal and MI's move to go for a referral proved to be the right call, leaving the Australian star without an option but to walk back into the dugout. Defending a small but tricky

total on this surface, MI found another reason to celebrate when Yastika Bhatia completed a fantastic one-handed diving catch behind the wicket off the bowling of Nat Sciver-Brunt to send back Kiran Navgire for 12, for which she consumed 16 balls. UPW were in a spot of bother at 27 for 3 in the beginning of seventh over, when Grace Harris got off the mark with a boundary. Even as MI picked up three wickets quickly but they were

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Manhas-2nd and Sanya-3rd, in 44Kg; Himani Sharma-1st, Ishwin Kour-2nd and Tanishka Dhar-3rd, in 48Kg; Manita Saproo-1st, Ritika Rajput-2nd, Kiara Rajinder & Parti Rathore-3rd, in 52Kg; Khushi Thakur-1st, Palak Sharma-2nd and Manyara-3rd, in 36Kg; Sana Sharma-1st, Meghanki-2nd and Arushi Rajput & Shanti-3rd, in 48Kg; Niharika Sharma-1st, Kashvi Sharma-2nd and Sanvi Dogra-3rd. In 48Kg: Sunakshi Devi-1st and Saniya-2nd, in U /10 open, Enyeta Gupta-1st and Maksha Bakshi-2nd, in 20kg; Anitha-1st, Divyansi-2nd and Kangana & Pranjini-3rd, in 23Kg; Anu-1st, Khushnuma Jamwal-2nd and Apeksha & Akshita Kakri-3rd, in 27kg; Angel Preet Singh-1st, Angel Bhagat-2nd and Diksha & Hemakshi-3rd, in 32Kg; Angel Mehra-1st, Nihar Sharma-2nd and Sabrina Sabri & Simranjot-3rd, in 40kg; Inehreen-1st and Pauri Rathore-2nd, in 44 Kg; Poulami-1st, Actwaita Padyas-2nd, in 27Kg; Manya Kandari-1st, Kahani Rahani-2nd and Yasmeen Kousar and Kanishka Puri-3rd, in 36Kg; Aakriti Sharma-1st, Aalia Kawate-2nd and Drishthi Gupta-3rd, in 40Kg; Nagampreet Kour-1st, Manvi Verma-2nd and Mehajik Chib and Mridul Gadiya-3rd, in 52Kg; Kashvi Chopra-1st, Afreen Afzal-2nd and Palak Mehra-3rd, in 32kg; Khushboo-1st , Mahi Rajput-2nd and Heeral-3rd, in U/10 32Kg; Shanti-1st and Mirganka-2nd, in 48Kg senior, Upasana Singh-1st, Ayushi Unyal-2nd and Sonali-3rd, in 52Kg; Shikha Kumari-1st, Nidha-ul- Nisa-2nd and Garima Misri-3rd, in 44Kg; Shivanshi Thakur-1st, Shilpa Rajput-2nd and Shruti Chib & Khushi-3rd, in 36kg; H Goranshi Thakur-1st, Aashiriyaa-2nd and Drishti Verma & Anida-3rd, in 57Kg; Nirjala Kumari-1st, Kashish Rajput-2nd and Diyanishi Sharma & Ikshita-3rd and 70 Kg; Akariti Chandan-1st, Sonam Chib-2nd and Arohi Sharma-3rd.

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also guilty of dropping three catches, which proved to be crucial in the end. In the company of Harris, Tahlia McGrath stroked her way to a 25-ball 38 before Amelia Kerr had her caught and bowled. But Harris hit two successive fours on three occasions, after McGrath's dismissal, to reduce the gap. There was another twist after Kerr dismissed Harris at a crucial juncture, but UPW held their nerves to emerge winners. (PTI)

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Manhas-2nd and Sanya-3rd, in 44Kg; Himani Sharma-1st, Ishwin Kour-2nd and Tanishka Dhar-3rd, in 48Kg; Manita Saproo-1st, Ritika Rajput-2nd, Kiara Rajinder & Parti Rathore-3rd, in 52Kg; Khushi Thakur-1st, Palak Sharma-2nd and Manyara-3rd, in 36Kg; Sana Sharma-1st, Meghanki-2nd and Arushi Rajput & Shanti-3rd, in 48Kg; Niharika Sharma-1st, Kashvi Sharma-2nd and Sanvi Dogra-3rd. In 48Kg: Sunakshi Devi-1st and Saniya-2nd, in U /10 open, Enyeta Gupta-1st and Maksha Bakshi-2nd, in 20kg; Anitha-1st, Divyansi-2nd and Kangana & Pranjini-3rd, in 23Kg; Anu-1st, Khushnuma Jamwal-2nd and Apeksha & Akshita Kakri-3rd, in 27kg; Angel Preet Singh-1st, Angel Bhagat-2nd and Diksha & Hemakshi-3rd, in 32Kg; Angel Mehra-1st, Nihar Sharma-2nd and Sabrina Sabri & Simranjot-3rd, in 40kg; Inehreen-1st and Pauri Rathore-2nd, in 44 Kg; Poulami-1st, Actwaita Padyas-2nd, in 27Kg; Manya Kandari-1st, Kahani Rahani-2nd and Yasmeen Kousar and Kanishka Puri-3rd, in 36Kg; Aakriti Sharma-1st, Aalia Kawate-2nd and Drishthi Gupta-3rd, in 40Kg; Nagampreet Kour-1st, Manvi Verma-2nd and Mehajik Chib and Mridul Gadiya-3rd, in 52Kg; Kashvi Chopra-1st, Afreen Afzal-2nd and Palak Mehra-3rd, in 32kg; Khushboo-1st , Mahi Rajput-2nd and Heeral-3rd, in U/10 32Kg; Shanti-1st and Mirganka-2nd, in 48Kg senior, Upasana Singh-1st, Ayushi Unyal-2nd and Sonali-3rd, in 52Kg; Shikha Kumari-1st, Nidha-ul- Nisa-2nd and Garima Misri-3rd, in 44Kg; Shivanshi Thakur-1st, Shilpa Rajput-2nd and Shruti Chib & Khushi-3rd, in 36kg; H Goranshi Thakur-1st, Aashiriyaa-2nd and Drishti Verma & Anida-3rd, in 57Kg; Nirjala Kumari-1st, Kashish Rajput-2nd and Diyanishi Sharma & Ikshita-3rd and 70 Kg; Akariti Chandan-1st, Sonam Chib-2nd and Arohi Sharma-3rd.

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Manhas-2nd and Sanya-