

Sunrisers face rampaging KXIP in return leg

HYDERABAD, APR 25 /- / A charged up Sunrisers Hyderabad batsmen have revenge on their minds when they face an in-form Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League here tomorrow.

Sunrisers defended a modest 118 against Mumbai Indians last night to bring their campaign back on track after suffering back-to-back defeats.

Despite missing the services of injured Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Sunrisers showed their bowling prowess. Pacer Siddharth Kaul and leg-spinner Rashid Khan were the home team dismiss the two-time champions for 87 on a slow wicket at the Wankhede Stadium to record a 31-run victory.

Sunrisers have looked a balanced side with skipper Kane Williamson leading the from the front with 259 runs and Kaul standing out with nine wickets in the tournament so far.

It was KXIP who had handed out a 15-run loss to the Sunrisers earlier at Mohali. They were also blown away by Chris Gayle, who had cracked a 63-ball

104. The West Indian T20 exponent has looked in ominous form in the series with a hundred and two fifties.

However, Gayle had missed the last match against Delhi Daredevils as he was a bit sore and Punjab would hope the opener makes it to the playing XI tomorrow. His opening partner K.L. Rahul too has looked in good touch scoring 236 runs including two half-centuries. Sunrisers will be again banking on the dangerous duo to give them another flying start while Hyderabad will be focused on dismissing them cheaply. In Bhuvneshwar's absence, Siddharth and Basil Thampi will have to take the responsibility early on and the spin trio of Rashid, Shakib Al Hasan and Mohammad Nabi will hold the key in the middle overs. Among the batsmen, Sunrisers would hope Shikhar Dhawan, who had suffered a hit in the elbow during the match against KXIP and missed a match, finds his touch after getting out cheaply in the last game.

After the batsmen scored a lowly 118, skipper

Williamson said he expected more from them.

"Without a doubt, we were expecting a lot more from our batsmen. Perhaps we could have gotten to 140 or 150, but we are still to put a collective performance together," he said despite the team winning by 31 runs. The Teams (from): Sunrisers Hyderabad: Kane Williamson (captain), Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Shikhar Dhawan, Shakib Al Hasan, Manish Pandey, Carlos Brathwaite, Yusuf Pathan, Wriddhiman Saha, Rashid Khan, Ricky Bhui, Deepak Hooda, Siddharth Kaul, T Natarajan, Mohammad Nabi, Basil Thampi, K Khaleel Ahmed, Sandeep Sharma, Sachin Baby, Chris Jordan, Billy Stanlake, Tammy Agarwal, Shreevats Goswami, Bipul Sharma, Mehdi Hasan, Alex Hale, Kings XI Punjab: KL Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Aaron Finch, Yuvraj Singh, Karun Nair, David Miller, Marcus Stoinis, Asar Patel, Ravichandran Ashwin (captain), A.J.Tye, Mohit Sharma, Mubeer ur Rahman, Chris Gayle. (PTI)

Saina, Sindhu, Srikanth enter second round of Asia Badminton Championship



WUHAN, APR 25 /- / After stupendous success at the recently-concluded Commonwealth Games, top Indian shuttlers Saina Nehwal, P.V Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth made positive starts to their campaign at the Asia Badminton Championship. While Saina and Sindhu registered straight game victories over their respective rivals to enter the second round, Srikanth had to fight it out in his men's singles opener. Saina, who had clinched a gold medal at Gold Coast, continued her good run as she brushed aside Singapore's Yeo Jia

Min 21-12-21-9 while Sindhu, who had lost to Saina in the CWG final to settle for the silver, defeated Chinese Taipei's Pai Yu Po 21-14-21-19 in women's singles competition. Former world no 1 Saina will meet China's Gao Fangjie, while Olympic and world championship silver medalist Sindhu, seeded third, faces another Chinese Chen Xiaoxin next. Top seed and CWG silver medalist Srikanth eked out a come-from-behind 17-21-14-21-16 win over Japan's Kenta Nishimoto in men's singles to set up a clash with Hong Kong's Wong Wing Ki Vin-

cent. However, Sameer Verma's fight against seventh seed Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei ended with a 21-23 17-21 loss. The men's doubles pair of Arjun MR and Ramchandran Shlok and women's combo of Meghana Jakkampudi and Poorvisha S Ram too joined the singles stars in the second round after pulling off thrilling wins in the opening round. Arjun and Ramchandran had to dig deep into their reservoir before seeing off World championship quarterfinalists Chung Eui Seok and Kim Dukyoung of Korea 25-23 23-21, while Meghana

and Poorvisha held their nerves in pressure situations to beat Singapore's Ong Ren-Ne and Wong Jia Ying Crystal 14-21 22-20-21-17 in a women's doubles encounter. However, mixed doubles pair of Saurbh Sharma and Anoushka Parikh lost 17-21 14-21 to Korean combo of Kim Won Ho and Shin Seung Chan. Another Indian pair of Venkat Gaurav Prasad and Jitu Dewangan also crashed out after losing 11-21 13-21 to Hong Kong's Lee Chun Hei Reginald and Chau Hoi Wah.

Gambhir to forego salary, call on future post IPL

KOLKATA, APR 25 /- / Having relinquished captaincy of Delhi Daredevils, Gautam Gambhir has decided to forego his entire Rs 2.8 crore salary while taking responsibility for the team's disastrous run in the ongoing Indian Premier League.

It is possibly the first time that an IPL captain has decided to forego his salary because of non performance.

Gambhir resigned from captaincy after Delhi Daredevils lost five of their six games with the skipper managing a meagre 85 runs opening the batting, including a half-century in the first game.

"Gautam has decided that he won't take any salary from the franchise for the season. He will play remaining part of IPL for the

Delhi Daredevils for free," a source privy to the development told PTI on the condition of anonymity.

"Gautam is someone who puts pride above everything else. He has been a proud performer. He doesn't want to take any money and it's a very personal call. In fact, he wanted to quit just after the KXIP game," the source added.

While he is still available for the season as a player, he will take a call on his future only after the IPL gets over.

"I don't know, it's too early for me to decide on that. Let me sit down and decide. I have to think where my game goes and I go as an individual," Gambhir said during an media interaction. (PTI)

Afghans not to play India in Tests in next FTP

KOLKATA, APR 25 /- / Afghanistan is set to make its Test debut against India in June this year, but after the historic one-off match the two teams will not face each other in the longer format as per the new proposed Future Tours Programme (FTP) set for 2019-2022.

Having earned its Test status alongside Ireland in June last year, Afghanistan is set to take on India in its historic debut in Bengaluru from June 14.

Even though Afghanistan will play all top nations, including Australia and England in the new FTP, the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) has failed to secure any other series against India.

"India are a tough team to get hold of because they are very busy. Since we are not in Test Championship, the inaugural Test match is good enough for us. We are playing 14-18 Tests in new FTP cycle," ACB CEO Sharif Stanikzai said here today on the penultimate day of the five-day ICC quarterly meeting.

"Against India we will be playing only one Test in Bengaluru as per earlier FTP. The new FTP is from 2019 to March 2022," he added.

Afghanistan and Ireland would be the full members of the International Cricket Council (ICC) in June this year, becoming the sport's 11th and 12th Test-playing nations. (PTI)

"These series does not come under the Test Championship, these will be all bilateral series - home and away."

Stanikzai said Afghanistan is also considering day-night matches.

"As of now it's not yet decided. But there will be, we are deliberating." The ICC Chief Executive's committee has already decided that the FTP will have to be passed by the ICC Board before it is made public.

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Hardik has to work harder to be consistent: Jayawardene

MUMBAI, APR 25 /- / Young players, including Hardik Pandya, need to work harder and evolve to become a consistent cricketer, said Mumbai Indians coach Mahela Jayawardene. Defending champions Mumbai Indians failed to chase a target of 119 after being bowled out for 87 in 18.5 overs in their IPL fixture last night.

Opener Suryakumar Yadav (34) and Krunal Pandya (24) were the only batsmen to reach double figures as Mumbai suffered a 31-run loss, their fifth defeat in six IPL matches. "Every year you can't but the same as we expected don't evolve and improve, there is no progress. Young guys like Hardik will learn that and need to work harder, the talent alone will not get you," Jayawardene said.

"Leading the game and thinking about the game, that's the part they need to keep learning and specially with good international bowlers coming and doing various things you have to evolve otherwise you won't be able to be consistent." Disappointed at the loss, Jayawardene blamed the batsmen for not taking responsibility during their chase. "Today I am disappointed. Some of the matches we lost, I thought we played good cricket, they could have gone either way, it is T20 cricket," he said.

"We just probably played the wicket thinking there is going to be demons out there and we just have to knock it around. We did not take any responsibility, so that part is quite disappointing. The new came in as we expected after 10 overs, so no one took responsibility that is quite sad," Jayawardene said.

The former Sri Lankan captain said Mumbai batsmen should have exploited the young attack of Sunrisers Hyderabad, who were without the services of Bhuvneshwar Kumar. "We didn't play with our heads today. We really didn't have to take chances against their main bowlers. We had to

knock it around and then they may be couple of bowlers we could have attacked," he said.

"They were not there with their full strength, with no Bhuvli, they had their young attack and we could have taken advantage of that, so thinking wise we were very poor."

Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan, who starred in Sunrisers Hyderabad's 31-run win, said he bowled quicker than other leggies and his quick arm action has helped him. "I'm a little bit different from other legspinners. I bowl quicker than them and I have a quick arm action, which makes it difficult (for the batsmen) to judge which way the ball is going. That's the plus point for me. I'm taking advantage of that and that's helping me," Khan said.

Sunrisers Hyderabad were bundled out for a paltry 118, but their bowlers in absence of pacers Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Billy Stanlake, who has been ruled out of IPL, rose to the occasion and bowled out the hosts for 87, giving the team their fourth win.

Khan said that he bowled in the good length areas and did not bowl fuller, as he was taken to task in the last two games. "I bowled a little bit fuller in the last two games which didn't help me and I was punished. The only thing today was to bowl in a good-length area as much as possible. The only thing was line and length, that's what I have worked on and it's a positive," said Khan, who bled 55 and 48 in the last two games. Khan said his team relied on their bowlers to earn the victory after being let down by batsmen. "We did not have a good total on the board, but (we knew) we had a very good bowling attack. It was about believing in ourselves. Wicket isn't as easy to bat on. If we can't do it, we won't let them do it either. So everyone was positive and doing their best," the leg-spinner said.

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Kaul reprimanded for breaching IPL code of conduct

MUMBAI, APR 25 /- / Sunrisers Hyderabad pacer Siddharth Kaul has been reprimanded for breaching the IPL code of conduct during the match against Mumbai Indians here.

"Mr. Kaul admitted to the Level 1 offence under 2.1.4 of the IPL Code of Conduct for Players and Team Officials and accepted the sanction. For Level 1 breaches of the IPL Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding," read an IPL media advisory.

What led to the breach of conduct was not mentioned in the advisory but Kaul got a bit carried away while celebrating the dismissal of Mumbai spinner Mayank Markande at the Wankhede Stadium last night.

Kaul has been in fine form so far in the season, taking nine wickets in six games. (PTI)

Nine held for betting on IPL match

BHOPAL, APR 25 /- / Nine people were arrested from two separate places in the city for allegedly betting on an IPL match, police said today.

"They were arrested last night by the crime branch of Bhopal police."

"Acting on a tip-off, the crime branch sleuths raided a flat in Govind Garden area and another place, Satalkhi Garden in Pipalari area and arrested nine persons for betting on the IPL match being played between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Mumbai Indians."

Two TV sets, 42 mobile phones, two laptops, remote controls, set-top boxes, call recorders and records of betting being maintained in a register were seized from these places, he said.

The arrested accused were identified as Hemant Agrawal (25), Pramod Kumar Prajapati (28), Latif Khan (29), Rohit Sitole (19), Vikas Yadav (22), Harish Kumar (23), Akash Yadav (24), Vinay raj (26) and Lakhjan Singh Rajput (42), the SP said. A case under relevant sections of the Gambling Act is being registered against them, he added. (PTI)

Son keen to play at Asian Games, says SKorea coach

SEOUL, APR 25 /- / Tottenham Hotspur forward Son Heung-min is keen to play at the Asian Games later this year, South Korea's under-23 coach Kim Hak-bun has said, with a gold medal at the event bringing an exemption from almost two years of mandatory military service.

Son has been in terrific form for Spurs this season, scoring 18 goals in all competitions, but the 25-year-old could soon see his career interrupted. All able-bodied South Korean males must serve 21 months in the military and Korean law states that the period of service must begin before the age of 27.

However, exemptions are awarded to athletes who win a gold medal at the Asian Games, or an Olympic medal of any colour, and South Korea will be one of the favourites for the football title at the Aug. 18-Sept. 2 Games in Indonesia.

"Son has a strong will to compete at the Asian Games," Yonhap news quoted Kim as saying on his return from Europe on Tuesday. "But first, there's the World Cup. I would

Son to play well in Russia before we meet at the Asian Games."

Kim said he had met with Son in Britain as part of his trip to look at candidates for Asian Games selection. Son, who could be selected as one of three overage wild card, was refused permission by his former club team Bayer Leverkusen to play in the 2014 Asian Games in Incheon when the South beat North Korea in the gold medal match.

Since the Asian Games soccer tournament is not on the official FIFA calendar, clubs are under no obligation to release players but reports in Britain say Spurs are weighing up the possibility of giving Son the chance to earn an exemption.

The 2018/19 English Premier League season is scheduled to kick off on Aug. 11 with the final of the Asian Games football tournament taking place on Sept. 1. "It's a sensitive issue," Kim said. "I believe the Korea Football Association will handle this matter well. The men's senior national team, the U-23 team, the KFA and the player's club should all work closely."



Virat Kohli captain of the Royal Challengers Bangalore and MS Dhoni captain of the Chennai Superkings before the start of the match

After CWG high, paddlers leave for World Championships

NEW DELHI, APR 25 /- / After a tasting unprecedented success at the Commonwealth Games, Indian table tennis team left to two batches for the World Championships to be held in Halmstad, Sweden from April 29 to May 6.

The Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) has retained the same team as the one that competed in the Gold Coast Games. The team, led by Sharath Kamal, will be training at Varberg from tomorrow until the competition begins on April 29. Sharath said that both teams will try to live up to their rankings.

Our men's team is ranked 10th and women 14th. We also know the expectations have soared after our CWG success. But the worlds are a different ball game. Yet, we will give our best and I would be happy if we try to reach a top-12 spot, he said.

Anything else, we will consider as a bonus, he added. Manika Batra, who was a part of the first batch that left yesterday, was confident of performing well.

I am in good touch and our team spirit is really good after what we did at Gold Coast. But CWG is past and we have to live in the present. The world championships will give us a kind of experience that will help us all in the future, said Manika.

Haryana Government cancels award function for CWG medalists after prize money furore

CHANDIGARH, APR 25 /- / The Haryana government on Wednesday cancelled the felicitation function for the state's Commonwealth Games (CWG) medal winners after being threatened with a boycott by top athletes, such as wrestler Vinesh Phogat and javelin-thrower Neeraj Chopra, over a proposed cut in prize money.

The function was to be held in Panchkula on Thursday but athletes such as Phogat, Chopra and boxer Manoj Kumar had refused to attend it, citing the cut proposed for athletes employed with units like the Railways and Services. While Phogat and Chopra had won gold medals, Manoj claimed a bronze in the Gold Coast event.

"We have decided to cancel tomorrow's programme. We will be holding a meeting soon wherein we will review the existing policy. Under our sports policy, it is quite clear that we have to give award money to those who have played from the state," Haryana sports minister Anil Vij told PTI.

"There is no provision in the present policy to give award to those who have represented other bodies like Railways or the Army," he added.

Vij said even the reduced prize money being planned for the likes of Phogat (Railways) and Chopra (Services) is a departure from the past provision of not awarding athletes belonging to other units.

"...we gave relaxation in our policy and considered even those players who play for other units. However, lest they feel that they get any less than what their counterparts who represent the state get."

"Everyone is aware that Haryana gives highest award money. What we had said is that we will deduct the prize money that they get from their employer, in case of any from the total reward money," Vij explained.

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"If we don't go for deduction of this amount, then those who played from Haryana, their reward money will be reduced whereas those who played from other bodies, they will

take Rs 1 crore, let's say from Railways as well as get Rs 1.5 crore from the Haryana government. We will be holding a meeting. We will review the existing policy," he said.

The preparations for organising the mega awards function at Panchkula had almost been completed.

As per earlier programme, Governor Prof Kaptan Singh Solanki was to honour the medal winners in the presence of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Sports Minister Vij.

Of the 22 CWG medalists from Haryana, 13 represent organisations such as Indian Railways and Army. The Haryana government was to felicitate all the 22 medal winners.

However, controversy broke out after a few of the medal winners threatened boycott if the government didn't withdraw its decision of making the deduction from their prize money.

According to Haryana's sports policy, a CWG gold medalist from the state is to get Rs 1.5 crore, a silver medalist Rs 75 lakh and a bronze medalist Rs 50 lakh.

Jeremy win silver & bronze at Asian

Youth and Junior Weightlifting C'ship

NEW DELHI, APR 25 /- / India's Jeremy Lalrinmunga (56 kg) registered his best total of 250 kg to win the silver in Youth section and bronze medal in Junior section at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championship at Urgench, Uzbekistan.

The 15-year-old Lalrinmunga also created two new national records in Youth boys and junior men during his lift of 250 kg.

Sidhanth Gogoi, 14, finished with bronze medal with a lift of 240 kg in Youth Boys section. Earlier two Indian women athletes from Orissa won a silver and a bronze medal.

Jhilli Danchech, 14, clinched the silver medal in junior women after lifting 166 kg (73+93), while Sneha Soren (46 kg) lifted 145 kg (63+82) to bag the bronze medal in Youth Girls. (PTI)

