

## Punam Raut to lead India A

**NEW DELHI, OCT 11**—Punam Raut will lead the Indian Women's A side for a three-match ODI home series against Australia to be held in Mumbai from October 12-14. The ODI series will be followed by a T20 series and the squad for it will be named later, according to a media release. India A Women's ODI squad: Punam Raut (captain), Priya Punia, Devika Vaidya, Mona Meshram, Tanushree Sarkar, Sushma Verma (wicket-keeper), Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Sushree Dibyadarshani, C Prathiyusha, Reemalaxmi Ekka, Shikha Pandey, Nethra L, Hemali Borwankar, Kavita Patil, Preeti Bose. (PTI)

### UEFA Nations League

## Chelsea midfielder Ross Barkley returns

**LONDON, OCT 11**—/ Ross Barkley made his debut for England at the age of 19 and was tipped for the top, but has not featured so far during manager Gareth Southgate's reign, missing out on the World Cup in Russia. Chelsea midfielder Ross Barkley is back in the England squad after an absence of over two years and believes he is finally ready to fulfil his potential. Barkley made his debut for England at the age of 19 and was tipped for the top, but has not featured so far during manager Gareth Southgate's reign, missing out on the World Cup in Russia.

A protracted departure from his boyhood club Everton and a long-term injury limited Barkley to just two Premier League appearances last season. Yet following the arrival of Italian coach Maurizio Sarri at Stamford Bridge, Barkley has made an impressive start to this season. "I've had difficult times over the last two years," he told a news conference after training with England ahead of their Nations' League games against Croatia on Friday and Spain on Monday. "But I've kept a positive mind, worked really hard, fitness wise I'm feeling good. I've never felt before and I'm looking forward to the games ahead and the rest of the season. "I'm over the moon to be back. It's been a long time coming but I feel like I've worked hard over the last two years and I feel like it's probably deserved."

Barkley certainly appears to be a more confident character than when he was a young member of former England manager Roy Hodgson's squad. "I feel much more mature now, I feel like I'm ready to show what I'm capable of. To show I can produce the goods on any day," he said. "Maybe over the last few years I've been a bit inconsistent but now I'm fully focused on giving consistent performances."

## Louis Saha backs Jose Mourinho

### \*Slams Paul Pogba

**LONDON, OCT 11**—/ Louis Saha believes that Manchester United's win against Newcastle showed that Jose Mourinho is still the right man to lead the team. Former Manchester United striker Louis Saha criticised French midfielder Paul Pogba on Tuesday for speaking out and undermining manager Jose Mourinho with his recent "attack, attack, attack" comments. Following United's 1-1 home draw with Wolverhampton Wanderers in the Premier League last month, Pogba said United should be more attacking at Old Trafford. Compatriot Saha, who played for the club between 2004-08, however, told Reuters that the 25-year-old should keep his thoughts private. "I think he (Pogba) has done it for a purpose, and I don't think that is right," Saha, 40, said. "It's the wrong communication, it puts pressure on the manager, those talks you should do in the dressing room with your manager. "You know that people will question about it, so don't do it. This is my opinion and I would have said that to him. I would say 'No, that's not something to say because you are not the manager.'"

Saha was speaking to Reuters at the Emirates Stadium on the sidelines of the launch of the Association Football Development Programme Global, a social enterprise set up by former FIFA vice-president Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein of Jordan. When asked if Pogba should instead do his talking on the pitch, Saha replied: "Exactly. You should be like 'I should score, score, score. I should pass, pass, pass.' "So I don't think it was appropriate and I think (now) he understands that for sure. Whatever the situation, they have to sort it out because it's not good for the club, it's not good for themselves, it doesn't give them any space for mistakes so people are going to be on their backs," he added. Following Pogba's critique, media reports circulated that Mourinho was on borrowed time as United coach, especially after being dumped out of the League Cup by second-tier Derby County. However, that he might be gone as early as last weekend were allayed after a late 3-2 comeback win over Newcastle United at home in the league.

# We have plans in place for Shaw: Chase

**HYDERABAD, OCT 11**—/ West Indies all-rounder Roston Chase says they are better prepared to tackle young Indian batsman Prithvi Shaw, whose initial onslaught had set the tone for their embarrassing defeat in the first Test. Young Shaw scored a century on debut, playing a key role in India's big win in the series-opener. "I am sure our guys would have learnt quickly from what happened in the first Test and we will know some of the strengths of the young Shaw, who really took us apart early in the game. I am sure we will learn from our mistakes in the first game and move on smartly in the second game," Chase said on the eve of the second Test. While there is a plan in place for Shaw, Chase didn't want to divulge. "We had a long chat after the first Test and came up with some plans. We discussed how we are looking to bowl him in the second Test along with some of the other batters. I can't obviously discuss our plans in the conference. I think we have a better idea of what we are looking to do against him."

## Mourinho faces FA probe over touchline comments

**LONDON, OCT 11**—/ The Football Association gave the nod to conduct a probe into the matter following Manchester United's 3-2 win against Newcastle United. Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho's alleged remarks on the touchline have attracted an investigation from the Football Association (FA) following the Old Trafford based club's 3-2 win against Newcastle United.

Paparazzi captured the former Chelsea coach muttering what are reported to have been cuss words in Portuguese as he headed for the tunnel following his side's second-half turnaround, which saw them fight back from being 0-2 down at one stage to take all three points.

Following the match, the Football Association has given the nod to conduct a probe into the matter. Jose Mourinho was appointed the Manchester United manager in May 2016. He had also been the subject of intense speculation in the build-up to the game.

Goals in the second-half from Juan Mata, Anthony Martial and Alexis Sanchez saved United the blues as they avoided a fourth Premier League loss of the season. Reflecting on the same, the Old Trafford boss said, "As a friend of mine was saying to me this morning: if tomorrow it is raining in London it is my fault. If there is some difficulty to have the agreement of Brexit, it is my fault." "And I have to be ready for a lot of wickedness and a clear man-hunting which I think is too much in football. It is a life I love, it is the life I worked for since I was a kid and I will love this until my last day. It is one more thing in my life."

# SAI selects 734 athletes for Khelo India scholarship

**NEW DELHI, OCT 11**—/ The Sports Authority of India (SAI) today cleared 734 athletes for a scholarship programme under Khelo India Talent Identification Development scheme, through which they will get training at government-accredited residential academies. An annual stipend of Rs 1.2 lakh will be given to each player on a quarterly basis to meet their out of pocket expenses, treatment of injuries and other expenses. The athletes will be put up at various Khelo India accredited academies which will take care of the training, boarding and tournament expenses of the athletes.

A release from the Sports Ministry said, "For the first time ever, in order to create a strong ecosystem for nurturing talent, various private, state and SAI academies have been accredited. A High Powered Committee accredited 21 academies as well. The plan is to develop more such academies so that young athletes can get access to the best training without having to travel long distances."

Talent Identification Committee (TIC) was formed comprising Arjuna awardees and Oranacharya

awardees to shortlist and propose the names of the beneficiaries to be divided into three categories. To encourage excellence, there will be gap analysis which will offer these academies opportunities for upgradation. At the same time, there will be a strong review mechanism for academies on a periodical basis. Academies that do not maintain desired standards and fulfill the performance criteria may be delisted," the release said.

It was also decided that athletes must report injury immediately so that timely rehabilitation can be offered. The High Powered

Committee also decided to put into place a robust performance monitoring system to get the best out of everyone involved in the system.

Sports Minister Ravi Varadhan Rathore said that "transformational changes have been introduced into Indian sports". "Catch them young is no longer a slogan but is visible in our action. We are developing a sports system that connects local potential to global podiums, that encourages every Indian to have sports as a part of their lives for entertainment, education or excellence," he said. (PTI)



Soccer Football - UEFA Nations League - England Training - St. George's Park, Burton upon Trent, Britain - Reuters

## Barcelona trains without 10 intl players

### \*Suarez, Roberto sidelined as well

**GENEVA, OCT 11**—/ Manager Ernesto Valverde conducted the practice session without the presence of several big names including Marc Andre Ter Stegen, Philippe Coutinho and French forward Ousmane Dembele, reports Efe. At the same time, it provided a good opportunity for those youngsters who wanted to make an impression and stake a claim for first-team spots. Riqui Puig, a 19-year-old midfielder from Barcelona B was one such beneficiary after being included as a part of the session along with other first team members. The other high profile absentees who were not a part of the practice session included defender Sergi Roberto who did not take part in the practice session as well as Uruguayan striker Luis Suarez who has been ruled out with a knee injury. The Spanish giants have failed to register a win in their last four La Liga clashes, after barely managing to register a draw against Valencia and are all set to host Sevilla, who are enjoying a good run on October 20.

It was also decided that athletes must report injury immediately so that timely rehabilitation can be offered. The High Powered



Golf - European Tour - British Masters - Walton Heath Golf Club, Walton-on-the-Hill, Britain - October - Reuters

## Jayaram, Manjunath enter Vietnam Open semis

**HO CHI MINH CITY, OCT 11**—/ Indian shuttlers Ajay Jayaram and Mithun Manjunath on Friday advanced to the men's singles semifinals of the Vietnam Open Super Tour 100 tournament.

Jayaram, former World No.13, beat Canada's Sheng Xiaodong 26-24, 21-17 while Manjunath edged past China's Zhou Zeqi 17-21, 21-19, 21-11. Jayaram and Manjunath will meet Japan's Yu Igarashi and Indonesia's Shesar Hiren Rhusvanto respectively in the semifinals.

Jayaram started the first set with a healthy 5-0 lead but Xiaodong fought back to lead with seven straight points. Xiaodong threatened to take the first set when he set up two crucial game points but Jayaram held his nerves to force a deuce. Jayaram eventually won 26-24.

In the second set, Xiaodong turned aggressive and led Jayaram 7-3 in the start. Jayaram came back into the match to lead by three points at the break (11-8). He then surged ahead to win the second set 21-17 and the match in straight sets.

The 20-year-old Mithun Manjunath survived Zhou Zeqi's probing attack to win a neck-and-neck quarterfinal match by 17-21, 21-19, 21-11. Manjunath, a semifinalist at the Russian Open last month, will face Indonesian World No. 79 Shesar Hiren Rhusvanto in the penultimate clash.

In the Women's singles, former national champion Rituparna Das lost to Thailand's Phittayaporn Chaiwan in the quarterfinal. Das was outplayed 19-21, 14-21 by the World No. 9. (PTI)

## Paco Alcacer happy leaving Barcelona

**BERLIN, OCT 11**—/ Spain forward Paco Alcacer on Tuesday said that he was happy with the decision to leave Barcelona over the summer in order to play a bigger role with German fourth giants Borussia Dortmund.

Alcacer, 25, scored a hat-trick in Dortmund's 4-3 win over Augsburg on Saturday, after he joined the Bundesliga side on a one-season loan following two years with Barca, reports Efe.

The Spanish striker has formed a lethal partnership with English winger Jadon Sancho who is considered one of the most highly rated talents in world football which has reflected on the pitch.

Having Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Ousmane Dembele at Barcelona, it's very complicated to get more quality of the qualities of those strikers," Alcacer said during a press conference ahead of Spain's fourth Wales on Thursday in the UEFA Nations League. "I'm really pleased with my decision," he added.

Alcacer would not reveal the discussions he had with Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde about leaving the club but made it clear that it was his decision to go.

"The decisions that I make, I have made them. In the end, the conversations with a coach are private," he asserted, adding "A player with confidence is better than one without confidence."