

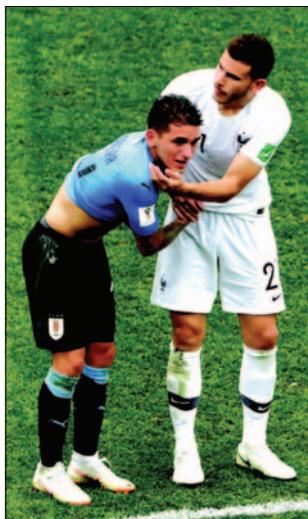


England fan inside the stadium before the match —REUTERS

France were better: Oscar Tabarez

France can still get better, warns Didier Deschamps

NIZHNY NOVGOROD, JUL 7 /--/ Uruguay coach Oscar Tabarez said that France were worthy winners of Friday's World Cup quarter-final but that his small country had once again shown why it deserves its place alongside the best nations in global soccer. In charge of Uruguay for the last three World Cups, Tabarez has taken his teams beyond the group stage each time - to the semi-final in 2010, the last 16 in 2014, and the quarters in Russia. They were comfortably beaten 2-0, however, at the Nizhny Novgorod Stadium by a smooth-looking French team. "We couldn't control their strengths," Tabarez said, looking sad but calm after his players left the field in tears to an ovation from their traveling fans. "Today we played against opponents who were better and stronger than us. We have to admit it and congratulate them." The Europeans won with a Raphael Varane header in the first half and a fumble by goalkeeper Fernando Muslera in the second that led to a soft Antoine Griezman shot go in. "I told all my players after the match that they can be very proud, they can keep their heads high," said Tabarez, who saw his team nearly equalise at the end of the first half but otherwise create little. "I'm not going to tell you what I said with my goalkeeper. He has been a very important pillar for us. I am not going to wash my hands putting any responsibility on the players." With a population of just 3.3 million, twice World Cup winners Uruguay have long punched above their weight in global soccer. But beating France always looked a tall order, and it became much harder when striker Edinson Cavani was ruled out with injury. His replacement Cristian Stuani made no impact in attack, and fellow forward Luis Suarez missed his usual partner. But Tabarez said Uruguay had done superbly to get so far, given its disadvantages in terms of population and infrastructure. "Today our dream comes to an end... (but) I think the world has seen what we achieved, what we want to do, and what sort of country we are. We are a small country, you know. It is harder for us than France or Germany or England.

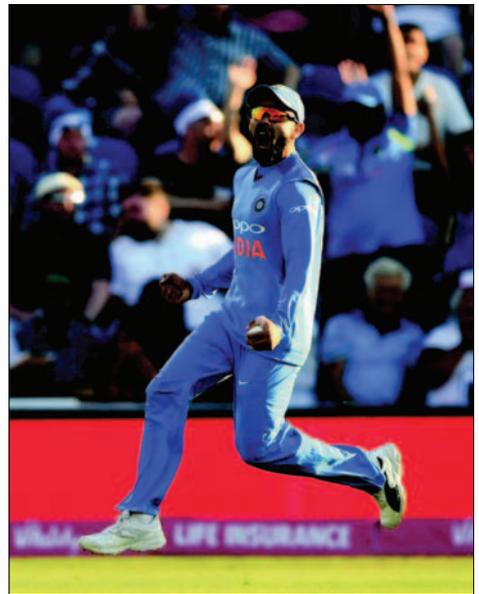


Uruguay's Lucas Torreira looks dejected after the match next to France's Lucas Hernandez—REUTERS

England tackled Kuldeep well and it made difference: Kohli

CARDIFF, JUL 7 /--/ England could level the series since they came well-prepared to effectively tackle wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav, India captain Virat Kohli said after they lost the second Twenty20 by five wickets. Kohli had no qualms in admitting that the hosts were a better side in the second Twenty20 with the hosts comfortably chasing a 150-run target. "Kuldeep, who had bamboozled England batsmen in the series-opener and returned a five-wicket haul, remained wicket-less in second match last night. "They played Kuldeep really well today, and that was the difference in the middle overs this time. They did their homework and played Kuldeep really well. Need to get back day after," Kohli opined after the match. The India skipper said the order inside five overs pegged the back. Rohit Sharma (5), Shikhar Dhawan (1) and KL Rahul (6) departed early to leave India struggling at 22 for three. "It was difficult to come back after losing three early wickets. England hit the right areas and we had to play back shots. I would have liked 10-15 runs more. We thought 149 would be competitive, especially since they had to win. But they eventually did win," Kohli said. The Indian skipper also lamented

boundary conceded by paceman Umesh Yadav after bowling a tight 19th over. "The format is cruel: Umesh was outstanding, but the final-ball boundary changed things. Those little things that you can brush it aside, had a good game, but England were better than us," he said. England captain Eoin Morgan was pleased that the conditions favoured them. "We showed character and we did hit more bounce today. When it bounces you can take wickets, and that's what we did. Why did we, and the unit as a whole did really well. We were happy with that total. To be normally play spin well, but it's a matter of being logical while playing." Hales top scored for the hosts with his 41, unbeaten 58 and was adjudged Man-of-the-Match. "It was an important game and nice to take the team through to the win. I had to look at a big more footage for the spinners, and this time I played more on the backfoot. The other day was just a bad day at the office. Bowling effort was outstanding. Two very strong teams so all play for in Bristol," he said. (PTI)



Virat Kohli redeemed himself three balls after dropping Jos Buttler, England v India, 2nd T20, Cardiff

Kuldeep, Chahal under pressure after England fight back

BRISTOL, JULY 7 /--/ Rendered ineffective in the previous match, India's wrist spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal would look to bowl well in the second T20. England batsmen as the two teams clash in the series-deciding third Twenty20 International, here tomorrow. The Indian spin duo faces its first real challenge in more than a year with England batsmen biting back and trying to disrupt the spin duo in Manchester. From Sri Lanka, to Australia, to New Zealand, and to South Africa, none of the opponents have easily content with Chahal-Kuldeep in such quick time. With Kuldeep returning wicket-less in Cardiff after a sensational five-wicket show in the series-opener and Chahal too taken for runs last night, they need to find ways to trouble the opponents. India missed injured Jasprit Bumrah's services on Friday, leaving the duo to lead the attack. England hit three sixes. His replacement Umesh Yadav has provided wickets (four in two matches) in the powerplays, but he has allowed Alex Hales to build partnerships and anchor their win. Hales was included in the side in place of injured all-rounder Ben Stokes, but on a curfew form, it will be tough to leave him out. Stokes returns to the England squad for the third match and bolsters their confidence being yet another key member to have played in the IPL. In the current scenario, he could walk into the playing eleven in place of the struggling Root, based alone on the fact that he has played enough against both Chahal and Kuldeep in the last two IPL seasons. Stokes will also provide another seam-bowling option, and thus it remains to be seen if Moeen Ali will return to the eleven. It will depend on pitch conditions. A similar wicket to the one in Cardiff will see the all-rounder sitting out again, for the boundaries at the Gloucestershire County Club will be short once again. That India played spin well in both matches will also be a factor. The conditions concern India as well. Thanks to the last layer of grass remaining on

the surface, England used the short ball tactic against the top-order. Both Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul struggled to get going against the short deliveries, while Shikhar Dhawan and Suresh Raina looked ill at ease. Even Virat Kohli was out caught pulling a short one straight to the keeper, but it is tough to see the hosts abandoning a plan that worked so well. The shorter boundaries will only re-affirm such a plan once again. Victory on Friday would have allowed India to experiment in the third game, with the likes of Manish Pandey, Siddarth Kaul, Krunal Pandya and Deepak Chahal waiting in the wings. The same is true for England as well, particularly regarding their batting order. With the series pegged at 1-1, it is difficult to envisage either team playing around with combinations as lot is at stake. If Pakistan beat Australia on Sunday, India could climb to number two in the ICC T20I rankings with a series' win, relegating England to number seven. Even so, this is about more than just rankings at this juncture. At the start of what promises to be an intensely foggy summer of cricket, this is now about bragging rights and carrying winning momentum into the ODI series.



Virat Kohli

SQUADS:

India: Virat Kohli (c), Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul, Suresh Raina, Manish Pandey, MS Dhoni (wk), Dinesh Karthik, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Krunal Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Deepak Chahal, Hardik Pandya, Siddarth Kaul, Umesh Yadav.
England: Eoin Morgan (c), Moeen Ali, Jonny Bairstow, Jake Ball, Jos Buttler (wk), Sam Curran, Alex Hales, Chris Jordan, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Jason Roy, David Willey, David Malan, Ben Stokes (PTI)
Match starts at 6.30 pm IST.

India U-16s play out 1-1 draw against Korea

NEW DELHI, JULY 7 /--/ The Indian U-16 football team played out a 1-1 draw against DPR Korea U-16s in their last match of the tournament Hua Shan Cup CFA International Youth Football Tournament in Wei Nan City, China today. In a draw first half, the Indian Colts had an opportunity to go ahead as early as the 13th minute but Givson's shot missed the goal by a whisker as DPR Korea survived an early scare. With DPR Korea dominating possession, the Indian Colts relied on counter-attacks and in the 39th minute, Givson, once again found himself in the mix. However, his shot was saved by the opposition custodian. The Indian Colts survived a scare in the 44th minute when DPR Korea rattled the woodwork as the half-time scoreline read 0-0. Changing over, in the 60th minute, Beke's shot was saved by the Korean defence line. However, in the 75th minute, the opponents took the lead and found the net to make the scoreline read 1-0. It wasn't long before the Indian Colts came up with their response and were awarded a penalty in the 77th minute, which Vikram Pratap Singh slotted with ease to make the scoreline read 1-1. In the tournament, the Indian U-16s had earlier faced hosts China U-17s, and Thailand U-16s, losing 0-1 and 1-3 respectively. (PTI)

7-times champion Serena Williams powers past qualifier into third round

LONDON, JULY 7 /--/ Seven-times champion Serena Williams moved up a gear at Wimbledon to beat Bulgarian qualifier Viktoriya Tomova 6-1 6-0 on Wednesday and reach the third round. The 36-year-old American barely broke a sweat in a one-sided first set but was tested by the world number 135 in the second without ever looking troubled. While the Centre Court crowd clearly appreciated the sight of Williams in full flow, she took a shine to the plucky Tomova who battled hard to make a match of it. Even ultimate warrior Williams applauded a couple of her opponent's winners late in the second set before completing victory in 66 minutes.

Ruthless Federer marches on with another straight-sets win in Wimbledon

LONDON, JULY 7 /--/ Top seed and defending champion Roger Federer advanced to the Wimbledon last 16 without dropping a set after a 6-3 7-6 2-1 win over German qualifier Leonard Struff on Friday. Federer, seeking a record ninth Wimbledon title, eased through the first set before the best-serving Struff put up more of a fight in the second. But Federer clinched it with a superbly timed game that included a wonderful volley at the end of a long rally followed by a winning drive down the line. The 36-year-old Swiss proceeded to win his 29th consecutive set at the All England Club with an impressive victory in the second round as his first match point in just over one and a half hours. "Against big servers who go for a lot it's always dif-

ficult to find rhythm and be sure that you are in driver's seat until the match is over," Federer said after his 175th grand slam win. "I was happy to stay calm and finish off the job. I thought I did very well today. I created more chances in the second set and was always able to stay pretty clean on my own service game. But Federer clinched it with a superbly timed game that included a wonderful volley at the end of a long rally followed by a winning drive down the line. The 36-year-old Swiss proceeded to win his 29th consecutive set at the All England Club with an impressive victory in the second round as his first match point in just over one and a half hours. "Against big servers who go for a lot it's always dif-

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