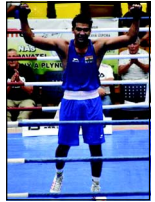


8 Sport

Shiva, Manoj strike gold at Czech boxing tourney

NEW DELHI, JUL 30/-/ Indian boxers packed quite a heavy punch at the 48th Grand Prix Usti Nad Labem, clinching five gold, two silver and one bronze medal at the event in the Czech Republic. World Championships bronze-medallist Shiva Thapa (60kg), former Commonwealth Games gold-medallist Manoj Kumar (69kg), Amit Phangal (52kg), Gaurav Bidhuri (56kg) and Satish Kumar (+91kg) claimed gold medals after winning their respective summit clashes last night. Kavinder Bisht (52kg) and Manish Panwar (81kg), on the other hand, settled for silver medals. Earlier, Sumit Sangwan (91kg) had claimed a bronze after going down in the semifinals. Amit and Kavinder opened the proceedings for the country in an all-Indian final. Of the two, Amit is a light flyweight (49kg) boxer but competed in the flyweight division in this event. He defeated Kavinder 3-2 to claim the top position. Next up was Gaurav against Iwanow Jaroslav and the Indian had no trou-



ble notching up a 5-0 win. Shiva, who recently won a silver medal at the Asian Championships, also clinched a dominant 5-0 victory over Slovakia's Filip Meszaros to record another morale-boosting triumph ahead of next month's World Championships in Hamburg, Germany. Another Hamburg-bound boxer, Manoj, too claimed a 5-0 verdict against local favourite David Kotry. However, Satish Kumar had to stave off a stiff challenge from German Max Keller for his gold. Manish, on the other hand, lost to Germany's Ibrahim Bazeu to settle for a silver medal. The tournament marked the end of a fortnight-long training-cum-competition trip for the Indian boxers ahead of the world showpiece scheduled from August 25 to September 2. Of the boxers competing in this tournament, Amit, Kavinder, Gaurav, Shiva, Manoj, Sumit and Satish will be competing in the World Championships. The eighth Indian boxer in the fray at Hamburg will be Vikas Krishan (75kg) but he did not accompany the team on this trip, preferring to train in Pune.

GERARD PIQUE SCORES WINNER  
Barcelona edge Real in thrilling Miami Clasico



MIAMI, JULY 30/-/ Gerard Pique delivered Barcelona's match winner over Real Madrid on Saturday as El Clasico Miami lived up to the hype. The Spanish international, steered in a Neymar free-kick in the 50th minute to seal a 3-2 win for the Catalan giants in front of 66,014 at the Hard Rock Stadium. Lionel Messi, who put in a superb 64-minute performance, opened the scoring after just three minutes when Ivan Rakitic doubled the lead soon after, the writing appeared to be on the wall for a sluggish Real Madrid side. Yet Zidane's side quickly woke from their slumber and by the end of the first half, goals from Mateo Kovacic and Marco Asensio had pulled them level. What followed was entertaining, often breathless friendly fare before Pique struck that decisive goal. This was nothing more than

a pre-season match and obviously wasn't going to affect the overall record between these two old rivals, which stands at 93 wins for Real, 91 for Barcelona. Their last meeting was quite incredible. Messi's last gasp winner, his 500th for the club - it was quite a night. Madrid had the last laugh in May, winning La Liga and the Champions League, but actually arrived in Miami off the back of two exhibition defeats - a penalty shoot-out defeat to Manchester United before City also did a number on them in Los Angeles, running out 4-2 winners. Barca, meanwhile, had beaten United and Juventus in International Champions Cup friendly competition, but the ongoing uncertainty surrounding Neymar and the interest from Paris Saint-Germain has cast a serious cloud over their two-week stay in North America. The Brazilian started

for Ernesto Valverde's side and while the rest of his team mates head home he will fly to China to perform commercial obligations on behalf of the club. To their credit, and much to the obvious delight of the organisers, both teams didn't hold back with their starting lineups. Messi and Luis Suarez started in attack while Bale, Modric and Karim Benzema were all unleashed by Madrid's manager Zinedine Zidane. Neymar's first involvement was to fall to the attack while he and Karim Benzema were all unleashed by Madrid's manager Zinedine Zidane. Neymar's first involvement was to fall to the attack while he and Karim Benzema were all unleashed by Madrid's manager Zinedine Zidane.

national was picking the ball out of the back of the net once again. On six minutes, Neymar, gradually moving more freely squared the ball and it found Rakitic, whose finish was clinically struck in the seventh minute. What a start for Barcelona. Real had barely escaped their own half and were lucky not to fall further behind on 13 minutes when Suarez fired over from close range. Yet with Madrid's first effort on goal, Zidane's side pulled one back. Croatian Kovacic evaded a challenge just outside the box before arrowing the ball past the outstretched hands of Jasper Cillessen. Sudden death was on Benzema, who barely had a sniff, dragged the ball past the outstretched hands of Jasper Cillessen. Navas remained the busier keeper, however, and was on hand to repel Messi once again on 31 minutes.

It was a key save because on 36 minutes, Asensio levelled for Madrid. Los Blancos were counter-attacking dangerously and it was left to Modric who squared for the Spaniard who took full advantage of Jordi Alba missing the ball to rifle past a horribly exposed Cillessen. Both teams remained their star men after the restart and it was Neymar whose pinpoint free-kick was steered home by Pique in the 50th. While the clash in Barcelona colors, if it was, those inside the Hard Rock Stadium -- home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins -- won't forget it.

Iniesta urges Neymar to stay at Barcelona

MIAMI, JULY 30/-/ Barcelona captain Andres Iniesta said he would rather have Neymar at the club than a massive transfer fee, with speculation linking the Brazilian to Paris Saint-Germain in a world record deal. PSG have reportedly held discussions with Barcelona about a transfer for the 25-year-old that would smash the world record 89 million pounds (\$116.8 million) Manchester United paid for France midfielder Paul Pogba last year. "I do not think 200-300 million will be more beneficial for Barcelona than having players like Neymar," Iniesta said in a news conference ahead of the Saturday pre-season friendly against Real Madrid. "I don't think we have the best players in the world and I always want the best players in my team. I have no doubt that we all wish him to continue with us. We would like you (the press) to not keep asking about Neymar so much, but to end this, there is only one way: Neymar will speak."

Dani Alves urges Neymar to be brave about his transfer decision

TANGIER, JUL 30/-/ Veteran Brazil international Dani Alves said he hopes super star Neymar will join him at Paris Saint Germain. "I don't want to see Neymar leaving the club," Alves said. "I don't want to see Neymar leaving the club." Alves said he hopes super star Neymar will join him at Paris Saint Germain. "I don't want to see Neymar leaving the club," Alves said. "I don't want to see Neymar leaving the club."

Don't feel burdened by World Cup defeat: Modi to Women's team Kohli yet to be tested as captain: Sourav

NEW DELHI, JUL 30/-/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi says he had advised the Indian women's cricket team not to feel burdened by the World Cup final defeat since they had backing of the nation. India's team ended runner-up at the prestigious ICC event after losing the final to England narrowly by nine runs. Their unexpected performance in the World Cup followed a host of felicitations after the team's arrival and Modi too hosted the entire squad at his residence here. "I felt happy talking to them, but I had a feeling that they felt burdened by the fact that they could not win the World Cup. This stress, this tension was evident on their faces also," Modi recalled during his 'Mann Ki Baat' address. "I said, Look this is the age of the media. So expectations get hyped up to such an extent that if cor-

responding success is not achieved, these turn into despair and even resentment," Modi said. India chose to praise the women cricketers instead of criticising them for their defeat in the final. "But it happened for the first time that when our daughters did not succeed in winning the

World Cup, the hundred and twenty-five million people took this defeat on their own shoulders, never letting the burden weigh down these daughters of ours. 'Not only this, they lauded them and showered them with high praise for their brilliant performance. I view this as a healthy and

pleasant change and I told these daughters that only they were blessed with such good fortune, and hence they should banish any thought of not having been successful. You may not have won the final match but you have won the hearts of 1.25 billion Indians," he said. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, JUL 30/-/ Virat Kohli's team India might have registered their biggest away win in Tests after their comprehensive 304-run victory over Sri Lanka at Galle, but former India skipper Sourav Ganguly believes that Kohli hasn't even faced a 'real' test yet. Speaking to India Today, Ganguly gave his analysis on India's recent win over the Islanders. "India are perfectly balanced with so much firepower in their batting, bowling, and fielding. Sri Lanka on the other hand, have a lot to worry about," Sourav Ganguly was quoted as saying. "The last two years they (Team India) have been wonderful, especially away from home. Under Anil they won everything in the West Indies and then came the home season. 'I feel India won't be challenged in these conditions. Kohli is absolutely right when he said in the post-match ceremony that they have been clinical in their performance'," he added. India's most successful Test captain, further said that Kohli's competence will be put to test on the basis of how the team performs in countries like South Africa, Australia, and England. "Virat hasn't been tested yet. Sri Lanka is probably not the strongest Test side at the moment. For me, the fans as well as for Virat Kohli himself, the yardstick will be how well his side performs in South Africa, Australia, and England. While many have been criticising Virat's recent performance in the traditional format of the game, Ganguly refused to label the present form as 'lean patch'. Talking about Kohli's return to form, Ganguly said, "I don't consider it a lean patch as he only struggled in one series. If you look at the Champions Trophy and the one-day series in West Indies, he has been in good touch." Sri Lanka have a lot to think about on how to get batsmen like Shikhar Dhawan, Cheteshwar Pujara, Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane out. If they don't bowl well they will have to field a lot in these hot and humid conditions," Ganguly concluded.

India vs Sri Lanka: Visitors face selection 'Dilemma' after massive win in 1st Test

GALLE, JUL 30/-/ India's thrashing of Sri Lanka in the first Test has left captain Virat Kohli with a "massive" yet welcome headache as he ponders his team selection for the next match. India dominated the first Test from the outset to win by 304 runs with a day to spare in Galle. The tourist's top order batsmen fared well, with Shikhar Dhawan making 190 in the first innings and fellow opener Abhinav Mukund contributing a quickfire 81 in the second. Cheteshwar Pujara also blasted 153 batting at three in the first innings while Kohli chipped in with an unbeaten 103 batting at four in the second.

The success of the top four batsmen, however, leaves Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri with a dilemma ahead of the second Test, starting in Colombo on Thursday. Regular opener Lokesh Rahul missed the match in Galle because he was suffering from the flu but is expected to be available for the next game, meaning someone has to miss out. "Yes, it's a very tricky situation," Kohli admitted. "We've got all four openers firing now. Shikhar was supposed to go to Melbourne, now he's got a 190 in Galle. So, anything can happen in life. It's a massive headache but I guess a good one. You know, eventually guys understand that only two

can take the field and at most two or three openers make the squad." Kohli was careful not to pre-empt any picks and hoped the third guy will understand what he was disappointed. "We'll have to eventually take a call on who plays in the next Test and I'm sure the third guy will understand whatever the call is taken by the team," the skipper said. Dhawan was a late inclusion for the series opener, replacing the injured Murali Vijay, but made the most of his chance with his career-high 190. "My plans were to go to Melbourne and spend time with my family, do training and get fit for the one-day series," he said. "I was in

Hong Kong actually on holiday and from there I flew back to India and joined the team. That was my plan and I think destiny had a different plan for me." Kohli was also happy with the bowlers' performance, particularly Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja. "The Galle pitch favoured batting, with India piling on 600 and 240-3, but the Indians twice bowled out the home side for less than 200. We are able to capitalise in those situations and really put more pressure on the opposition," Kohli said. "I would say that we really executed our plans well to force the opposition to make mistakes regularly."

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