

De Bruyne seals win for Belgium to get campaign on track

The result means all four teams in Group E have three points and there is all to play for in the final round of games, when Belgium plays Ukraine and Romania takes on Slovakia

AP, COLOGNE (Germany): In front of Belgium's royal family, King Kev sealed the win. Belgium shook off the shock of losing to Slovakia in its opening game of the European Championship by beating Romania 2-0 on early Sunday.

Kevin De Bruyne's second-half goal completed the win after Youri Tielemans scored in the second minute at Cologne Stadium. Watching on were Belgium's King Philippe and Queen Mathilde.

"We knew what we needed to do. We needed to win otherwise we were going home," De Bruyne said. "I will do everything I can to keep the lads on track."

This was just what Belgium needed after the Slovakia stunner, which raised the prospect of another early exit from a major tournament after being eliminated at the group stage of the 2022 World Cup.

Tielemans gave the No. 3-ranked team in the world a flying start with a goal from the edge of the area. De Bruyne converted direct from Belgium goalkeeper Koen Casteels' long kick in the 80th.

The result means all four teams in Group E have three points and there is all to play for in the final round of games on Wednesday, when Belgium plays Ukraine and Romania takes on Slovakia. "I'm very relieved we



Belgium's midfielder #07 Kevin De Bruyne celebrates after scoring his team's second goal during the UEFA Euro 2024 Group E match against Romania at the Cologne Stadium in Cologne

won the game. It was very important to get the three points," Belgium coach Domenico Tedesco said.

While Belgium won, there was more frustration for Romelu Lukaku, who had a third goal ruled out

by VAR at these Euros.

RESULT
Belgium 2 (Tielemans 2, De Bruyne 79) Romania 0

Portugal coach bemoans risk to player safety from pitch invaders

AFP, DORTMUND: Portugal coach Roberto Martinez said it was lucky that none of the multiple fans who invaded the pitch during his team's Euro 2024 game against Turkey on Saturday had ill intentions after several supporters ran on looking for a selfie with Cristiano Ronaldo.

The Group F match which Portugal won 3-0 was interrupted on several occasions in the second half as pitch invaders got away from security in an attempt to take a photograph with the 39-year-old superstar.

The first fan, a young boy wearing a red tracksuit top, emerged from the stand behind the benches midway through the second half and made his way towards the Portugal skipper.

Ronaldo posed smiling for a photo before the pitch invader ran off trying to escape stewards. They eventually caught up with him and escorted him away to applause from the stands.

At least five other fans managed to get onto the pitch attempting to pull off the same stunt, either during the match or after the final whistle, but Ronaldo grew increasingly exasperated with the unwanted attention.

"It is a concern because today we were lucky that the intentions of the fans were good," Martinez told reporters following the match, after Portugal secured qualification for the last 16.

"I think that we all love a fan who recognises the big stars who are icons in their lands. I think we all agree with that, but you can understand that it is a very difficult moment if those intentions are wrong. Then the players are exposed and we need to be careful with that. Probably there is a lot of security and protection and I don't think it should happen."

Martinez, the Spanish former Belgium boss, added: "Probably we should give a message to the fans that it is not the right way. You are not going to get anything out of it and what you do is that probably the measures get worse for the future and it is not good to get the players so exposed when you get people running on the pitch."

However, Ronaldo is one of the most recognisable celebrities on the planet and his teammate Bernardo Silva -- who scored the first goal in the game -- admitted all the attention was the price to pay for such levels of fame.

"I am not really concerned. It is just a bit annoying in terms of always having to stop the game because a fan enters the pitch," Manchester City player Silva said.

TUESDAY'S FIXTURES

Albania vs Spain, at the Merkur Spiel-Arena, 12.30 am

Croatia vs Italy, at the Red Bull Arena (Leipzig), 12.30 am

France vs Poland, at the Westfalenstadion, Dortmund, 9.30 pm

Netherlands vs Austria, at the Olympiastadion Berlin, 9.30 pm

India will look to derail under-pressure Oz's campaign

PTI, GROS ISLET (Saint Lucia): India will be out to derail Australia's T20 World Cup campaign when they take on their shocked and under-pressure opponents in their final Super 8 game here on Monday.

A third straight win for India will not only make them the group toppers and send them to the semi-finals, it will also substantially threaten Australia's chances of progressing through to the semi-finals following the unexpected loss to Afghanistan.

Following the reverse against Afghanistan, Australia don't have the destiny in their own hands and will be keenly tracking Rashid Khan's team final game against Bangladesh on Monday night. India, who

have had to endure heartbreaking defeats at the hands of Australia in major ICC events, would like to see a pre-mature exit of their strong rivals.

On fine-tuning their game ahead of the knock-outs, India don't need to do much having ticked all boxes in their back-to-back wins against Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

Both Rohit and Virat Kohli played innings of substance against Afghanistan, while Shivam Dube, who had not been able to perform his role, answered his critics with a crucial knock.

Number three Rishabh Pant has been getting dismissed off reverse hit often and it is something he would like to correct.

The biggest positive for

SQUADS

INDIA: Rohit Sharma (captain), Hardik Pandya, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Sanju Samson, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammad Siraj
AUSTRALIA: David Warner, Travis Head, Mitchell Marsh (captain), Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis, Tim David, Matthew Wade (wk), Pat Cummins, Ashton Agar, Adam Zampa, Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc, Josh Inglis, Cameron Green, Nathan Ellis

T20 WORLD CUP - TODAY'S FIXTURES
West Indies vs South Africa, at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Antigua and Barbuda, 6 am
India vs Australia, at the Darren Sammy Cricket Ground, St Lucia, 8 pm

India in this tournament has been the all-round effort of Hardik Pandya, who has now come to the party with the bat to complement his incisive spells.

Kuldeep Yadav has tak-

en little time to come up with match-winning contributions and he would be relied on for wickets in the middle overs. With the team playing three Super 8 games with as many days of

travel in between, the management will be tempted to rotate players but is unlikely to do so. India, who arrived in Saint Lucia on Saturday night, chose not to train ahead of the Australia game considering the hectic travel involved.

It will only be the second day game at the Darren Sammy Cricket Stadium. The day nighters have produced high-scores here but in the previous game at the venue, England were not able to chase 164 in a day game against South Africa.

It has been the best batting strip of the competition but sun beating down on the pitch through the day is likely to aid the slower bowlers. Australia, on the other hand, have plenty to worry about going into the game.

It was a flop batting show against Afghanistan and unusually Mitchell Marsh's team had a forgettable night in the field as well.

Having logged only 88 runs in six games at a strike rate of 111, Marsh needs to lead from the front against India. With the ball, offie Glenn Maxwell needs to check his economy rate of 8.58 runs per over.

In terms of match ups, it will be interesting to see how Kohli fares against leg-spinner Adam Zampa, who has had the better of the Indian superstar on multiple occasions.

Australia played the extra spinner in Ashton Agar instead of Mitchell Starc against Afghanistan but that could change against India.

Jordan, Buttler power England into semis

PTI, BRIDGETOWN: Pacer Chris Jordan grabbed a sensational hat-trick in his birthplace before captain Jos Buttler's blitzkrieg as England stormed into the semifinals of the T20 World Cup with a 10-wicket mauling of USA, here, on Sunday.

Making a comeback in place of Mark Wood, Jordan (4/10) mopped up the USA tail by claiming four wickets in five balls, including the hat-trick, in the 19th over as the Americans folded for 115 in 18.5 overs.

Buttler then blazed away to a 38-ball 83 not out as England completed the chase in 9.4 overs to become the first team to make the semifinals of the showpiece.

During his scintillating knock, Buttler smashed seven sixes and six fours, including hitting five maximums in a Harmeet Singh over to leave the USA bowling bruised and battered.

Earlier, the 35-year-old Jordan, who was born and

grew up in Christ Church, Barbados, began the penultimate over dismissing a well-set Corey Anderson for 29 with a low full toss.

After surviving the next ball, Ali Khan found his off stump knocked over before Jordan went on to dismiss Nosthush Kenjige and Saurabh Netravalkar off successive deliveries to pick the first hat-trick for England in T20Is. Jordan had figures of 4/10 from his 2.5 overs. Jordan also became only the second bowler in T20 World Cup history to pick four wickets in a single over: Curtis Campher of Ireland was the first to pick four wickets in a single over against the Netherlands during the 2021 edition in Abu Dhabi.

Brief scores: United States 115 all out, 18.5 overs (Nitish Kumar 30, Corey Anderson 29, Harmeet Singh 21; Chris Jordan 4-10, Adil Rashid 2-13, Sam Curran 2-23). England 117-0, 9.4 overs (Jos Buttler 83 not out, Phil Salt 25 not out).

Afghanistan shock Australia

The result has opened up the Group 1 as both Australia and Afghanistan now have one win each with one match to go, while India sit atop the table

PTI, KINGSTOWN: Afghanistan pulled off an upset of epic proportions with a shock 21-run win over mighty Australia in T20 World Cup match at Guldadin Naib's four-wicket haul upending Pat Cummins' hat-trick to produce one of most memorable days in Afghan cricket.

Using the slower balls smartly on a difficult batting wicket, Afghanistan defended their total of 148 for six for their first-ever win over Australia in international cricket.

Australia were all out for 127 in 19.2 overs in the Super Eight contest and they are now staring at early elimination from the World Cup. Australia now must win their match against India on Monday and also hope that Afghanistan lose to Bangladesh in their next match.

Afghanistan openers Rahmanullah Gurbaz (60)



Afghanistan's wicketkeeper Rahmanullah Gurbaz reaches for the ball as Australia's Glenn Maxwell, left, watches during the men's T20 World Cup match at Arnos Vale Ground, Kingstown, St Vincent and the Grenadines

and Ibrahim Zadran (51) forged a 118-run partnership setting up base for a challenging total but Pat Cummins registered his second successive hat-trick spread across two overs to restrict Afghanistan to a manageable total.

Australia were reduced to 32 for 3 in the powerplay but

Saturday too he threatened to deny them but Naib's brilliance ensured them the win. Afghanistan players jumped in joy and were joined by their support staff members to celebrate the win.

The result has opened up the Group 1 as both Australia and Afghanistan now have one win each with one match to go, while India sit atop the table with two wins from as many games.

Defending 149 on a spin-friendly wicket, Afghanistan had the perfect start as Naveen-ul-Haq picked up two early wickets with the new ball to peg Australia back.

Brief scores: Afghanistan 148-6 off 20 overs (Rahmanullah Gurbaz 60, Ibrahim Zadran 51; Pat Cummins 3-28, Adam Zampa 2-28). Australia 127 all out off 19.2 overs (Glenn Maxwell 59; Guldadin Naib 4-20, Naveen ul Haq 3-20).

sportspopup

Recurve archers win two bronze; India finish with four medals in World Cup Stage 3

ANTALYA (TURKEY): Dhiraj Bommadevara secured two bronze --- one individual and another in recurve mixed team event with Bhajan Kaur, as India ended their campaign with four medals in the Archery World Cup Stage 3, here on Sunday. India could have added another but Ankita Bhakat, eyeing a maiden World Cup medal, narrowly lost her semifinal to eventual gold medalist and top-seed Yang Xiaolei of China. She eventually ended up losing her bronze medal match as well. The third-seeded mixed team of Dhiraj and Bhajan produced an excellent performance to rally past Mexico and clinch a bronze.

India beat SA by six wickets, sweep women's ODI series 3-0



India celebrate after winning the third women's ODI cricket match and series over South Africa, at M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, on Sunday

BENGALURU: India put up yet another dominating performance to defeat South Africa by six wickets and sweep the three-match Women's ODI series 3-0 here on Sunday. Smriti Mandhana narrowly missed a century and got out for an 83-ball 90, having set up the 216-run chase with her superlative show at the top. She hit 11 boundaries. Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur made a 48-ball 42 before Richa Ghosh sealed the chase with a six off Tumi Sekhukhune in the 41st over. India won with 56 balls to spare. Earlier, skipper Laura Wolvaardt made 61 before South Africa suffered a batting meltdown to finish with an underwhelming 215/8. Arundhati Reddy and Deepti Sharma took two wickets each for India. Brief scores: South Africa 215/8; 50 overs (Laura Wolvaardt 61, Tazmin Brits 38; Arundhati Reddy 2/36, Deepti Sharma 2/27) lost to India 220/4; 40.4 overs (Smriti Mandhana 90, Harmanpreet Kaur 42) by six wickets.

NADA suspends Bajrang again, serves him notice of charge

NEW DELHI: The National Anti-Doping Agency on Sunday suspended Bajrang Punia for a second time, three weeks after ADDP had revoked his suspension on the grounds that NADA had not issued a 'notice of charge' to the wrestler. NADA had on April 23 suspended Tokyo Games bronze medalist wrestler for refusal to give his urine sample for dope test during the selection trials held in Sonapat on March 10. World Governing body UWW had also suspended him. Bajrang had appealed against the provisional suspension and NADA's Anti-Disciplinary Doping panel (ADDP) had revoked it on May 31 till NADA issues the notice of charge. Swinging to action, NADA on Sunday served the notice to the wrestler. "This serves as a formal notice that you are being charged with the violation of Article 2.3 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021 and now you are provisionally suspended," said NADA's communication to Bajrang. Bajrang has time till July 11 to request for a hearing or accept the charge. The elite wrestler has maintained that he never refused to give sample but only demanded to know NADA's response to his email where he sought answer why expired kits were sent to take his samples in December 2023. NADA also explained the reason for its action.

IOA proposes to start medical insurance, pension for all ex-Olympians

NEW DELHI: The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) is set to bring in medical health insurance and pension scheme for all former Olympians, the top sports body's president PT Usha said, here, on Sunday. Usha has proposed the recommendations to the IOA's Executive Committee which will come up for discussion soon. The IOA will solely cover all these expenses from its coffers and the idea came to Usha's mind after she witnessed the plight of Indian archer Limba Ram. "The IOA is taking many athlete-centric steps and one of these is medical insurance and pension for all our ex-Olympians," Usha told PTI while felicitating legendary Indian athlete Gurbachan Singh Randhwa on the occasion of International Olympic Dat at his residence here. "We have submitted the proposal to all EC members for all ex-Olympians. It is a small help from IOA for all ex-Olympians. We should remember all our ex-Olympians," she added. Usha said the idea struck her after she met ailing Olympian Limba Ram, who has suffered a brain stroke and approached the IOA on a wheelchair for financial assistance. "I was really moved when I saw Limba Ram on a wheelchair in the IOA office struggling for financial assistance. That moment the idea came to my mind," she said.

Verstappen the Spanish master as Hamilton makes podium return

BARCELONA: Red Bull's three-time world champion Max Verstappen won the Spanish Grand Prix on Sunday from McLaren's pole-sitter Lando Norris to extend his lead in the world championship. Lewis Hamilton completed the podium at the Barcelona-Catalunya circuit for the Mercedes seven-time former champion's first podium of the season. The racing may be closer than the past two seasons but Verstappen always seems to pull it out of the bag when it matters most. This was his 61st career win, seventh of the season, and fourth at the track where he first shot onto the F1 scene as a teenager in 2016. And it pushed him another step further to a fourth straight title with Austria and Silverstone coming up over the next two weekends. Fourth-placed George Russell in the other Mercedes enjoyed a stunning start. With Verstappen to the left of Norris, and Russell to the right of him in the charge into the first turn at the end of the long straight, the pole-sitter came out the loser. As Norris grappled with Verstappen Russell, unsighted, pulled out from fourth on the grid to take command. Verstappen raced in second from Norris with Hamilton in fourth. Verstappen heads to Red Bull's home race in Spielberg in a week's time with a 69 point lead over Norris, with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, fifth on Sunday, third, two points further back.