

India batters falter in all-round England attack

Visitors win the third T20I by 26 runs and keep the five-match series alive

PTI, RAJKOT: Indian batters faltered against an incisive England bowling attack as the visitors raised their game in a must-win scenario to win the third T20I by 26 runs and keep the five-match series alive, here, on Tuesday.

Mohammed Shami made a solid comeback to international cricket after 14 months but it was Varun Chakravarthi's bowling effort that stood out as his five-wicket haul helped India limit England to 171/9.

3RD T20I: INDIA VS ENGLAND

India should have chased down the target but the batters could only manage 145/9 in 20 overs. India still lead the series 2-1 with the fourth game scheduled in Pune on January 31.

While express pace combine of Jofra Archer and Mark Wood did the job in the powerplay, Adil Rashid applied the choke in the middle overs with a skillful display of leg-spin.

Unsettled by the extra pace of Archer in the first two games, Sanju Samson (3 off 6) fell to the England pacer once again while trying to



Tilak Varma is bowled out by England's Adil Rashid during the third T20 match at the Niranjan Shah Stadium in Rajkot, on Tuesday

hit a short of length ball out of the park.

His opening partner Abhishek Sharma (24 off 14) played some crisp shots before falling to Brydon Carse.

Suryakumar Yadav (14 off 7) started with a trademark pick up shot off Archer that went all the way but a simi-

lar shot attempted off Wood brought about his downfall, extending his lean run.

The turning point of India's innings was the dismissal of Tilak Varma (18 off 14) who had returned not out in his last four outings including two hundreds and a half-century.

It took a special ball from Rashid to send back Varma as the leg-spinner got one to turn sharply from outside the off-stump and crash into the middle stump.

Hardik Pandya (40 off 35) took the game deep but was not able to take his team over the line. Earlier, England lost

their way after a whirlwind fifty from Ben Duckett (51 off 28) as the in-form Chakravarthi ran through the opposition batting on a flat track.

From 83 for one, England slipped to 127 for eight before Liam Livingstone (43 off 24) went on a six-hitting spree to end the innings on

a high. Chakravarthi completed his second five-wicket haul in T20s when he bowled Jofra Archer with a googly.

While Ravi Bishnoi (4/46 in 4 overs) and Washington Sundar (0/15 in 1) proved expensive, Chakravarthi (5/24 in four), Hardik (33/2 in 4) and Axar Patel (1/19 in 3) kept things tight for their end.

Shami (0/25 in 3) did not set the stage on first but it was important that he had an incident free outing.

After being put in to bat, England made a promising start by coasting to 52/1.

England have struggled against the Indian spinners in the series but Duckett overcame that challenge with some audacious stroke-play on way to his second T20 fifty. He danced down the track, employed the scoop and reverse hits to unsettle the opposition attack.

He was the aggressor in his 76-run stand with skipper Jos Buttler (24 off 22) but the duo fell in quick succession to lose the momentum in the middle overs. Among the shots Duckett pulled off included a scoop over the keeper's head off Shami's second over.

SCOREBOARD

England: Philip Salt c Sharma b Pandya 5, Ben Duckett c Sharma b Patel 51, *Jos Buttler c Samson b Chakravarthi 24, Harry Brook b Bishnoi 8, Liam Livingstone c Jurel b Pandya 43, Jamie Smith c Jurel b Chakravarthi 6, Jamie Overton b Chakravarthi 0, Brydon Carse c Varma b Chakravarthi 3, Jofra Archer b Chakravarthi 0, Adil Rashid not out 10, Mark Wood not out 11.

Extras: 11. **Total:** 171-9. **Fall of wickets:** 7-1, 83-2, 87-3, 108-4, 115-5, 115-6, 127-7, 127-8, 147-9.

Bowling: Mohammed Shami 3-0-25-0, Hardik Pandya 4-0-33-2, Washington Sundar 1-0-15-0, Varun Chakravarthi 4-0-24-5, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-46-1, Axar Patel 3-0-19-1, Abhishek Sharma 1-0-4-0.

India: Sanju Samson c Rashid b Archer 3, Abhishek Sharma c Archer b Carse 24, *Suryakumar Yadav c Salt b Wood 14, Tilak Varma b Rashid 18, Hardik Pandya c Buttler b Overton 40, Washington Sundar c Buttler b Overton 6, Axar Patel c Rashid b Archer 15, Dhruv Jurel c Salt b Carse 2, Mohammed Shami c Brook b Overton 7, Ravi Bishnoi not out 4, Varun Chakravarthi not out 1. **Extras:** 11. **Total:** 145-9.

Fall of wickets: 16-1, 31-2, 48-3, 68-4, 85-5, 123-6, 131-7, 140-8, 140-9.

Bowling: Jofra Archer 4-0-33-2, Mark Wood 3-0-29-1, Brydon Carse 4-0-28-2, Liam Livingstone 1-0-11-0, Adil Rashid 4-0-15-1, Jamie Overton 4-0-24-3

Man-of-the-match: Varun Chakravarthi

U-19 T20 WC: Trisha scores first ton as India crush Scotland

Indian eves will next face England in first semis on Jan 31

PTI, KUALA LUMPUR: Opener **Trisha Gongadi** etched her name in the record books by scoring the first ever century in women's U-19 T20 World Cup that powered India into the semifinals with a 150-run victory over Scotland, here, on Tuesday.

Trisha, who was deservedly adjudged player of the match, slammed 110 not out off just 59 balls with the help of 13 boundaries and four maximums after India were sent in to bat by Scotland at toss. The Indians will next face England in the first semifinal on January 31.

She was ably supported by fellow opener and wicketkeeper Kamalini G (51 off 42 balls) and Sanika Chalke, who remained unbeaten on 29 off 20 balls as India scored 208 for 1 in 20 overs. In reply, Scotland cut a sorry figure as they were bowled out for 58 in 14 overs. For Scotland, openers Pippa Kelly (12) and Emma Walsingham (12) were joint top-scorers.



Left-arm orthodox spinner Ayushi Shukla was the star for India with the ball returning with figures of 4 for 8, while left-armer Vaishnavi Sharma (3/5) and Trisha (3/6), after her exploits with the bat, also performed with the ball in hand.

The 19-year-old Trisha, who hails from Telangana, has been in tremendous

form in the tournament and notched up two 40-plus scores before the big knock on Tuesday.

Meanwhile in other matches of the day, Bangladesh finished their campaign in style with an easy 10-wicket victory over the West Indies.

The Asian side performed well with the ball to restrict

the West Indies to just 54 for 6 for their 13 overs and cruised past the victory target inside nine overs on the back of an unbeaten 25 not out from opener Juairiya Ferdous.

Bangladesh won the toss and elected to bowl at Bayuemas Oval after tireless effort from ground staff in the nation's capital, with spinner Nishita Akter Nishi collecting three wickets. Anisa Akter Soba claimed a pair of wickets as the West Indies struggled in the conditions and Bangladesh eased home to move up to third place on the Group 1 standings.

In another Group 2 match, no play was possible in Sarawak, with heavy rain leaving the Super Six contest between South Africa and the USA abandoned without a ball being bowled.

South Africa had already qualified for the semi-finals of the event, while USA picked up a point to move to third in Group 2.

Amelia named ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year

PTI, DUBAI: New Zealand all-rounder **Amelia Kerr** made history on Tuesday by becoming the first Kiwi recipient of the prestigious Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy, earning the title of ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year for her exceptional performances in 2024.

The 24-year-old stood out among her peers, surpassing Laura Wolvaardt, Chamari Athapaththu, and Annabel Sutherland to claim the top honour in women's cricket.

Kerr is not only the first New Zealander to win the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy but also the first Kiwi to be recognised as ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year in any category.

Throughout the year, Kerr demonstrated her prowess as a world-class all-rounder, excelling in every facet of the game.

Her outstanding fielding repeatedly lifted New Zealand, while her skill as a leg-spinner established her as one of the most dangerous strike bowlers



in the world. Kerr was often the White Ferns' go-to match-winner with the ball.

With the bat, she was a cornerstone of New Zealand's lineup, capable of playing expansive innings to capitalise on strong starts or anchoring the innings when the top order faltered.

First introduced in 2017, the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy has been awarded to just three players prior to Kerr - Australia's Ellyse Perry, India's Smriti Mandhana, and England's Nat Sciver-Brunet, each of whom has won the award twice.

sportspopup

Ranji Trophy: Virat declines captaincy; BCCI set to live stream

NEW DELHI: Just like Rishabh Pant did in the last game against Saurashtra, legendary Virat Kohli has politely declined to captain Delhi in their last Ranji Trophy home game against Railways as he wanted Ayush Badoni to continue leading the side. "Virat was asked if he would like to captain but he has also said that he would like Ayush to continue leading the side," a DCCA official told PTI on conditions of anonymity. Meanwhile, the BCCI and domestic broadcasters JioCinema have decided to live-stream the match, given the immense fan interest sparked by Kohli's presence. The general norm is BCCI has one premier match which is aired both on TV and streaming app and for this round it is Karnataka versus Haryana as the star attraction of that game is KL Rahul. The other two games that were supposed to be only live streamed were Punjab vs Bengal at the Eden Gardens and Baroda vs Jammu and Kashmir in Baroda.

Security and better drinking water management on MCA agenda for Pune T20I

PUNE: The Maharashtra Cricket Association (MCA) has put in place measures to address parking, security, and drinking water concerns for fans ahead of the fourth T20I between India and England on Friday. MCA Secretary Kamlesh Pisal said on Tuesday that additional land has been acquired for general parking to accommodate spectators attending the India-England T20I at the MCA Ground in Gahunje on Friday. "Extra land acquired (total of 45-acre area) and has been allocated exclusively for general parking for spectators, ensuring ample space and convenience," Pisal said in a media release. "Dedicated parking routes and slots have been designed to streamline vehicular movement. Videos and photos highlighting these routes will be shared on MCA's official Instagram account, making access easier for visitors." "Security personnel will be deployed across parking areas to ensure safety and assist in route guidance for spectators navigating toward the stadium," he added.

Head set to open batting as Australia weighs options for first test against Sri Lanka

GALLE: The rainy weather conditions have given Australia a selection problem for the opening test against Sri Lanka starting Wednesday, although one thing seems certain: Travis Head will open the batting. Stand-in captain Steve Smith has hinted at a range of strategies under consideration depending on the weather, but highlighted that Head has previously thrived as an opener in Asian conditions. Squads: Australia: Usman Khawaja, Travis Head, Marnus Labuschagne, Steve Smith (captain), Josh Inglis, Beau Webster, Alex Carey, Mitchell Starc, Matt Kuhnemann, Nathan Lyon, Scott Boland, Sean Abbott, Cooper Connolly, Sam Konstas, Nathan McSweeney, Todd Murphy. Sri Lanka: Dimuth Karunaratne, Oshada Fernando, Dinesh Chandimal, Angelo Mathews, Kamindu Mendis, Dhananjaya de Silva (captain), Kusal Mendis, Prabath Jayasuriya, Nishan Peris, Asitha Fernando, Lahiru Kumara, Vishwa Fernando, Jeffrey Vandersay, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Lahiru Udara, Milan Rathnayake, Sonal Dinusha.

India U20 women to play three friendlies in Türkiye in February

NEW DELHI: The India U20 women's team will play friendly matches against Jordan, Hong Kong and Russia during the FIFA International Match Window in Antalya, Türkiye next month. Led by head coach Joakim Alexandersson, the Young Tigresses, who are currently camping in Bengaluru, will face Jordan on February 19 followed by Hong Kong on February 22 with the final friendly scheduled for February 25 against Russia. India U20 women are preparing for a long year ahead, the SAFF U20 Women's Championship, slated in July and the AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers, scheduled in August 2025.

PM in attendance as 38th National Games kick off with colourful opening ceremony

DEHRADUN: A modest but colourful opening ceremony showcasing Uttarakhand's religious heritage and bio-diversity kicked off the 38th National Games here on Tuesday with guest of honour Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterating his commitment to bring the 2036 Olympics to India during his address. "It is our endeavour to enhance your capabilities and we are focussed on supporting you. We consider sports an essential aspect in development of country," Modi told the gathered athletes at the ceremony. "It is a beautiful portrait of 'Ek Bharat, Sreshth Bharat,'" Modi said referring to the Games.

Bumrah picks T20 WC as most cherished moment

Jasprit bagged Sir Garfield Sobers Award for 'a master-class in skill, precision, and relentless consistency' across all formats

PTI, NEW DELHI: Jasprit Bumrah feels honoured after winning the prestigious ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year award but team's success would always be his priority and he picked India's T20 World Cup triumph as his most cherished moment of 2024.

The 31-year-old was awarded the Sir Garfield Sobers Award on Tuesday following a remarkable 2024, where he showcased "a master-class in skill, precision, and relentless consistency" across all formats.

Bumrah's stellar performance earned him accolades, including the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year on Monday and a spot in the Test Team of the Year announced last week. "I feel really good. As a youngster, I have seen my childhood heroes winning this great award, so yeah, very happy to be at the 'receiving end,'" Bumrah cheekily told broadcasters.

The India pace spearhead, however, said he will always prioritise team victory.

"So winning the T20 World Cup was really special, and the mem-

ories that we made after that are going to be close to me forever," said Bumrah, who played a pivotal role in India's T20 World Cup campaign in the Americas, picking up 15 wickets at an astonishing average of 8.26 and an economy of just 4.17, leading India to the title.

"So I will always pick up winning the T20 World Cup first."

Bumrah's consistent performances across formats also earned him recognition as the fifth Indian cricketer to win the ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year Award. Previous Indian winners include Rahul Dravid (2004), Sachin Tendulkar (2010), Ravichandran Ashwin (2016), and Virat Kohli (2017, 2018).

"It feels really good to get honours from the legends of the game, but I always take things with a pinch of salt," Bumrah said.

"I'm very happy with the honour, but I don't let myself get too high. My feet are on the ground, and I'm really happy with the accolades that I get."

In the Test format, Bumrah finished 2024 with 71 wickets in just 13 matches, averaging 14.92, which was the second-best among fast bowlers, trailing only former India captain Kapil Dev's 100 wickets in 1983. The right-arm pacer was in stellar form during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy Down Under, claiming 32 wickets in five Tests.

Despite India's failure to qualify for the final of the 2023-25 World Test Championship, Bumrah claimed 77 wickets, contributing significantly to India's points tally.

Reflecting on his memorable wickets, Bumrah singled out Ollie Pope's wicket during the Test series against England as particularly special.

"I've been very happy to play a lot of Test cricket this year, and many wickets have been special. But the one that I took against England at Vizag, the Ollie Pope, was really special because that changed the momentum and everything," he said.



“I feel really good. As a youngster, I have seen my childhood heroes winning this great award, so yeah, very happy to be at the 'receiving end'. I will always prioritise team victory. So winning the T20 World Cup was really special, and the memories that we made after that are going to be close to me forever. So I will always pick up winning the T20 World Cup first - Jasprit Bumrah