

# Gill's 90, Rashid's resurgence propel Gujarat Titans to commanding win

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PTI, KOLKATA: Skipper Shubman Gill's elegant 90 off 55 balls on a challenging Eden Gardens pitch was complemented well by a disciplined bowling from Gujarat Titans as defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders succumbed to a 39-run loss in an IPL match here on Monday.

Gill's innings, adorned with 10 fours and three sixes, along with Sai Sudharsan's 36-ball 52, his fifth 50 in six matches, that made him the first player this season to surpass 400 runs to reclaim the Orange Cap, laid the foundation for GT's total of 198 for 3 after KKR opted to bowl on tucky track.

The total, which was well calculated and strategised by GT, proved more than enough as GT bowlers led brilliantly by Rashid Khan and Prasidh Krishna's identical figures of 2/25 restricted KKR to 159 for 8.

It was yet another low for the defending champions after their horror show of 95 all out while chasing 112 in the last match as their batting looked woefully out of depth and succumbed to their third defeat in four matches at home, and fifth overall from eight games.

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KKR's chase faltered early as Mohammed Siraj removed Rahmanullah Gurbaz for 1 in the opening over. Sunil Narine's brief 17-run cameo ended with his dismissal by Rashid, who found his mojo back after an indifferent start to the season.

The wily Afghan spinner,



Gujarat Titans players celebrate after winning the Indian Premier League match over Kolkata Knight Riders, at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata, on Monday

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## TWISTS & TURNS

who had been under scrutiny for his recent performances, delivered a tight spell beautifully exploiting the conditions to return with 2/25 including the prized scalp of Andre Russell (21; 15b).

His control and variations on the slow Eden pitch signaled a return to

form. He showcased his prowess by conceding just five runs in his two-over

## TODAY'S IPL FIXTURE

Lucknow Super Giants vs Delhi Capitals, at the Ekana Cricket Stadium, Ardonamau, Uttar Pradesh, at 7.30 pm

gh (1) and Moeen Ali (0) in successive balls as it was all but over for KKR at 119 for 7 in 16.3 overs.

KKR's innings stagnated during the middle overs, with Rahane and Venkatesh Iyer struggling to accelerate against GT's spinners in a phase where for 36 balls they failed to get a boundary.

Sai Kishore's economical 1/19 in three overs further tightened the screws, leading to Rahane's stumping for 50 off the bowling of Washington Sundar (1/36 in three overs) and Iyer's departure for 14 from 19 balls.

Requiring 108 runs from the final 45 balls, KKR's hopes rested on Russell and Rinku Singh. However, the mounting required run rate proved insurmountable against GT's disciplined attack.

Earlier, opting to bowl, KKR's bowlers faced an early onslaught as Gill (90 off 55) and Sudharsan (53 off 38) forged a 114-run opening stand. Sudharsan's consistent form earned him the Orange Cap, becoming the first player this season to surpass 400 runs.

## SCOREBOARD

Gujarat Titans: Sai Sudharsan c Gurbaz b Russell 52, \*Shubman Gill c Singh b Arora 90, Jos Buttler not out 41, Rahul Tewatia c Singh b Rana 0, Shahrulkh Khan not out 11. Extras: 4. Total: 198-3. Fall of wickets: 114-1, 172-2, 177-3.

Bowling: Vaibhav Arora 4-0-44-1, Moeen Ali 3-0-26-0, Harshit Rana 4-0-45-1, Varun Chakaravathy 4-0-33-0, Sunil Narine 4-0-36-0, Andre Russell 1-0-13-1.

Kolkata Knight Riders: Rahmanullah Gurbaz lbw b Siraj 1, Sunil Narine c Tewatia b Khan 17, \*Ajinkya Rahane st Buttler b Sundar 50, Venkatesh Iyer c Sundar b Kishore 14, Rinku Singh c Gill b Sharma 17, Andre Russell st Buttler b Khan 21, Ramandeep Singh c and b Krishna 1, Moeen Ali c Khan b Krishna 0, Angkrish Raghuvanshi not out 27, Harshit Rana not out 1. Extras: 10. Total: 159-8. Fall of wickets: 2-1, 44-2, 84-3, 91-4, 118-5, 119-6, 119-7, 151-8. Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 4-0-32-1, Ishant Sharma 2-0-18-1, Prasidh Krishna 4-0-25-2, Rashid Khan 4-0-25-2, Washington Sundar 3-0-36-1, Sai Kishore 3-0-19-1.

Man-of-the-match: Shubman Gill

## Valverde stunner keeps alive Real title hopes

AFP, MADRID: Fede Valverde's superb 93rd minute strike kept Real Madrid on Barcelona's tail in the Spanish title race, earning the champions a 1-0 win over Athletic Bilbao on Sunday.

Madrid stayed four points behind Barca after Valverde smashed into the top corner with a sliced, swerving effort.

After Champions League elimination by Arsenal it looked like Madrid were set for another devastating result until the Uruguay international's stoppage-time intervention.

Athletic Bilbao, who reached the Europa League semi-finals on Thursday by beating Rangers, rotated heavily.

Despite that, the Basque side proved a hard nut for Madrid to crack, especially with their top goalscorer Kylian Mbappe both suspended and recovering



Real Madrid's Uruguayan midfielder Federico Valverde (right) celebrates with forward Vinicius Junior after scoring the winning goal during the Spanish league match against Athletic Club Bilbao at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in Madrid

from an ankle problem. Champions League quarter-finals in midweek when he was shown watching the game on the stadium screens.

## LA LIGA RESULTS

Valladolid 2 (Moro 49, Sylla 66-pen) Osasuna 3 (Budimir 9, 60-pen, Garcia 34), Villarreal 2 (Pino 7, Perez 60) Real Sociedad 2 (Oyarzabal 19-pen, 49), Sevilla 1 (Peque 12) Alaves 1 (Garcia 45+2), Real Madrid 1 (Valverde 90+3) Athletic Bilbao 0

## Rohit, Virat retained in top grade; Iyer, Kishan back

PTI, NEW DELHI: The BCCI on Monday retained megastars Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the top bracket of its annual players contract list, less than 24 hours after they played sublime knocks to win IPL games for their respective franchises.

The out-of-favour duo of Shreyas Iyer and Ishan Kishan also returned to the fold in lower brackets in a 34-strong list of centrally-contracted players, which also includes pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and Ravindra Jadeja in the highest-paid A+ category. Iyer and keeper-batter Ishan Kishan were dropped from the list last year for allegedly ignoring domestic cricket.

Both Rohit and Kohli figure in A+ category but it remains to be seen if the Mumbai batter will be asked to lead the team in England in the upcoming

five-Test series when his red ball form has been patchy.

The BCCI mandarins are however tight-lipped on the issue since head coach Gautam Gambhir's view will also matter in taking a final decision.

The BCCI offers contracts in four categories: A+, A, B and C with annual retainer-ship valuation of Rs 7 crore, Rs 5 crore, Rs 3 crore and

Rs 1 crore respectively. It is learnt that national selectors after discussion with head coach Gambhir and secretary Devajit Saikia had prepared the contract list at least two weeks back but held back the announcement.

Interestingly, it was announced hours after both veterans hit sparkling knocks -- especially skipper Rohit, who was going through a lean patch.

## BCCI CENTRAL CONTRACTS LIST

A+ category: Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja  
A category: Mohammed Siraj, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Hardik Pandya, Mohammed Shami, Rishabh Pant  
B category: Suryakumar Yadav, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shreyas Iyer  
C category: Rinku Singh, Tilak Verma, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shivam Dube, Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Mukesh Kumar, Sanju Samson, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Rajat Patidar, Dhruv Jurel, Sarfaraz Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, Akash Deep, Varun Chakaravathy, Harshit Rana

## Duplantis, Biles win top honours at Laureus World Sports Award

PTI, MADRID: Star pole vaulter Mondo Duplantis was named the Laureus World Sportsman of the Year, while American gymnast Simone Biles bagged the top women's honour at the Laureus World Sports Awards ceremony here on Monday.

The 25-year-old Duplantis, regarded as the greatest pole vaulter of all time, was fourth-time lucky after being nominated in each of the past three years. He became only the second track-and-field athlete after four-time winner Usain Bolt to claim the prestigious award.

Duplantis won his second World Indoor Championship gold medal in March and broke his own world record for a remarkable ninth time in 2024 en route to Olympic gold in Paris.

The Swede-American gained

more votes than Spain's Carlos Alcaraz (Tennis), France's Léon Marchand (Swimming), Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar (Cycling) and Netherlands' Max Verstappen (Motor Racing).

"I am incredibly honoured to have won my first Laureus World Sportsman of the Year Award in the sporting capital of Madrid and to have the great Usain Bolt pay tribute to me..." he said.

Biles, who returned to action after a break, clinched three gold and one silver medal in a stunning comeback at the Paris Olympics to claim her fourth Laureus award -- equalling the record held by Serena Williams. Both the athletes also have one Comeback of the Year honour.

"I'm so happy to be here in Madrid and to receive my fourth

## FULL LIST OF WINNERS

Sportsman of the Year Award: Mondo Duplantis  
Sportswoman of the Year Award: Simone Biles  
Team of the Year Award: Real Madrid  
Breakthrough of the Year Award: Lamine Yamal  
Comeback of the Year Award: Rebeca Andrade  
Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability Award: Jiangu Yuyan  
Action Sportsperson of the Year Award: Tom Pidcock  
Sport for Good Award: Kick4Life  
Sporting Icon Award: Rafael Nadal  
Lifetime Achievement Award: Kelly Slater

Laureus World Sportsman of the Year Award," said Biles, who topped the polls ahead of Spain's Aitana Bonmati (Football), Netherlands' Sifan Hassan (Athletics), Kenya's Faith Kipyegon (Athletics), USA's Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (Athletics) and Belarus' Aryna Sabalenka (Tennis). Brazilian gymnast Rebeca

Andrade got the Comeback of the Year award for her inspirational return from a series of career-threatening injuries. Andrade, who contemplated quitting after three ACL injuries, made a triumphant return by winning gold in the floor exercise at the Paris Games.

"This beautiful Laureus Stat-

uette represents a huge amount of hard work, of struggle and pain, and also great happiness," she said.

She surpassed Indian cricketer Rishabh Pant, USA's Caleb Dressel (Swimming), Switzerland's Lara Gut-Behrami (Alpine Skiing), Spain's Marc Márquez (Motor Cycling) and Australian Ariarne Titmus (Swimming).

Real Madrid were adjudged Laureus World Team of the Year following a dominant campaign that saw them win La Liga for a record 36th time, clinch their 15th UEFA Champions League title, and defeat Barcelona in the Supercopa de España.

They also lifted the UEFA Super Cup and Intercontinental Cup early in the 2024-25 season, making Carlo Ancelotti the most decorated manager in the

club's history. Tennis great Rafael Nadal was conferred the Laureus Sporting Icon Award in a year he announced his retirement from professional tennis.

"Back in 2006 I won the Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award in Barcelona... Tennis and sports in general has given me so much..." Nadal said.

Tom Pidcock won the Laureus World Action Sportsperson of the Year Award for his dramatic Olympic mountain bike cross country gold. After suffering a puncture, the British cyclist fought back to overtake home favourite Victor Koretsky in the final stages.

Pidcock became the fourth British cyclist to win the award after Jamie Bestwick (2014), Rachel Atherton (2017) and

Beth Shriver (2022). Paralympic swimmer Jiang Yuyan won the Laureus World Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability Award after claiming seven gold medals from as many events.

Teen football sensation Lamine Yamal received the Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award. The Spanish winger became the youngest player to score and feature in a European Championship final and was named the tournament's Best Young Player.

Kelly Slater, widely considered the greatest surfer of all time, received the Laureus Lifetime Achievement Award. Slater is a four-time winner of the Laureus World Action Sportsperson of the Year Award and an 11-time World Surf League champion.

## sportspopup

### Simranpreet wins silver in women's 25m pistol, Bhaker finishes 4th in World Cup

LIMA (Peru): Indian shooter Simranpreet Kaur Brar clinched her maiden senior international medal with a silver in the women's 25m pistol event while Paris Olympics double medallist Manu Bhaker finished fourth at the ISSF World Cup here on Monday. The 20-year-old Indian shot 33 hits across 10 rapid-fire series to finish just one behind China's Sun Yujie, who claimed her second successive World Cup gold in the event. Another Chinese shooter, Yao Qianxun, secured the bronze with 29 hits. This was India's fourth silver of the competition, adding to two golds and a bronze. Esha Singh, who won silver in the last World Cup in Argentina, ended sixth.

### Injured Samson to miss RCB game, will continue rehab in Jaipur

JAIPUR: Rajasthan Royals on Monday confirmed that skipper Sanju Samson will miss the upcoming away game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru as he continues his recovery from the side-strain he suffered during the game against Delhi Capitals. Samson has already missed Royals' home against Lucknow Super Giants and are scheduled to clash with RCB on Thursday. The Royals' medical staff hasn't set a date for Samson's return.

### CAB red flags Bhogle and Doull for criticism of Eden Gardens curator

KOLKATA: Taking a strong exception to public criticism of their curator by Harsha Bhogle and Simon Doull, the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) has red flagged the two cricket experts and requested the BCCI not to assign them commentary duty for Kolkata Knight Riders home matches. Bhogle and Doull got embroiled in the controversy when the former New Zealand cricketer opined that KKR should relocate their franchisee if the curator was not paying any heed to team's request for spin-friendly tracks while Bhogle said the team should get the home advantage. This was during a panel discussion on a popular website after KKR lost two of their first three home games. Infuriated by their comments, CAB Secretary Naresh Ojha wrote to the BCCI nearly 10 days ago, requesting the removal of Bhogle and Doull from the commentary panel for their home games. Interestingly, during Monday's game between KKR and Gujarat Titans neither Bhogle nor Doull was on commentary duty.

### Neeraj Classic javelin throw event on May 24 shifted to Bengaluru from Panchkula

NEW DELHI: The maiden edition of Neeraj Chopra Classic javelin throw event on May 24 has been shifted from Panchkula to Bengaluru due to inadequate lighting at the original venue for live telecast but the field will be teeming with stars as the likes of Anderson Peters and Thomas Rohler have confirmed their participation. Peters, who hails from Grenada, is a two-time world champion and Rohler is the gold-medallist from the 2016 Olympics. Chopra said he has also invited Pakistani Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem who is, however, yet to confirm participation. The competition has been granted category A status by World Athletics, which has also changed the venue of the event on its calendar.

### Satwik-Chirag pair withdraws from Sudirman Cup due to illness: BAI

NEW DELHI: India's top men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty on Monday withdrew from the BWF Sudirman Cup Finals due to illness in a big blow to the country's prospects at the prestigious mixed team championship to be held in Xiamen, China from April 27 to May 4. The Asian Games gold medallists world number 11 Indian duo was to return to action after an injury break but Badminton Association of India (BAI) announced that Satwik and Chirag will be missing the tournament. "Men's Doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy/Chirag Shetty have withdrawn from the BWF Sudirman Cup Finals 2025 due to illness," the BAI said on Monday. "No replacements will be added to the squad." Chirag had suffered a back injury during the second round of the All England Championships in March.

### Indian women's hockey team leaves for five-match series in Australia

BENGALURU: The Indian women's hockey team led by Salima Tete has left for Australia to compete in a five-match friendly series starting April 26 in Perth, an engagement that will be crucial preparation for the side ahead of the FIH Pro League's European leg in June. The team left late on Sunday night. The series will begin with two matches against Australia A on April 26 and 27, followed by three encounters against world No. 5 ranked Australian senior team on May 1, 3, and 4 at the Perth Hockey Stadium. Led by dynamic midfielder Salima, with experienced forward Navneet Kaur as her deputy, the 26-member squad will use the tour as a preparation ground ahead of the European leg of the Pro League, where India will start its campaign on June 7 against the Netherlands. |

### Is it to develop sports or just have an event? Moses' poser to India on 2030 CWG bid

MADRID: Perplexed by India's interest in hosting events like the 2030 Commonwealth Games, American athletics legend Edwin Moses says the country, which is yet to have a consistent supply line of world-class athletes, needs to decide whether such bids are meant to develop sports or simply make a statement. "It depends on what the vision is for having a Commonwealth Games. Is it just to have an event in India, or is it to really develop sports? That's going to be the big question," Moses said.