

Ton-up Gill, Jaiswal Leads the way

Gill (127 batting) and Jaiswal (101) shared a 129-run partnership for a determined third wicket alliance; Pant (65 batting) was keeping vigil with Gill at close

PIC: PTI



India's Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates after scoring a century during the play on Day 1 of the first Test match against England at Headingley in Leeds, England, on Friday. (Right) India's captain Shubman Gill, right, celebrates after scoring a century

PTI, LEEDS: Yashasvi Jaiswal and captain Shubman Gill announced their readiness to carry India's batting into the post Virat Kohli-Rohit Sharma era, striking marvellous hundreds to guide the visitors

1ST TEST: ENGLAND VS INDIA

to a dominant 359 for three against a faltering England on the first day of the opening Test here on Friday.

Gill (127 batting) and Jaiswal (101, 159b) shared a 129-run partnership for

a determined third wicket alliance that carried India to 221 from a slightly wobbly 92 for two after KL Rahul (42) and debutant B Sai Sudharsan (0) were dismissed in quick succession.

Rishabh Pant (65 batting) was keeping vigil with Gill

at close. But there was an underlying significance to the centuries of Jaiswal and Gill other than giving India a head-start on the first day of the newly-minted five-match Anderson-Tendulkar



Trophy. This Indian batting line-up is a tad thin on experience after the recent retirements of former skipper Kohli and Rohit, who played at the pivotal No. 4 and opening slots in their illustrious careers.

Both Jaiswal and Gill are

not newcomers to the unforgiving Test arena, but there has been this widespread anxiety over how the 'New Gen' India stars would step into the big shoes of their predecessors.

But the portends are quite bright, if the day's in-

nings by Jaiswal and Gill are anything to go by.

Jaiswal was the first to reach the three-figure mark, the fifth in his flourishing career, off 144 balls and Gill reached his own landmark off 140 balls in the final passage of the day, heralding the start of a new era in Indian cricket.

But the way they reached that point was entirely different. Jaiswal eschewed his natural flair as the first session offered its own share of assistance to the English bowlers in the shape of movement and carry.

However, it was an altogether different matter that the home bowlers were not prudent enough to exploit that offering, and later the pitch eased up considerably.

But a flaccid track and a fangless England attack without James Anderson or Stuart Broad could not take the sheen out of the knocks of Jaiswal and Gill.

It was not a typical Jaiswal innings where he simply played the bowlers around, but he showed admirable self-restraint, particularly outside the off-stump.

SCOREBOARD

India 1st Innings: Y Jaiswal b Stokes 101, K L Rahul c Root b Carse 42, S Sudharsan c Smith b Stokes 0, S Gill not out 127, R Pant not out 65. **Extras:** 24. **Total:** 359 for 3. **Fall of wickets:** 1-9, 12-92, 3-221. **Bowling:** Woakes 19-2-89-0; Carse 16-5-70-1; Tongue 16-0-75-0; Stokes 13-1-43-2; Bashir 21-4-66-0.

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PSG stunned, Messi lights up Inter Miami

AFP, PASADENA (United States): European champions Paris Saint-Germain suffered a shock 1-0 Club World Cup defeat to Brazilian side Botafogo on Thursday after Lionel Messi lit up the tournament with a brilliant free-kick winner for Inter Miami.

CLUB WORLD CUP

Atletico Madrid and Palmeiras also won as the second round of group matches began, but it was Botafogo who stole the headlines. A first-half goal from Igor Jesus proved the difference as last year's Copa Libertadores winners all but sealed a place in the knockout rounds at the Pasadena Rose Bowl in California.

PSG hopes of securing a victory which would have seen them become the first side into the last 16 were stymied by a resilient performance from their opponents from Rio de Janeiro.

Botafogo took the lead against the run of play on 36 minutes as Jefferson Savarino's through ball split the PSG defence and released Jesus.

He then did brilliantly to wrongfoot the covering Wilian Pacheco before sweeping a shot that took a slight deflection past goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma on its way into the net. Botafogo's win leaves them firmly on course for the last 16, with a final group game against Atletico to come on Monday.

Atletico bounced back from a 4-0 loss to PSG as Diego Simeone's side beat Seattle Sounders 3-1.

Pablo Barrios scored twice, including an 11th-minute opener which crashed in off the underside of the crossbar.

RESULTS

Palmeiras 2 (Abou Ali 49-og, Lopez 59) **Al Ahly 0**, **Inter Miami 2** (Segovia 47, Messi 54) **Porto 1** (Aghehova 8-pen), **Seattle Sounders 1** (Rusnak 50) **Atletico Madrid 3** (Barrios 11, 55, Witsel 47), **Paris Saint-Germain 0** **Botafogo 1** (Igor Jesus 36)

AIFF administration a 'circus', says Bhutia

PTI, KOLKATA: Former India captain Bhaichung Bhutia on Friday made a scathing attack on the All India Football Federation (AIFF) leadership, calling the current administration under President Kalyan Chaubey a "circus" riddled with all-round mismanagement.

Chaubey hit back through an official statement, dismissing the allegations as "baseless" and accusing Bhutia of "deliberately distorting the image of AIFF".

In a no-holds-barred press conference here, Bhutia said

Indian football has been experiencing one of the worst phases in recent history -- both in performance and credibility -- under the stewardship of Chaubey.

"The AIFF today is a circus. And when you put jokers in those positions, it's bound to become a circus," Bhutia said, pointing to the federation's inability to resolve the I-League championship impasse between Inter Kashi and Churchill Brothers.

The fate of the I-League title hinges on a Court of Arbitration for Sport's ver-

dict on the appeal filed by Inter Kashi against a decision of the AIFF's Appeals Committee.

"They (AIFF) should have made a clear decision when the controversy erupted. Instead, they let the league continue in confusion. Clubs were treated unfairly. It's embarrassing for Indian football," said Bhutia.

Bhutia repeated his earlier criticism of Chaubey's decision to withdraw India's bid to host the 2027 AFC Asian Cup, leaving Saudi Arabia the sole candidate

in the fray.

"Why did we suddenly withdraw our 2027 AFC Asian Cup bid and agree to host the Santosh Trophy in Saudi Arabia instead? This has to be investigated by someone neutral," said Bhutia, alleging "financial misuse" by the AIFF president.

Chaubey has now expressed India's interest in bidding for the 2031 edition of the AFC Asian Cup.

"When we had the best chance, we gave it away. Now we're looking at 2031 where seven countries,

including World Cup-qualified Uzbekistan, are interested. It makes no sense," said the legendary striker.

Dismissing Bhutia's allegations, Chaubey said, "As a member of the (AIFF) Executive Committee, Bhutia has access to appropriate and empowered platforms to express his views.

Bhutia, who lost a lopsided election for the AIFF president against Chaubey in 2022, said he's not keen on contesting polls again if there is interference from the government.

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