

INDIA ON CUSP OF BIG WIN

CHENNAI

RAVICHANDRAN Ashwin on Monday scored his fifth Test century as India tightened the noose around England in the second Test as they set England a target of 482 runs and then reduced them to 52 for three at stumps on the third day.

Ashwin scored 106 runs off 148 balls with the help of 14 fours and a six as India's second innings came to an end at 286 in the post-tea session. Mohammad Siraj remained unbeaten on 16, and added 49 runs for the final wicket with Ashwin who was the last wicket to fall.

India then knocked out openers Dom Sibley (3) and Rory Burns (25) as well as night-watchman Jack Leach (0) to set England back in chase of 482. England are still 430 runs adrift.

Ashwin's century followed a five-wicket haul in England's first innings, making him only the second cricketer to achieve the feat of a century and a fiver in the same game on three different occasions. Ian Botham of England had done it five times.

Earlier, resuming at 54/1 on the third day, India lost five wickets but added 102 runs to get their lead past 350 in the morning session. The hosts lost the wickets of Cheteshwar Pujara (7), Rohit Sharma (26), Rishabh Pant (8), Ajinkya Rahane (10) and debutant Axar Patel (7) in quick succession to give a glimmer of

hope to England.

However, skipper Virat Kohli and Ashwin then shared a 96-run stand for the seventh wicket to put India in a commanding position.

Kohli, who showed his class on a Chepauk wicket that aided turn, was the first wicket to fall in the post-lunch session as he was dismissed by Moeen Ali at his individual score of 62. This was the fifth time that Ali had dismissed the India skipper in Test cricket.

Kuldeep Yadav (3) and Ishant Sharma (7) also shared eight and 27-run partnerships respectively with Ashwin to frustrate the England bowlers.

India had posted 329 runs in their first innings. The hosts then bowled out England for 134, securing a 195-run lead in first innings.

England wicket-keeper Ben Foakes, who turned 28 on Monday, drew all-round praise from renowned former players from around the world for his brilliant work against India, with Kiran More calling him one of the best overseas players to have

Vinoo Mankad (vs England at Lord's, London, in 1952) and Polly Umrigar (vs West Indies in Port of Spain in 1961-62) are the other Indians to score a century and take five wickets in an innings

India's Ravichandran Ashwin plays a shot during the 3rd day of second Test match against England at M.A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Monday



LEFT-HANDERS' BOGEYMAN

OFF-SPINNER RAVICHANDRAN ASHWIN HAS BECOME THE FIRST PLAYER IN THE 143-YEAR HISTORY OF TEST CRICKET TO TAKE 200 WICKETS AGAINST LEFT-HANDED BATSMEN. IN 76 TESTS, HE HAS PICKED 391 WICKETS AND 51.27 PER CENT OF HIS VICTIMS ARE LEFT-HANDERS.

R Ashwin (India) 201 of 392 wickets (51.27 per cent)	Muttiah Muralitharan (Sri Lanka) 191 of 800 (23.9 per cent)	James Anderson (England) 190 of 611 (31.1 per cent)	Gleeson McGrath (Australia) 172 of 563 (30.6 per cent)	Shane Warne (Australia) 172 of 708 (24.3 per cent)
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SCOREBOARD DAY 3

India 1st Innings: 329	England 1st Innings: 134
India 2nd Innings: (Overnight 54/1)	
Rohit Sharma st Foakes b Leach	26
Shubman Gill lbw b Leach	14
C Pujara run out (Ollie Pope/Foakes)	7
Virat Kohli lbw b Moeen	62
Rishabh Pant st Foakes b Leach	8
Ajinkya Rahane c Ollie Pope b Moeen	10
Axar Patel lbw b Moeen	7
Ravichandran Ashwin b Ollie Stone	106
Kuldeep Yadav lbw b Moeen	3
Ishant Sharma c Ollie Stone b Jack Leach	7
Mohammed Siraj not out	16
Extras: (8-5, LB-15)	20
Total: (All out in 85.5 overs)	286
Fall of Wickets: 1-42, 2-55, 3-55, 4-65, 5-86, 6-106, 7-202, 8-210, 9-237, 10-286	
Bowling: Ollie Stone 65-1-21-1, Jack Leach 33-6-100-4, Moeen Ali 32-7-90-4, Joe Root 4-0-15-0, Stuart Broad 9-3-25-0, Daniel Lawrence 1-0-7-0.	
England 2nd Innings:	
Rory Burns c Kohli b Ashwin	25
Dom Sibley lbw b Pate	3
Dan Lawrence not out	19
Jack Leach c Rohit Sharma b Patel Joe	0
Root not out	2
Extras: (8-4)	4
Total: (For 3 wickets in 19 overs)	53
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-49, 3-50	
Bowling: Ishant Sharma 2-1-6-0, Axar Patel 9-3-15-2, Ravichandran Ashwin 8-1-28-	

Brought out the sweep shot after 13-14 years: Ashwin

CHENNAI

INDIA off-spinner R Ashwin, who scored his fifth Test century after a five-wicket haul to help India take the stranglehold of the second Test, said he brought out his sweep shot for the first time after well over a decade.

"After the last Test, we were thinking on how to counter [Jack] Leach and start bringing sweep to the game. The last time I was sweeping was probably when I was 19 years old; hit a couple of sweep shots, got dropped from the side, and maybe never played a sweep for the last 11, maybe 13-14 years. I've been practicing that shot for the last week to 10 days. Very, very thankful that the plan has really paid off," Ashwin, who scored 106 to help India make 286 in the second innings and set a target of 482 runs for England, said after the third day's play.

Ashwin credited India's batting coach Vikram Rathour, a former India opener, for improvement in his batting.

"We have been practicing along with Vikram Rathour. Rathour has been very, very helpful trying to explore new options. He is someone who is facilitating me to go out there and be able to express myself, explore various options. I would love to credit him for how my batting has gone through the last four-five Test matches. He has kept me in the loop, said I have been batting very well. He asked me not to overthink but just look at the gameplan," he disclosed.

Ashwin added that the big target has helped them be able to attack the batsmen with fielders around the bat. "The wicket is such that you have to get runs square of the wicket. Sort of had a very, very good day. We posted a very good score. Now we can really attack with men around the bat," said Ashwin.

"I think in the past when I have made my hundreds in India, Ishi [Ishant Sharma] has been a sort of cog in the wheel. He has been with me twice when I made my hundred. He sort of understands how I go about it. Ishi was defending well. So, I thought I need to take calculated risks as long as he was there. But once Siraj came, I knew I had to get it done in a few overs. But I was super thrilled how he batted and hit the ball out of the ground," he said smilingly.

On Siraj's celebration after his hundred, Ashwin said: "Quite a funny thing [to see him] excited when I got to my hundred. That says a thing or two how the dressing room has been. Lived a dream over the past three-four months."

Earlier, on Sunday, Ashwin became the first player in the 143-year history of Test cricket to take 200 wickets against left-handed batsmen. Fast bowler Stuart Broad was the 200th left-hander he dismissed. (HANS)

ALL-ROUND SHOW

Century & five wickets in a Test match

Ian Botham (England) 5	R Ashwin (India) 3

Play-off spot in sight, Hyderabad FC hope to return to winning ways

VASCO

A play-off spot in sight, Hyderabad FC can ill-afford any slip-up when they take on a struggling Kerala Blasters in an Indian Super League match at the Tilak Maidan Stadium here on Tuesday.

For most part of the ISL season, Hyderabad had maintained their place in the top four. But now, with three games to go, they find themselves at fifth, level on points with fourth-placed FC Goa and two points below NorthEast United.

From here on, Hyderabad can't afford more slip-ups. They have played out six draws in their last seven matches. And when t h e

Nizams face Kerala Blasters on Tuesday, they will know that any more dropped points will hugely dent their play-off ambitions.

On paper, Hyderabad face one of the most vulnerable sides in the league, who are playing for pride. Kerala Blasters have conceded 29 goals, which is the second-worst tally. Their defence has been so fragile that Kibu Vicuna's side has now dropped 18 points after scoring the first goal. But for Hyderabad coach Manuel Marquez, that doesn't mean Kerala are to be taken lightly.

"All the other teams, from Kerala who are second from the bottom, till the top positions, can climb positions in the table," he said.

"We will play with Kerala with our style. We are nine games unbeaten but six of them are draws. We have to continue in the same vein and try to win the game because our season has been fantastic. We want to be in the top four."



Aridane Santana looks to add on to his goal tally against KBFC

TODAY'S MATCH	RESULTS
Hyderabad FC vs Kerala Blasters FC Tilak Maidan Stadium 7.30pm	Mumbai City FC lose to Bengaluru FC 2-4

ISL STANDINGS

CLUB	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
ATK Mohun Bagan	17	11	3	3	23	10	13	36
Mumbai City FC	17	10	4	3	27	15	12	34
NorthEast United FC	17	6	8	3	24	21	3	26
FC Goa	17	5	9	3	26	21	5	24
Hyderabad FC	17	5	9	3	21	17	4	24
Bengaluru FC	18	5	7	6	23	23	0	22
Jamshedpur FC	18	5	6	7	16	20	-4	21
Chennaiyin FC	18	3	9	6	13	19	-6	18
SC East Bengal	17	3	8	6	15	22	-7	17
Kerala Blasters FC	17	3	7	7	22	29	-7	16
Odisha FC	17	1	6	10	17	30	-13	9

Racing Team India makes ALMS debut

DUBAI: Racing Team India won its bid to become the first all-Indian squad to compete at the 24 Hours of Le Mans with a solid debut over the opening two rounds of the Asian Le Mans Series in Dubai this weekend. The JK Tyres-backed team's ORECA 07 LMP2 car, driven by Narain Karthikeyan, Arjun Maini and Naveen Rao, with technical support from reigning ALMS champions Algarve Pro Racing, finished fifth and fourth in the two four-hour races held at the Dubai Autodrome on Saturday and Sunday respectively. The team's car showed promising pace throughout the weekend. But its challenge was hampered by racing incidents and to be taken lightly. The team had to make an extra precautionary pit-stop in Saturday's opening race which dropped the car down the order.

Nadal beats Fognini to enter Aus Open quarters

MELBOURNE

WORLD number two Rafael Nadal on Monday entered the Australian Open quarter-finals for the 13th time after getting past Fabio Fognini in their fourth round contest.

Nadal, the 2009 champion, registered a 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 win over the Italian No. 16 seed in two hours and 16 minutes at the Rod Laver Arena.

"When you go on court

against Fabio, you worry," said Nadal after the match as per the ATP Tour website.

"There can always be problems. I was just lucky that when he broke me (in the second set) I responded immediately and held the score. Today was very humid and quicker during the day, which I like, but I have to adapt to every condition," he added.

The 34-year-old is looking to

Spain's Rafael Nadal hits a forehand return during his fourth round match against Italy's Fabio Fognini at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia on Monday

become the first man in the Open Era to clinch each of the four major championships on two

or more occasions. He will next face fifth-seeded Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas, who received a walkover after No. 9 seed Matteo Berrettini of Italy withdrew due to an ab-

dominal strain. Earlier in the day, fourth seed Daniil Medvedev also booked his place in the quarter-finals after a commanding straight-sets win over Mackenzie McDonald.

Medvedev beat the 25-year-old American 6-4, 6-2, 6-3 in his fourth-round match that lasted an hour and 29 minutes at the Margaret Court Arena.

"It's an exciting moment (to

wishers, and MPCA & BCCI," he added.

Ojha said he is eager to ply his trade in global T20 leagues. As per the BCCI rules, he is now eligible for such leagues, having announced his retirement from all forms of cricket.

"While I leave the competitive format of game for my state and country with best of memories, I shall be keen to wear the gloves and face the ball in global competitions," he said.

Ojha made his international debut in 2010 in his only ODI against Sri Lanka, followed by his first T20I match in Zimbabwe a week later. His lone Test came in 2015 against Sri Lanka in Colombo and the top-order batsman rued not being able to play for his country more. (HANS)

Ojha retires from all forms of cricket, says keen to play in global T20 leagues

Rahul at 2, Kohli at 7 in ICC T20I rankings

DUBAI: Indian batsmen KL Rahul and Virat Kohli have maintained their respective second and seventh spots in the ICC T20I rankings for batsmen which got updated on Monday.

India are slated to take on England in five T20Is, following the culmination of the ongoing four-Test series, part of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) and the duo will get a chance to gain some points.

The rankings got updated following the culmination of the three-match series between Pakistan and South Africa which the Babar Azam led-side won 2-1.

South Africa spinner Brazaiz Shamsi has grabbed a career-best second position among bowlers while Pakistan wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Rizwan has raced to 42nd place in the rankings.

Shamsi's series-topping six wickets, which included a haul of four for 25 in the final match, helped the left-arm wrist-spinner overtake Australia's Adam Zampa, England's Adil Rashid and Afghanistan's Mujeeb Ur Rahman to within three points of top-ranked Rashid Khan of Afghanistan. Rizwan too benefited from heading the run-aggregate in the series with 197 runs, which comprised knocks of 104 not out, 51 and 42. The string of impressive scores won him the player of the series award and lifted him a whopping 116 slots to a career-best 42nd position.

Haider Ali is another Pakistan batsman to advance, moving up 13 places to 137th position while fast bowlers Shaheen Afridi (up five places to 11th) and Hasan Ali (up 14 places to 82nd), and spinners Mohammad Nawaz (re-entered at 64th) and Usman Qadir (up 129 places to 92nd) are the bowlers to progress.

For South Africa, Reeza Hendricks' 98 runs in the series have lifted him seven places to 17th and David Miller's 116 runs, which included a 45-ball 85 not out in the second match, sees him gain seven places to 22nd position in the list led by Dawid Malan of England. There is no change of positions in the ICC team rankings after the series.

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