



IPL 2024: Parag's magnificent 84 sets up RR's 12-run win over DC

Parag hits 7 fours and 6 sixes as RR recover from 36 for 3 in 8th over to 185 for 5

JAIPUR, MARCH 28: Young Riyan Parag showed why he is considered a precocious talent as he struck a stunning 84 not out off 45 balls to set up a 12-run win for Rajasthan Royals against Delhi Capitals in their IPL match here on Thursday.

Sent in to bat, RR were reduced to 36 for 3 in the eighth over but the 22-year-old Parag single-handedly took the home side to 185 for 5 with a magnificent unbeaten knock studded with seven fours and six sixes.

Parag, who was promoted to number 4 by the team management this season and made 43 in the previous match, took 25 runs off veteran South African pacer Anrich Nortje with scores of 4, 4, 6, 4, 6, 1 in the final over to hit his highest T20 score.

Chasing 186 for a win, DC could only manage 173 for 5 in 20 overs though South African youngster Tristan Stubbs (44 not out off 23 balls) kept them in the hunt till the final over from which they needed 17 runs.

Avesh Khan conceded just four runs to help RR win their second consecutive match.

South African pacer Nandre Burger and Yuzvendra Chahal took two wickets apiece to also contribute in the RR win.



"Definitely disappointed. The best thing to do from here is to learn from it. The bowlers did well through the 15-16 overs. But the batters did well at the death, hopefully we do better in the next game," DC skipper Rishabh Pant said.

DC were reduced to 34 for 2 in the fourth over with Burger taking two wickets in three balls in a fine display of fast bowling.

Burger, who was brought in as Impact Sub for Shimron Hetmyer, dismissed opener Mitchell Marsh (23 off 12 balls) and Ricky Bhui (0) in the fourth over.

DC captain Rishabh Pant came out to bat at the fall of Bhui's wicket and along with senior batter David Warner built the innings without taking too much risk. Delhi were 89 for 2 at the halfway stage.

Warner was the more aggressive one as he got the boundaries to keep DC in the hunt. The senior Australian batter fell one run short of his fifty courtesy a brilliant diving catch by Sandeep Sharma off the bowling of Avesh in the 12th over.

Warner and Pant were involved in a crucial 67-run partnership for the third wicket.

Playing in his 100th IPL match and 14 months after a horrible car crash, Pant tried to build the innings with occasional boundaries. But he got out for a 26-ball 28 as Chahal induced a faint lower edge for Sanju Samson to do the rest behind the stumps in the 14th over.

The asking rate shot up to more than 13 runs an over and DC needed 66 from the last five overs.

Stubbs kept DC in the game with two consecutive

sixes off Ravichandran Ashwin in the 17th over, but in the end the Delhi side were short by 12 runs.

They needed 34 runs from the final two overs which they could not get. It was DC's second consecutive loss.

Earlier, Parag shared 54 and 52 runs respectively with Ravichandran Ashwin (29) and Dhruv Jurel (20) after RR made a shaky start.

Royals captain Samson struck three consecutive boundaries in the fourth over bowled by pacer Mukesh Kumar before nicking a Khaleel Ahmed delivery two overs later to Pant to get out for 15.

RR were 30 for 2 by then as Mukesh had given DC their first breakthrough with the wicket of Yashasvi Jaiswal (5).

The Royals were in more trouble after wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav literally forced his captain Pant to take a review, which later proved to be successful, to dismiss Englishman Jos Buttler for an LBW decision.

Ashwin came out to bat at number five and he lofted a Kuldeep delivery for a six to help RR reach 58 for 3 at halfway stage. He gave Nortje even a harsher treatment with two sixes in the next over that yielded 15 runs.

Neeraj to begin season with Doha Diamond League, Jena set to make DL debut

NEW DELHI, MAR 28: India's Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra will make a welcome return to the Doha leg of the Diamond League series on 10 May alongside compatriot Kishore Jena, who is set to make his League debut.

Chopra was the first Indian track and field athlete to set a world record (under-20) when he threw 86.48m to win the 2016 World U20 Championships, which was also the first time an Indian athlete had won a global track and field title.

He won javelin gold at the 2018 Asian Games, the first Indian athlete to do so, and made history in Tokyo when he became the country's first Olympic gold medallist in track and field. That trend continued at the 2023 World Athlet-



ics Championships in Budapest when he became the first athlete from India to strike gold.

"This year, my personal goal is to defend my Olympic title, but it would also mean a lot to me to break the 90m barrier. The Doha Meeting, with good conditions and a great atmosphere, is a perfect opportunity to get my season off to the best start," the Commonwealth and Asian Games champion told the Diamond League website.

Chopra set the tone for his 2023 gold medal-winning summer with victory in the opening meeting of the Wanda Diamond League in Doha ahead of former world champion Anderson Peters and Olympic and world medallist Jakub Vadlejch.

The trio will be joined at the Qatar Sports Club by European champion Julian Weber; World Championships finalist Oliver Helander; Qatari record holder Ahmed Bader

Magour; World University Games champion Edis Matusevicius; Asian Games bronze medallist Roderick Genki Dean; Olympic finalist Andrian Mardare; and Pan American Games champion Curtis Thompson.

"I'm always overwhelmed by the warm support I get from Indians across the world and in Qatar that is particularly special. I feel privileged that so many people come out to support me and I hope I can repay their faith in me with a good performance," added Chopra.

Chopra's continued excellence has raised the bar for Indian athletes and for the first time in his country's history, he was joined in the World Championships final by two of his teammates, Jena and DP Manu.

PV Sindhu advances to Madrid Masters quarters

MADRID, MAR 28: Star Indian shuttler P V Sindhu continued her impressive run at the Madrid Spain Masters, advancing to the quarterfinals with a comfortable straight-game win over Chinese Taipei's Huang Yu-Hsun here on Thursday.

It was a smooth performance from Sindhu as she was hardly tested by the Taiwanese qualifier, ranked world no. 63, resulting in a 21-14 21-12 win in 36 minutes.

The former world champion, who finished runner-up in the last edition, will take on either sixth seed Supanida Katethong of Thailand or Japan's Natsumi Nidaira.

In the opening game, Sindhu was 3-0 up initially



but then entered a phase where she often found the net or went long, while her rival produced some precise returns to grab a 7-6 lead before taking a one-point advantage with a straight down-the-line smash.

The Indian, however, produced a better show after resumption, taking a 18-12 cushion with Yu-Hsun making errors. She

soon grabbed eight game points, wasted two of them before sealing the opening game with her trademark smash.

After the change of sides, Yu-Hsun struggled to control the shuttle as her lifts repeatedly went long. The Taiwanese shuttler tried to use her drops and placements but she didn't have power in her smashes.

The result was Sindhu

quietly waited for her opponent to commit errors. Soon she had a five-point advantage at the break. Every time Yu-Hsun tried to extend the rallies, she ended up with unforced errors.

Soon a smash handed another eight match points to Sindhu and she wrapped it up when her opponent sprayed into net again.

With top seed Carolina Marin of Spain pulling out of the tournament after her title-winning run at the All England Championships and Swiss Open in the last two weeks, Sindhu is now the favourite to claim the crown and end a long wait.

Sindhu won her last BWF tour title at the 2022 Singapore Open Super 500.

23rd Sub-Junior National Wushu Championship begins in Jammu

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAR 28

The 23rd Sub-Junior National Wushu Championship for boys and girls took off today in Jammu. The event, being organized by the Wushu Association of J&K in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council in the Gymnasium Hall of Jammu University, was declared open by Secretary J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gull today.

More than 1500 boys and girls from different parts of the country are participating in the event

In her address, Nuzhat Gull congratulated the participants of the guest states and UTs for making it to the grand event.

The Secretary Sports Council thanked the Directorate of Sports and Physical Education for its cooperation and support in the conduct of this event.

The Bureau Chief of Times Now, Pradeep Dutta who was the guest of honour on the occasion, also shared his views with the participants and the guests present on the occasion.

Earlier, the General Secretary



Wushu Association of India, Vijay Saraf, presented a welcome speech and gave a brief gist of the event.

While the presentation ceremony

was folding, Kuldeep Handoo presented the vote of thanks.

The six-day event will conclude on the 2nd of April.

Miami Open: Jannik Sinner, Daniil Medvedev book semi-final clash

NEW DELHI, MAR 28: World number three Jannik Sinner will face defending champion Daniil Medvedev in the semi-finals of the Miami Open - a rematch of the Australian Open final won by Sinner and last year's Miami title match.

Sinner moved into the last four in emphatic style on Wednesday, beating Czech Tomas Machac 6-4, 6-2 before Medvedev overcame a stern test against Chilean Nicolas Jarry before emerging with a 6-2, 7-6 (9/7) win.

Italy's Sinner, who rallied from two sets down to beat Medvedev and claim his first Grand Slam title at the Australian Open, will play in his fourth semi of the season after dealing with lively Machac in 91 minutes. Sinner broke the opening game serve from the Czech but Machac responded immediately to make it 1-1.

The crowd were on their feet to appreciate some brilliant defensive play



from Sinner who eventually took charge of the set, breaking to go 4-3 up and then closing out.

The second set was more straightforward with Sinner breaking in the third game and never looking back.

Despite the comfortable margin of the win, Sinner said Machac deserved praise for his energetic and aggressive performance.

"He has an incredible talent. He is super fast, also physically he is in great shape," said the world number three.

"I didn't know exactly what to expect today. The first games I was looking a



little bit at what kind of tactics could work or not," he added.

"I played good, especially in the important moments of the match, which makes it... the scoreboard, you see the score, but it's sometimes lying. Today was a little bit like that," said Sinner.

Medvedev ran away with the first set against Jarry, who was slow out of the blocks. But the second set was a different story with the Chilean, roared on by heavily Latin American crowd, finding his big serve. The pair were inseparable, with plenty of entertaining rallies, until the

tiebreaker.

Medvedev missed a chance to win the match at 6-5 up when he came to the net for a routine conversion on match point but found the net - prompting a huge roar from the Chilean fans.

A thumping ace from Jarry made it 7-7 but it was followed with a poor effort which flew long and then on the third match point Medvedev wrapped up the win.

"In the first set I feel like I was playing good level, but nothing extra and it was enough to win, so I was happy about it," said Medvedev.

"Then he managed to play much better. It was tough rallies, tough points, he served better and yeah, it was a matter of a few points on the tiebreak like it is sometimes in tennis," he said.

The Russian appeared to enjoy the extra spice provided by the Chilean fans in the stadium.

Sharfuddoula first Bangladesh umpire to enter the ICC elite panel, Menon enters fifth year; Broad excluded

NEW DELHI, MAR 28: Bangladesh's Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid on Thursday became the first from his country to be inducted into the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires while India's Nitin Menon entered the top tier for an unprecedented fifth time.

Indore-based Menon, who joined the elite panel at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, remains the only Indian in the 12-member club.

The 40-year-old is only the third Indian to be part of the elite panel after S Ravi and former India spinner S Venkataraghavan, who performed on-field duties in 33 and 73 Tests, respectively.

Menon has been an on-field umpire in 23 Tests, 58 ODIs and 41 T20s (122 overall) and is expected to surpass Venkataraghavan's overall match tally of officiating in 125 games in the T20 World Cup in the USA and Caribbean.

Menon had also realised his dream of officiating in the Ashes last year.

On the other hand,



Bangladesh's Sharfuddoula was elevated from the ICC International Panel of Umpires, replacing the now-retired Marais Erasmus.

Sharfuddoula has been on the International Panel since 2006 and his first international appointment was an ODI between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka at Mirpur in January 2010.

He has been an on-field umpire in 10 Tests, 63 ODIs and 44 T20Is. He has also featured on-field in 13 women's ODIs and 28 T20Is.

"It is a great honour to be named on the ICC Elite Panel. To be the first from my country on the panel makes it extra special, and

I look forward to justifying the faith shown in me. I have had a fair bit of experience over the years and am ready for more challenging assignments," said Sharfuddoula.

The ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees has been reduced from seven members to six, with Chris Broad not included in the panel for 2024-25.

Broad, who has been on the panel since 2003, has refereed 123 Tests, 361 ODIs, and 135 T20s, as well as 15 women's T20s.

ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said: "Chris Broad has been a valuable member of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees over many years and has performed his role

with distinction.

"He was prepared to take difficult calls in the best interests of the game and was respected by players and officials from all over the cricketing world. On behalf of the ICC, I would like to thank Chris for his long and distinguished contribution to the game.

Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees: David Boon (Australia), Jeff Crowe (New Zealand), Ranjan Madugalle (Sri Lanka), Andrew Pycroft (Zimbabwe), Richie Richardson (West Indies), Javagal Srinath (India).

Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Umpires: Kumar Dharmasena (Sri Lanka), Christopher Gaffaney (New Zealand), Michael Gough (England), Adrian Holdstock (South Africa), Richard Illingworth (England), Richard Kettleborough (England), Nitin Menon (India), Ahsan Raza (Pakistan), Paul Reiffel (Australia), Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid (Bangladesh), Rodney Tucker (Australia), Joel Wilson (West Indies).