



## Virat ton, Harshit counter-attack in vain as NZ secure first ODI series win in India, beat Men in Blue by 41 runs

**INDORE, JAN 18:** An incredible lone warrior century from Virat Kohli and his 99-run stand with lower-order batter Harshit Rana, who scored his maiden ODI fifty, went in vain as New Zealand downed the Men in Blue in the third and final ODI at Indore to secure their first-ever ODI series win in India.

Centuries from Daryl Mitchell (137\*) and Glenn Phillips (106) took NZ to 337/8, despite three wickets from Harshit Rana and Arshdeep Singh. After being reduced to 5/2 and later 58/3, the duo put on a 219-run stand that put the Kiwis in a commanding position. In the chase, India was down at 71/4, but an entertaining 88-run stand between Virat and Nitish Kumar Reddy (53 in 57 balls, with two fours and two sixes) and a 99-run stand between Virat and Harshit Rana (52 in 43 balls, with four boundaries and four sixes) gave India hope, with Virat producing a masterclass 108-ball 124 ball to the delight of Indore crowd. However, once he was gone, it was curtains for India who was all out for 296 in 46 overs, handing NZ the series 1-2.

During the run-chase of 338 runs, Indian skipper Shubman Gill and Rohit Sharma started off decently, with the 'Hitman' getting a cover drive for four on the first ball of the innings. Gill picked up a boundary against Zak Foulkes and two successive ones against lanky Kyle Jamieson.

However, India's party was ended by Foulkes, with Rohit handing a soft catch to Kristian Clarke for a 13-ball 11, flopping in his 100th ODI at home. India was 28/1 in four overs.

Virat started off strongly, with a pull over mid-wicket against Foulkes for six. Gill was looking in a fine touch against Jamieson, scoring another boundary against him, but his off-stump took a beating in the next ball. The Indian skipper was gone for 18-ball 23, with four boundaries. India was 45/2 in 6.4 overs.

India reached the 50-run mark in 7.5 overs, courtesy of a flamboyant drive from Virat for four. The superstar batter was looking in sublime touch, getting two successive boundaries against Clarke, taking India to 66/2 in 10 overs, with Virat (28\*) and Shreyas Iyer (2\*) unbeaten.

Clarke and Jayden Lennox handed India a quick double whammy, as Iyer (3) and KL Rahul (1) were removed in quick succession. India was in a spot of bother at 71/4 in 12.5 overs.

Virat brought up his half-century in 51 balls, with four



boundaries and a six. He and Nitish looked in fine touch as they brought up their 50-run stand in 58 balls, keeping India's hopes going.

As India reached the 25th over mark, Virat and Nitish upped the ante, with Virat getting a four against Glenn Phillips and Nitish collecting a six each against Foulkes and Phillips. The second one was a beautiful slog sweep and sealed his maiden ODI fifty in 52 balls, with two fours and two sixes.

However, courtesy some lucky runs for Kuldeep and two successive boundaries for Virat against Clarke, India could keep dreaming. However, Clarke got the last laugh as Virat was dismissed as he skied one straight to Mitchell near the boundary. Virat was gone for 108-ball 124, with 10 fours and three sixes. India was down and out at 292/9 in 45.4 overs.

India was bundled out for 296 runs in 46 overs, with Glenn Phillips running out Arshdeep.

Clarke (3/54) and Foulkes (3/77) were the pick of the bowlers for NZ, while Lennox bowled an impressive spell of 2/42.

Earlier, a fantastic century from Daryl Mitchell and Glenn Phillips guided New Zealand to 337/8, to post a challenging target of 338 runs for India in the series decider.

After being asked to bat first, New Zealand were off to a poor start. Speedster Arshdeep Singh clean bowled opener Henry Nicholls for a golden duck during the fourth ball of the very first over.

In the very next over, right-arm pacer Harshit Rana removed Devon Conway (5) after he edged straight to Rohit Sharma, who took a simple catch at the first slip. This was the third time Rana dismissed Conway in the ongoing ODI series.

After the end of five overs, Will Young and Daryl Mitchell took New Zealand to 27/2. After losing both openers inside the first two overs, Mitchell and Young took New Zealand to 47/2 in 10 overs.

During the first ball of the 12th over, Harshit Rana broke the 53-run partnership for the third wicket. The pacer removed Will Young (30 off 41 balls) after Ravindra Jadeja took a stunning catch at the backward point region.

After the end of 20 overs, New Zealand scored 95/3. Mitchell continued his sublime form as he scored yet another fifty in the ongoing series during the last ball of the 21st

over. This was Mitchell's fourth consecutive ODI fifty against India. He is just behind Kane Williamson's (5) tally.

New Zealand crossed the 150-run mark after the end of the 29th over. During the 33rd over, Glenn Phillips completed his sixth ODI half-century. It was also the first 50-plus score in 10 ODI

innings against India for Glenn Phillips as New Zealand reached 183/3.

During the fourth ball of the 36th over, Daryl Mitchell hammered his ninth ODI century in 106 deliveries. It was Mitchell's third ODI hundred in the last four innings, and second in the ongoing three-match ODI series against India.

Overall, Mitchell is just behind South African great AB de Villiers's record (5) of most hundreds against Men in Blue in India ODI cricket. This was also the fourth ODI century for Daryl Mitchell in India - the joint-most for a New Zealand batter alongside Nathan Astle (5).

After the end of the 40th over, New Zealand were in a commanding position as they reached 238/3, with the partnership for the fourth-wicket between Mitchell and Phillips was at 180 runs.

During the last ball of the 42nd over, Glenn Phillips completed his second ODI century in 83 deliveries. New Zealand reached 266/3. Notably, this was the first instance of two New Zealand batters (Mitchell and Phillips) scoring hundreds against India in the same ODI innings.

Arshdeep Singh finally broke the mammoth 219-run partnership after he dismissed Phillips during the first ball of the 44th over. Phillips played a fantastic knock of 106 off 88 deliveries, including nine fours and three sixes.

The 219-run partnership between Mitchell and Phillips was the second-highest partnership for the fourth wicket or lower against India in ODIs, behind 221\* runs added by Kane Williamson and Tom Latham for the fourth wicket at Auckland in 2022.

Mohammed Siraj then removed dangerous Mitchell during the first ball of the 45th over. The right-handed batter played a classy innings, scoring 137 off 131 balls, with the help of 15 fours and three sixes.

During the second ball of the 46th over, Kuldeep Yadav got the wicket of Mitchell Hay (2) as New Zealand slumped to 286/6.

Towards the end, captain Michael Bracewell's unbeaten 28 off 18 deliveries, including four boundaries, guided New Zealand to 337/8 in 50 overs.

With the ball, Arshdeep Singh (3/63) and Harshit Rana (3/84) scalped three wickets each for India.

Japan 17-21, 25-23, 21-16 in the men's doubles final.

But the star of the day was An Se Young, who had reached the women's singles final without dropping a game, and it looked like the 23-year-old was not willing to let that streak slip up against a player who had come close to winning the second game against her in the Malaysia Open Super 1000 last month.

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According to a release, the world no.1 Korean came out all guns blazing against the Chinese second seed to win 21-13, 21-11 in the women's singles final, while Lin out-classed Christie 21-10, 21-18 in just 38 minutes to clinch his first BWF World Tour Super 750 title.

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China won both the women's and men's doubles titles in contrasting fashion. In the women's doubles summit clash, Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning defeated Yuki Fukushima and Mayu Matsumoto of Japan 21-11, 21-18, while Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang got the better of Hiroki Midorikawa and Kyohei Yamashita of

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## Volleyball tourney by Poonch Police begins

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, JAN 18

To pay tributes to the brave soldiers, Poonch Police today inaugurated the 1st edition of the Police Martyrs Volleyball Tournament at the Government Degree College Ground, here today.

The tournament witnessed enthusiastic participation from 12 teams representing different clubs and institutions of the district.

The event was declared open by SSP Poonch, Shafket Hussain amid applause from participants, officials, and the volleyball lovers. Speaking to the gathering, the chief guest paid rich tributes to police martyrs, highlighting their supreme sacrifice for the safety, peace, and sovereignty of the Nation.

Referring to martyr Amjad Pathan, who was recently martyred in an encounter with terrorists in Udhampur, SSP Poonch stated, "Our martyrs embodied

courage, dedication, and selflessness. They laid down their lives so that we may live in peace. Today, we honour their legacy not merely in words, but through actions that inspire discipline, unity, and national pride among our youth."

He announced that the Police Martyrs Volleyball Tournament will be made an annual event, reinforcing the commitment to a drug-free and sports-oriented Poonch.



## Bhanu, Christi get China exposure

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, JAN 18

Two promising Wushu players from J&K have been selected in the Indian team for the foreign exposure training in China, being conducted as part of preparations for the Asian Games.

The selected athletes are Bhanu Partap Singh, Bronze medalist at the 18th Asian Games, and Ansa Christi, who have current No. 1 ranking in the 52 kg women category, a handout issued by the Wushu Association of J&K here informed.

Both these athletes are part of the Indian team, already left for the one-month foreign exposure training programme in China.

The named were short-listed by the Wushu Association of India (WAI) across 13 events (seven Sanda and six Taolu) during the recent national ranking tournament held at Jammu.

Notably, 12 athletes from



J&K featured among the top eight rankings, highlighting the strong performance and growing prominence of the region in Wushu at the National level.

In view of preparations for the 20th Asian Games 2026, scheduled to be held in Japan this year, the

Sports Authority of India (SAI) has sanctioned a 23-member Indian Wushu team for the foreign exposure training programme in China.

Meanwhile, Kuldeep Handoo, Dronacharya Awardee congratulated the athletes and advised them

to work diligently to secure their berths for the forthcoming Asian Games in Japan.

He expressed gratitude to the J&K Sports Council headed by Secretary, Nuzhat Gul for extending full support to Wushu in the Union Territory.

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Hosts University of Jammu (JU) today trounced equally good University of Kashmir 3-2 in a neck of neck contest in the title clash of Volleyball in the ongoing sports meet for 3rd Chancellor's Trophy at JU main campus, here.

Training by two sets, JU fought back to secure consecutive three sets and the match in a charged atmosphere with spectators from both sides in support at the Volleyball courts this afternoon.

Earlier, in the semifinals, decided today, University of Kashmir beat Cluster University of Jammu 3-2 (19-25, 25-18, 25-21, 22-15) and University of Jammu beat Central University of Jammu 3-2 (21-18, 25-21, 25-22).

Earlier, in the semifinals, decided with the results the teams qualified for the finals. Some of the finals were slated for this evening and remaining tomorrow morning.

The finals shall be followed

der the guidance of qualified technical panel, a handout issued by the Association here today informed.

The event is being held under My Youth My Pride. In support with J&K Sports Council (JKSC) in different age and weight groups un-

der the chairmanship of Rajesh Pangotra, president of the Association.

For further information, participants may contact Anuj Sharma (9018920009), organizing secretary.

Chancellor's Trophy: JU beat KU for Volleyball title

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Other Results: Semifinals: TABLE TENNIS: Men: University of Kashmir beat Cluster University of Jammu 3-2 (19-25, 25-18, 25-21, 22-15) and University of Jammu beat Central University of Jammu 3-2 (21-18, 25-21, 25-22).

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