



3rd Women's T20I: India batters eye resurgence against Aussies to seal historic series win

ADELAIDE, FEB 20: India will need their batting big guns to fire collectively against an experienced Australian bowling group in the third and final women's T20 International to seal a historic maiden series triumph Down Under, here on Saturday.

Despite registering a few victories in the past, the Indian women are yet to score a bilateral series win in Australia across all three formats.

To change that script, India need a better batting effort here and it starts from openers Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma.

Both Smriti and Shafali got starts but failed to kick on, impeding India's relatively easy-looking chase of 164 in the second match.

The veteran Aussie trio of Kim Garth, Annabel Sutherland and Sophie Molineux exploited that opening, getting rid of five Indian batters for a mere seven runs to wreck the chase.

But the Adelaide pitch offers a lot more trueness than its counterpart at Canberra, and the Indian batters should be able to trust their



pick-up shots here. An excellent outfield also adds value to the drive here.

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, Jemimah Rodrigues and Richa Ghosh love the ball coming on to the bat, and they can expect some assistance here.

However, the smooth nature of the ground also puts an onus on Indian pacers — Renuka Singh, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Goud and Amanjot Kaur — to be steady in their lines, as the Aussie batters can quite ruthlessly exploit any slack.

In that context, no one is a bigger threat than young and prolific Georgia Voll,

who has seamlessly taken over the opening role from the now-retired Meg Lanning and Alyssa Healy.

Those are massive shoes to fill, but the 22-year-old has been nothing less than remarkable so far.

The Indian pacers will have to stop Voll on her tracks, and the spinners — Deepti Sharma and Sree Charani — too need to chip in during the middle overs.

It is mandatory to keep the range-hitters Sutherland and Ash Gardner and the innovative Phoebe Litchfield quiet post the Powerplay segment.

Teams:

India: India: Harmanpreet Kaur ©, Smriti Mandhana, Bharti Fulmal, Kranti Gaud, Richa Ghosh (wk), Gunalan Kamalini, Amanjot Kaur, Shreyanka Patil, Sneh Rana, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Shree Charani, Vaishnavi Sharma.

Australia: Sophie Molineux ©, Tahilia McGrath, Darcie Brown, Nicola Carey, Kim Garth, Grace Harris, Phoebe Litchfield, Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Voll, Georgia Wareham.

Bangladesh bundles out Pakistan for 56, reaches Rising Stars Asia Cup finals

BANGKOK, FEBRUARY 20: Bangladesh's women's side ripped through Pakistan for just 56, sealing a commanding 54-run victory in the Rising Stars Asia Cup semi-final and punching their ticket to the final on Friday.

Bangladesh skipper Fahima Khatun's all-round performance, Sanjida Akter Meghla's 3-fer, helped them claim the victory. Bangladesh scored 110 runs in 20 overs, thanks to Pakistan Women's brilliant bowling.

Pakistan A women won the toss and opted to bowl first.

Ishma Tanjim and Shamina Sultana opened the innings for Bangladesh. They were off to a slow start, finishing power play at 27/1, losing Sultana to Waheeda Akhtar in the fourth over for 13 runs off 13 balls.

Pakistan were in a commanding position after ten overs as Bangladesh crumpled to 44/3. Ishma Tanjim was dismissed for 12 runs off 23 balls by Anosha Nasir after getting hit on the pad for lbw, and Sarmiin Sultana was removed by Omaima Sohail for a score of 15 runs off 20 balls.

Khatun was the only standout batter from the



side who held the crease from the eighth over to the end of the innings, remaining not-out with a score of 40 runs of 32 balls, with five boundaries.

It was an excellent bowling display from the Pakistan side, restricting Bangladesh to a scant total of 110/8 in 20 overs. It was expected to be an easy win for Pakistan, but the Bengal Tigresses had different plans.

They started excellently, with Fariha Trisna dismissing opener Eman Naseer at a score of just four runs off 12

balls on the last ball of the third over. Pakistan were at the score of 8/1 after three overs.

In the following over, Sanjida Akter Meghla cleaned up Huraina Sajjad for a duck. Pakistan crawled to 21/2 after the powerplay. Following the powerplay, Khatun bowled Shawaal Zulfiqar on 14 runs off 17 balls.

Khatun was on fire. She first contributed to run out Gull Rukh (2) on the third ball of the ninth over, and on the last ball, removed Sohail. Pakistan were 39/5 af-

ter 10 overs. The rest of the wickets did not trouble Bangladesh much as they lost the remaining five wickets for mere 17 runs, thanks to Bangladesh's bowlers.

Akter ended the match with three wickets while conceding only six runs in her spell, with two balls remaining in her quota. Khatun was awarded the player of the match for her all-rounding performance of 40 runs and two wickets.

Bangladesh will now face India in the finals at Tendthai Cricket Ground on Sunday. (ANI)

BCCI backs global roadmap to strengthen cricket for blind

BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 20: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will be providing more backing to the country's visually impaired cricketers as a part of global roadmap, in the form of help in travelling and accommodation at home or away from home during bilateral events/tournaments and access to the board supported stadiums which will give them access to top class playing conditions and professional standards.

This significant milestone follows a series of constructive discussions led by Jay Shah, Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC), whose continued advocacy for inclusive growth in cricket has been instru-

mental in shaping this collaboration. Shah engaged closely with CABI leadership, including Dr Mahantesh G Kivadasanavar (Chairman) and Shailender Yadav (General Secretary), to ensure that blind cricket receives the structural support it rightfully deserves, as per a press release.

To further strengthen the journey of India's visually impaired cricketers, the BCCI has committed to support both the Men's and Women's National Teams, specifically focusing on:

- Provision of international travel and accommo-

dation for two overseas tournaments annually for each team (Men & Women).

Exclusive access to BCCI-supported stadiums and grounds for domestic and international fixtures, ensuring world-class playing conditions and professional standards.

This partnership helps CABI bridge the gap in support it receives through CSR grants, enabling it to more effectively promote cricket for the blind on the global stage, particularly by organising tournaments and supporting participation in away series.

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