



Bethell stars as England beat India by 4 wickets to take 1-0 lead in 5-match T20I series

MANCHESTER, JULY 04: Ravi Bishnoi became the perfect party pooper on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's much-hyped debut, conceding 29 runs in an over as England romped home by four wickets against India in the second T20I International here on Saturday.

The 17th over, bowled by a profligate Bishnoi, saw him deliver two no-balls in the first two deliveries. Jacob Bethell (76 not out off 46 balls), keen to make amends for the T20 World Cup semi-final defeat, capitalised on the opportunity, smashing three towering sixes to ensure England completed the chase of 191 with an over to spare.

The afternoon began with anticipation over a 15-year-old Indian's debut and ended with a 22-year-old talented Englishman's swift counter-offensive that gave the hosts a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

The chase could not have started on a worse note for the hosts, as Phil Salt and Jos Buttler were snapped up by Arshdeep Singh.

However, to his horror, skipper Harry Brook (39 off 15 balls) was brutal on the seasoned seamer, smashing him for 27 runs, which included three sixes and two boundaries.

While Axar Patel (1/19 in 4 overs) had Brook caught down the leg side by Ishan Kishan, the England skipper had already set the platform for the counter-offensive.

Bethell was then joined by Tom Banton (39 off 32 balls), and the duo handled the Indian spinners with relative ease during their 67-run stand for the fourth wicket.

It also helped that India's spinners Ravi Bishnoi



(0/60 in 4 overs) and Varun Chakravarthy (1/37 in 4 overs) did not match the English spinners, who were slower through the air and off the pitch. Only Axar Patel held his own.

Bishnoi and Chakravarthy bowled flat and quick on a skiddy surface, which made it easier for both Bethell and Banton to rock back and execute their shots. However, Chakravarthy did redeem himself in the final over when he removed Will Jacks which turned out to be an important moment in the game.

However skipper Shreyas Iyer's tactical move to bring in Arshdeep in the 13th over for his second spell, worked wonders as Banton picked the fielder at deep extra cover to bring India back in the game. But Bishnoi's over dashed all hopes of a win.

Earlier, Tilak Varma's last-over heroics ensured a decent 190 for 7 for India after Iyer opted to bat first.

Tilak (24 n.o. off 11 balls), whose batting approach has been heavily criticised, smashed Jofra Archer (1/40 in 4 overs) for 17 in the 20th over to take India to a respectable total even though it might have slightly below

the par score of 200.

The extra bounce and cross winds on a skiddy surface did make batting difficult as the world saw the first glimpse of a 15-year-old debutant, who broke Sachin Tendulkar's nearly 37-year-old record, at international stage.

However, his stay was restricted to 10 balls in which he collected two sixes and a couple of singles to manage 14 before being stumped by Jos Buttler off off-spinner Will Jacks. Abhishek Sharma (43 off 24 balls), skipper Shreyas Iyer (37 off 22 balls) and Ishan Kishan (49 off 43 balls) all scored some runs but only looked comfortable in patches with England bowlers mixing it up quite nicely.

Kishan, in particular, was exceptionally scratchy, failing to pick the slower deliveries and altered length ones bowled by the spinners. While Archer's sheer pace and the bounce extracted off the surface had Abhishek in all sorts of trouble at the onset, it was seamer Sam Curran's (3/33 in 4 overs) pace-off strategy and assortment of slower variations that made life difficult for Indian batters post power play.

Jacks (1/22 in 3 overs) and left-arm spinner Liam Dawson (1/27 in 3 overs) ended with good figures. Even Adil Rashid (0/21 in 2 overs) wasn't exactly taken to the cleaners as boundaries were hard to come by.

In his first 12 balls, Abhishek played and missed around 10 of them. Archer cranked it up to 90 miles per hour, pitching it on hard length and got it to deviate away. At the other end, even Sooryavanshi struggled to cope with the extra bounce but got a six each—first when Archer tried to cramp him for room and the left-hander played a no-look whip-scoop behind for a six.

The shot against Josh Tongue was a more familiar IPL type hoick over long-on. However, England skipper Harry Brook rightly introduced Jacks and he bowled a wide loopy off-break which Sooryavanshi jumped out and missed by a foot and half to get stumped. Abhishek, after an initial play and miss phase, got his mojo back against bowlers with comparatively lesser pace than Archer.

It was still hitting through the line that got him to 43 as he played the field admirably, targeting the shorter side. He should be cursing his luck when his snap flick off a Curran full-toss went straight to Tom Banton stationed at least 15 metres inside the mid-wicket boundary. Iyer and Kishan added 65 for the third wicket but even their biggest supporters won't claim that they could dominate the England attack during those middle overs.

Iyer, though, was a bit better trying to use his feet but the bigger dimensions of the Old Trafford ground made boundary scoring difficult.

Sooryavanshi became the youngest player to represent India across formats, as well as the youngest debutant from a Test-playing nation in T20I history.

Sooryavanshi, who has been included in India's playing 11 for the ongoing second T20I against England to become India's youngest debutant at 15 years and 99 days.

Opener Abhishek Sharma then took charge, hammering a brisk 43 to give India a flying start in the powerplay before falling to Sam Curran.

After the early breakthroughs, Ishan Kishan anchored the innings with a fluent 49, while captain Shreyas Iyer contributed a quickfire 37 off 22 balls, including a six off Liam Dawson, as the pair stitched together a valuable partnership to keep the scoreboard moving.

However, England pulled things back in the latter half of the innings with regular wickets and tight bowling from Liam Dawson, Will Jacks and Sam Curran, preventing India from fully capitalising on their strong start.

Things got worse for India as Axar Patel's innings ended in an unfortunate run out in the 19th over after Jos Butler aimed for the stumps at the striker's end, but it hit the stumps at the bowler's end, and Patel had to go back.

DC Kathua inaugurates Kathua Cricket League under NMJKA

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 04

Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today inaugurated the Kathua Cricket League, organised by the District Administration Kathua at the Sports Ground, Government Degree College (Boys), Kathua.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said sports provide an effective platform to channelise the energy of youngsters in a positive direction and keep them away from drug abuse, and reiterated the District Administration's commitment to creating more opportunities for youth through sports and other constructive activities.

The Deputy Commissioner expressed satisfaction over the good response to the participation of young cricketers reflects the growing sporting culture in Kathua. He appealed to people to support the participating teams, adding that community participation would motivate youth to pursue healthy and positive pursuits.

The organisers said 24 teams are participating in



the league stage, with matches played in white attire using a red ball. Twelve qualifying teams will advance to the knockout stage, where matches will be played in coloured clothing with a white ball.

Carrying the theme "Youth for Sports, Youth Against Drugs," the tournament reinforces the mes-

sage of sports as a tool for building a healthy, disciplined and drug-free society.

The opening day saw keenly contested matches. Kathua Blasters defeated The Rising Star Nagri, Barwal Athlete Club registered victory over Hiranagar

Cricket Club, while Gurha Munda outplayed Elite XI.

Among those present were Chief Planning Officer Kathua Ranjeet Thakur, District Information Officer Rajinder Dagra, Physical Director GDC Sandeep Singh and AP Dr Gotam Singh, besides officers, officials, players and sports enthusiasts.

DC Samba felicitates winners at grand finale of SCPL U-19 cricket tournament

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 04

The grand finale and prize distribution ceremony of the Samba Cricket Premier League (SCPL) U-19, organised under the 100 Days Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, was held today at Kehli Ground, Samba.

Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan attended as chief guest and distributed prizes to the winning teams and outstanding performers. Bhatia Cricket Academy won the tournament, defeating Katra Sports Academy by seven wickets in the final. The winning team received a cash prize of ₹75,000 and the runners-up ₹50,000.

Manik Langeh of Bhatia Cricket Academy was adjudged Player of the Match for scoring an unbeaten 98 off 36 balls and taking three



wickets.

Among those present were the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Samba, Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Samba, other officers con-

cerned, local residents, sports enthusiasts and members of the participating teams.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner congratulated the winners

and the participating teams, highlighting the role of sports in promoting discipline, fitness, teamwork and a drug-free lifestyle, and encouraged youth to participate in healthy activities.

2nd T20: Jacob Bethell's heroics guide England past India, take 1-0 series lead

MANCHESTER [UK], JULY 4 : A majestic half-century from Jacob Bethell helped England edge past India by 4 wickets in the second T20I on Saturday in Manchester.

Bethell played a commanding innings of 76 off 46 balls laced with 5 fours and sixes each, leading the hosts to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match T20 series after the first match was washed out due to rain.

England's chase of 191 got off to a shaky start as India's ace seamer Arshdeep Singh ripped through the top order before Harry Brook and Tom Banton launched a counterattack.

Arshdeep struck with the very first ball of the innings, removing Phil Salt for a duck, and followed it up by dismissing Jos Buttler, also for a duck, leaving England reeling at 1/2.

Brook responded with a blistering 39 off just 12 balls, taking the attack to the Indian bowlers, while Jacob Bethell played the anchor's role as England rebuilt.

Brook's aggressive knock ended when Axar Patel trapped him after a successful review, bringing an end to a rapid partnership.

Bethell then joined hands with Tom Banton, who made a fluent 39, to revive England's hopes with a brisk stand. The pair kept the required rate within reach with positive stroke-play against India's spin-



ners. India regained control in the middle overs as Arshdeep returned to dismiss Banton, while Varun Chakravarthy removed Will Jacks for 9.

However, following Chakravarthy's over, Bethell slammed Ravi Bishnoi for 29 runs and brought up an excellent fifty to get the game under control for the hosts.

In the following over, Harshit Rana got the better of Sam Curran, bringing Jofra Archer to the crease. In the next over, Bethell and Archer sealed the match for England with 6 balls to spare.

Earlier in the match, fluent innings from Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan and a late flourish from Tilak

Varma powered India to 190/7 in their 20 overs against England in the second T20I in Manchester on Saturday.

A late surge of 23 runs off the final seven balls lifted India to a competitive total, giving them a fighting finish after a mid-innings slowdown.

After winning the toss and opting to bat, Abhishek Sharma and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi opened the innings. India produced an aggressive batting display against disciplined English bowling.

Teenage debutant Sooryavanshi made an entertaining start to his international career, smashing 14 off 10 balls with two sixes before being stumped off Will Jacks.

India set 191 target for England after late flourish in 2nd T20I

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