



Neeru Dhandra strikes women's trap gold at ISSF World Cup in Italy's Lonato

LONATO (ITALY), JULY 11: Asian Championships gold medallist Neeru Dhandra clinched her maiden ISSF World Cup title with a dazzling performance, ending India's wait for an individual shotgun medal on the global stage this year by winning gold in the women's trap event in Lonato on Saturday.

This was the biggest achievement of Neeru's career since winning the Asian Championships gold last year and the ISSF World Cup mixed team bronze earlier this year, and it came on the back of two days of stupendous shooting.

The 26-year-old, who hails from Haryana's Jind district but represents Madhya Pradesh in national competitions and is the reigning national champion, was in a league of her own. Picking up where she left off on Friday, she shot 27 out of 30 in the eight-shooter final to outclass a world-class field.

Her closest challenger, France's Carole Cormenier,



a former world champion, settled for silver with 25, while Italy's Erica Sessa claimed the bronze.

Neeru had carried her sublime form into the final after topping the qualification standings.

She began where she had left off on Friday, when she shot a flawless 75 out of 75 in the opening three rounds. She then missed just two targets in the fourth round and another two in the fifth and final round to finish with an impressive 121 out of 125, qualifying for the fi-

nal as the top-ranked shooter.

The fiercely competitive field saw two shooters finish the qualification with scores of 120, while another five were involved in a shoot-off to determine the remaining placings in the eight-shooter final. Neeru's compatriot Manisha Keer narrowly missed out on a place in the final after shooting 117 out of 125 to finish 10th.

Neeru, who will represent India at the Asian Games in Japan later this year, maintained her remarkable con-

sistency in the final, missing just three targets—the second, 13th and 25th shots—to seal a deserved maiden World Cup gold. History

The third Indian in the fray, Aashima Ahlawat, finished joint 80th in the 106-shooter field.

India's men's trap shooters, meanwhile, endured another disappointing outing, finishing well down the pecking order in their final international competition before the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya in September-October.

Ahvar Rizvi shot 118/125 in qualification to finish joint 40th in a field of 208 shooters, while experienced Kynan Chenai, who is also part of the Asian Games squad, ended joint 71st with a score of 116.

Shapath Bharadwaj had another disappointing day, managing only 113/125, with his lowest score of 21/25 coming in the fifth and final qualification round. Bharadwaj finished joint 106th along with several other shooters.

Sourav Ganguly inducted into ICC Cricket Hall of Fame

NEW DELHI, JULY 11: Former India captain Sourav Ganguly, widely regarded as one of the game's most influential leaders and one of India's finest left-handed batters, has been inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame, honouring his remarkable legacy in world cricket.

Ganguly's 16-year career, which included over 18,000 international runs, was reflected with ICC Hall of Fame induction.

"I am honoured to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. To have my name included among the cricket's greatest players will remain one of my most cherished moments. Representing India and playing along with several greats of the game has been a privilege, and to now be recognised in this way is truly special," Ganguly said as per the ICC website.

"I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr Jay Shah for this huge honour, which I consider the highest recognition a cricketer can receive. This game has given me a lot, and I hope to continue to serve the game in the years to come. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my near and dear ones for their support over the years," he added.

Over a remarkable 16-year international career, Ganguly scored more than 18,000 runs across formats and reshaped Indian cricket with his bold leadership, turning the team into a formidable force overseas and



laying the foundation for one of its most successful eras. IndiaNews Focus

In the summer of 1996, he made his Test debut against England, earning the nickname 'Dada'. He quickly made headlines after scoring a century in his first Test at Lord's, and the 'Prince of Kolkata' then went on to smash a ton in the second Test, becoming the third batter in history to make a hundred in each of his first two innings.

In 2000, the Team India camp got trapped in a match-fixing scandal. Ganguly was then appointed the captain of the side, where he started grooming new talent. Ganguly led India to the finals of the 2000 ICC Knockout Trophy for the first time.

Another Team India milestone came in 2001 when

the Ganguly-led side defeated Australia 2-1 in the Border-Gavaskar

Trophy. The Australian team, captained by Steve Waugh, challenged India to follow on in the series, but VVS Laxman and Rahul Dravid staged one of the greatest comebacks in Indian cricket history.

The former India captain's most memorable moment was definitely when he stripped off his shirt on the Lord's balcony when India famously beat England from the jaws of defeat in the NatWest Trophy finals in 2002. IndiaNews Focus

Ganguly also led India to the World Cup finals in 2003, where they narrowly lost to Australia in the championship game. In 2004, he also oversaw an ODI and Test series in Pakistan.

The Test series triumph was India's first on Pakistani soil. 'Dada' also had a memorable spat with then-coach Greg Chappell in 2005-6, after the 'Prince of Kolkata' was left out of the Team India squad.

He last played a Test against Australia in Nagpur in 2008. He played in the Indian Premier League (IPL) until 2012, when he retired from domestic cricket.

'Dada' played 113 Tests and 311 One-Day Internationals for India. In his international career, the left-handed batsman amassed 18,575 runs across all formats. In the long format, Sourav played 113 matches. He scored 7,212 runs at an average of 42.17.

He smashed 16 centuries and 35 half-centuries in 188 innings, with the best score of 239. He smashed a century on his Test debut against England at Lord's in 1996.

As a captain, he led India in 49 matches. Out of this, India won 21 matches, lost 13 and drew 15 matches. With a win percentage of 42.85, he is one of the most successful captains for India.

Ganguly has also represented India in 311 ODIs, scoring 11,363 runs at an average of 41.02. He has scored 22 centuries and 72 half-centuries in 300 innings, with the best score of 183. He led India to 147 ODI matches, winning 76, losing 66 and five failed to produce results. In ODIs, he had a win percentage of 51.70.

India assures six medals in U-19 Men's category at Asian U-19 & U-23 Boxing Championships

JAKARTA [INDONESIA], JULY 11: India confirmed six medals in the U-19 men's category at the Asian U-19 & U-23 Boxing Championships, following an impressive showing in the quarterfinal bouts held in Jakarta.

Among the winners, Aditya (55kg) delivered a commanding 5:0 victory over Philippines' Baruis Ephraim John. Sikander (60kg) followed it up with a strong 4:1 win against Tajikistan's Sharifkhon Nuraliev. Mausam Suhag (65kg) also progressed to the semifinals, ensuring a medal for India, according to a press release. In the higher weight divisions, Devender Choudhary (75kg) registered a dominant 5:0 win over Indonesia's Muhammad Rayhan Athaillah.

Sagar (85kg) impressed with an RSC victory in the second round against Indonesia's Irnanda Fir-



manda, while Shubham Rajput (90kg) secured an emphatic RSC win in the first round over Indonesia's Nouval Nouval.

India also witnessed some closely contested bouts. Ambekar Meitei Lairenlakp (50kg) lost narrowly by a 3:2 split decision to Japan's Kotaro Nishizaki. Lokesh

(80kg) went down 3:1 against Kazakhstan's Timur Taibekov, while Loven Gulia (+90kg) suffered an RSC defeat in the second round to Kazakhstan's Vladislav Samozhonov. South Asians & Diaspora

With six boxers advancing to the semifinals, India has assured six medals in the U-

19 men's competition, underlining the depth and potential of its young boxing talent on the continental stage.

The Asian U-19 & U-23 Boxing Championships, being held in Jakarta from July 5 to July 16, continue to showcase the rising stars of Asian boxing. (ANI)

5th T20I: Buttler-Brook carnage helps England post 257/3 in 20 overs against India at Southampton

SOUTHAMPTON [UK], JULY 11: England's Jos Buttler and Harry Brook delivered a stunning batting display to post a daunting total of 257/3 in 20 overs against India in the fifth and final T20I of the series, at the The Rose Bowl in Southampton on Saturday.

India, who opted to bowl after winning the toss on a batting-friendly surface, got an early breakthrough when Prasad Krishna dismissed Phil Salt for 6 in the second over. However, that remained the only moment of success for the visitors as England's batters took complete control of the innings.

Skipper Harry Brook, coming at No. 3, attacked from the outset and joined forces with Buttler to rebuild England's innings. The pair negated India's bowling attack with aggressive stroke play, taking the hosts to 62/1 at the end of the Powerplay.

Once the field restrictions eased, Buttler and Brook accelerated further, targeting India's bowlers with a relentless boundary-hitting



display. The duo took on the spin combination of Axar Patel and Suryansh Shedge, finding gaps with ease and clearing the ropes regularly. IndiaSpecific Content

England brought up their 100 in the 10th over, which saw Axar being clubbed for

25 runs in an over by the Buttler-Brook duo. The duo also brought up the 100-run stand in the same over as the Three Lions stood at 111/1 after 10 overs.

England crossed the 140-run mark in the 13th over. Brook unleashed his on-

slaught on Shedge as he smashed the Indian bowler for 24 runs in the 14th over. Buttler then got in the act and attacked pacer Prince Yadav, slamming 21 runs in the 15th over.

Buttler brought up his ton in 51 balls with a six off Axar Patel in the 16th over, which also yielded 20 runs as England stood at 209 in 16 overs. Shivam Dube provided India with back-to-back breakthroughs in the 19th over as he dismissed Buttler and Jacob Bethel on consecutive deliveries. However, it had been too late for the visitors as England reached 247/3 in 19 overs. IndiaSpecific Content

Buttler led the charge with a sensational 131 off 64 balls, smashing 12 fours and eight sixes. Brook provided equally explosive support, remaining unbeaten on 95 off just 35 balls with eight sixes and four boundaries to his name.

England finished their quota of 20 overs with the score of 257/3 as they look set to clinch the five-match series 4-0.

FIFA selling more seats for WC final as quarter-final resale prices crash after US, Mexico exit

NEW YORK, JULY 11: World Cup ticket resale prices dropped for quarter-final matches following the elimination of co-hosts United States and Mexico, and FIFA has nearly 1,200 seats on sale for the final at USD 7,380.

The site TickPick listed the lowest price for the Spain-Belgium game on Friday at Inglewood, California, at USD 1,381, down from USD 3,261 before the US lost to Belgium in the round of 16.

The lowest price for the England-Norway match at Miami Gardens, Florida, on Saturday was USD 2,049, down from USD 3,866 before England defeated Mexico to reach the quarterfinals.

It listed the lowest price for the Argentina-Switzerland game at Kansas City, Missouri, at USD 1,142, down from USD 2,381 before the round of 16.

Standing outside SoFi Stadium on Friday, Jake van Baarsel said he bought tickets two days earlier. The 65-year-old from Riverside, California, said he hadn't previously planned on attending because he knew ticket prices were so high. But when his son called to tell him he obtained seats at a lower price, he decided to pay for two at USD 1,000 each to share the moment with his 13-year-old grandson.

"It's one of those things - it's a memory maker for my grandson and me," he said. "So how much money do you put on a memory? So yeah, it's steep for a game, but we enjoy."

Others who bought tickets well ahead of Friday's quarter-final match paid far more.

Lisandro Pineda, 70, of East Los Angeles, said he

paid about USD 2,200 a month ago. "The price was too high, I think, but it's a resale, remember," he said.

"I didn't want to be left out. I've never been to a World Cup. I didn't go to the one we had before. So I figured, I have the money, I have the time, what the heck, buy the ticket, so here we are."

Kourosh Modarress, 68, of Los Angeles, said his family bought hospitality tickets at USD 7,000 each after they failed to obtain other tickets in one of FIFA's sales rounds. "I think it's highway robbery," he said.

FIFA had nearly 1,200 category two tickets priced at USD 7,380 on sale Friday for the World Cup final on July 19 at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

The governing body's last-minute ticket sales site, which at times had listed the

game as sold out, had 1,178 seats available across five sections of the top deck along the sidelines: 282 in section 344, 299 in section 343, 139 in section 335, 443 in section 334 and 15 in section 333.

FIFA also was selling 68 front category one tickets in the lower deck at prices ranging from USD 19,995 to USD 32,970 and had remaining hospitality tickets in its Trophy Lounge and Trophy Lounge+ sections priced at USD 34,500 and USD 32,500, including food and drinks.

Soccer's governing body did not immediately respond to a request for comment on why the additional tickets had become available.

Resale tickets for the final were available on FIFA's marketplace at prices from USD 7,440.50 to USD 11,499,998.85.

Archery World Cup Stage 4: India lose to dominant Colombia, settle for women's compound team silver

MADRID, JULY 11: The Indian trio of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Prithika Pradeep and Chikitha Taniparthi struggled to bring their A-game forward and were inconsistent at crucial moments as they lost 228-232 to a dominant Colombia in the women's compound team final, settling for the silver medal at the Archery World Cup Stage 4 here on Saturday.

The silver medal opened India's account in the season-ending tournament, with the contingent now looking to add to their tally later in the day.

Teenager Prithika has also advanced to the

women's compound individual semifinal and needs one more win to complete a double.

India are also in contention for two medals in the recurve section, where another teenager, Kirti Sharma who made her World Cup debut last month in Antalya, will also be eyeing a double.

She will partner India No. 1 Dhiraj Bommadevara in the recurve mixed team bronze-medal playoff and also needs one more win to secure another medal, having reaching the women's individual semifinal.

World No. 3 in women's compound team event, In-

dia, who had won gold at the season-opening Archery World Cup Stage 1 in Puebla, Mexico, in April, never really posed any threat to World No. 14 Colombia, who produced a resurgent display to clinch the title with authority. IndiaNews Focus

The 17-year-old Prithika was India's standout performer, drilling six 10s, including two perfect ends.

But the biggest letdown was the dip in form of Indian stalwart Jyothi, who managed just three 10s from her eight arrows as India failed to give any fight.

For Colombia, on the other hand, Alejandra

Usquiano was flawless, reeling off eight successive 10s to prove to be the difference between the two teams.

Even compound great, World No. 7 and former world champion Sara Lopez, had a relatively inconsistent outing, but Usquiano's brilliance ensured Colombia remained in control throughout.

India endured a slow start, posting 55 in the opening end, while Colombia raced ahead with 57, thanks largely to Alejandra's flawless shooting. IndiaNews Focus

The World No. 4 opened with effortless 10s, setting the tone for her team.