



Ton-up Duckett hammers Bumrah-less India as England post massive 387/3

LONDON, JULY 19: Ben Duckett made mincemeat of an inexperienced Indian bowling attack with a fabulous 141 as England posted a mammoth 387 for 3 in the series-deciding third ODI, riding on a 192-run opening stand between the centurion and Jacob Bethell here on Sunday.

Jasprit Bumrah's absence due to an impact injury on his left knee was certainly a blow for India and that proved to be telling for the visitors. WorldNews Coverage

The four-pronged pace attack comprising Prasidh Krishna (2/69 in 10 overs), Arshdeep Singh (0/72 in 10 overs), Prince Yadav (1/79 on 10 overs) and Gurnoor Brar (0/97 in 10 overs), with a cumulative experience of 51 ODIs, lacked both skill and experience against an in-form batting line-up.

Duckett and Bethell (91 off 93 balls) were fantastic in terms of planning and execution. The batting powerplay of first 10 overs yielded 58 runs but the wheels came off between overs 11 to 30 when they literally ran the bowlers ragged.

With head coach Gautam Gambhir using Kuldeep Yadav in only 38 games out of a



total 103 matches (across three formats) since his appointment, the lack of a second spinner save Axar Patel (0/61 in 10 overs) did hurt India.

While Duckett hit 18 boundaries in all apart from a six, Bethell, who looked comparatively more fluent at the onset, hit 11 fours and a six, before being holed out in the deep off Prasidh Krishna's bowling.

Joe Root (74 no off 48 balls) continued his golden run of form with another half-century—his third in three games—to take the total past 350-run mark. Jos Buttler (41 no off 13 balls)

also joined in the fun as Brar got a harsh lesson in international cricket, going for almost 100 runs.

At the onset, it didn't help matters that rookie Prince, bowling up the famous Lord's slope, struggled with his length as Bethell pulled him for a six over deep mid-wicket and then slapped him in the gap between deep mid-wicket and mid-on for a boundary. The rusty Arshdeep Singh didn't hold his line while Prasidh Krishna, despite beating Bethell's bat on a number of occasions, also bowled the odd loose delivery.

However, Bethell did well

to complete his half-century off 51 balls while England reached the team total of 100 by the 16th over. By that time, Indian bowlers have already conceded 15 boundaries and the lines were horribly wrong, allowing the opening pair to nicely settle into a rhythm. In all, they conceded 42 boundaries and six sixes. WorldNews Coverage

It also established the fact that all the other Indian pacers look good when the brilliant Bumrah is at work at one end and that effectiveness vanishes once he is absent. One saw that in the T20Is and now in ODIs too.

FIFA World Cup 2026: Spain name starting XI for WC final against Argentina

NEW YORK [US], JULY 19: Spain have named their starting XI for the FIFA World Cup 2026 final against defending champions Argentina, with captain Rodri set to marshal the midfield as La Roja chase their first world title since 2010.

Unai Simon starts in goal behind a back four comprising Pedro Porro, Aymeric Laporte, Pau Cubarsi and Marc Cucurella.

The midfield features Rodri alongside Fabian Ruiz and Dani Olmo, while teenage sensation Lamine Yamal and captain Mikel Oyarzabal provide the attacking threat.

Spain arrived in the final after a commanding 2-0 victory over France in the semi-finals, where Oyarzabal converted a first-half penalty won by Yamal before Porro sealed the win after the break.

Lamine Yamal played a key role in the win, winning a penalty after dispossessing Lucas Digne, which Mikel Oyarzabal converted in the 22nd minute to give Spain



the lead. Pedro Porro doubled Spain's advantage after the break following a fine move with Dani Olmo, while France struggled to create clear chances.

Yamal had a goal ruled out for offside, and despite late efforts from Kylian Mbappe and Aurelien Tchouameni, Spain's defence held firm to secure their sixth clean sheet in

seven tournament matches.

The European champions have impressed throughout the tournament with their disciplined defensive displays, keeping six clean sheets in seven matches, and now stand one victory away from adding a second FIFA World Cup title to the crown they won in South Africa in 2010.

Standing in their way are

Lionel Messi's Argentina, who are aiming to become back-to-back world champions after defeating England 2-1 in the semi-finals.

Spain starting XI: Unai Simon, Pedro Porro, Aymeric Laporte, Pau Cubarsi, Marc Cucurella, Rodri (captain), Fabian Ruiz, Dani Olmo, Lamine Yamal, Mikel Oyarzabal, Bryan Zaragoza. (ANI)

FIFA World Cup 2026: Messi first skipper to lead national team in three finals

NEW YORK [US], JULY 19: Leading Argentina into the finals of the FIFA World Cup 2026 against Spain, Lionel Messi is set to become the first player ever to captain his country in three World Cup finals, 433 Football reported.

Messi has led Argentina in the finals of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, in Qatar in 2022 and is set to lead the team in the upcoming finals on Sunday (local time) in the US.

In 2014, Messi led a team which had faced several setbacks due to injuries and eventually lost the finals to Germany by 1-0, as per FIFA.com. History

In 2022, Messi lifted the cup for the first time after Argentina defeated France on penalties at Lusail Stadium in Qatar. He claimed a brace in the final, leading to a 3-3 score line.

Argentina, the reigning FIFA World Cup champions, and Spain, winners of UEFA Euro 2024, will clash in New York/New Jersey for football's ultimate prize. Messi has led the team in style with eight goals, just two behind French captain Kylian Mbappe in the race for the Golden Boot, and four assists in the tournament.

Spain, the reigning European champions, are aiming for their first FIFA World Cup crown since 2010, while Lionel Messi's Argentina seek back-to-back titles.

Defending champions Argentina secured a thrilling 2-1 comeback win over England in the semifinal, overturning a first-half deficit with Enzo Fernandez scoring the equaliser before Lautaro Martinez netted the stoppage-time winner to send the de-

fending champions into the title clash against Spain.

Spain, on the other hand, secured a place in the FIFA World Cup final for the first time since their 2010 triumph after defeating France 2-0 with a composed performance.

Lamine Yamal played a key role in the win, winning a penalty after dispossessing Lucas Digne, which Mikel Oyarzabal converted in the 22nd minute to give Spain the lead. Pedro Porro doubled Spain's advantage after the break following a fine move with Dani Olmo, while France struggled to create clear chances.

Yamal had a goal ruled out for offside, and despite late efforts from Kylian Mbappe and Aurelien Tchouameni, Spain's defence held firm to secure their sixth clean sheet in seven tournament matches. (ANI)

MMA fighter Sangram Singh knocks Pakistan's Ali out in 80 seconds to win STRIKE Asia Championship title

KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 19: Indian mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter Sangram Singh scripted history as he defeated Pakistan's Mohammed Abid Ali via a stunning knockout in just one minute and 20 seconds to clinch the prestigious STRIKE Asia Championship title here on Sunday.

The highly anticipated India-Pakistan showdown lived up to its billing, but only briefly, as Sangram dominated the contest from the opening bell. Displaying exceptional power, precision, and composure, Sangram finished the fight in



emphatic fashion.

With this victory, Sangram extended his unbeaten professional MMA

record and added another historic milestone to his illustrious sporting career.

The triumph further

strengthens his remarkable transition from championship wrestling to mixed martial arts and reinforces his position as one of India's leading combat sports athletes. GeographicReference

Sangram dedicated the title to the people of India and said that every time he competes, he carries the dreams and pride of the nation with him.

The victory marks another memorable chapter in Sangram's career, following previous international MMA wins over Pakistan's Ali Raza Nasir, Tunisia's Hakim Trabelsi, and France's Florian Coudier.

PV Sindhu stuns Akane Yamaguchi to win maiden Japan Open badminton title

TOKYO, JULY 19: Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu produced a vintage display of attacking badminton to outclass local favourite Akane Yamaguchi in straight games, clinching her maiden Super 750 title at the Japan Open here on Sunday.

The 31-year-old became the first Indian to win the Japan Open, combining relentless attack with tactical discipline and composure in the decisive moments to register a 21-17, 21-17 victory over the three-time world champion and end a title drought of almost two years. WorldNews Coverage

"I'm very happy, I'm just out of words because I was 19 months since I had won," said Sindhu after the match.

"I think this one was very important to me because playing in the finals, coming to the finals is one thing but I think to win and stand on the podium getting that gold is a different thing.

"I'm happy that I'm on the positive side and I think this gives me a lot of confidence. I think I'm very thankful to my coach, my parents, my support staff and of course my husband." Sindhu's previous title came at the Syed Modi International in 2024. The triumph is her biggest title since winning the World Championships in 2019. She had won the Singapore Super 500 in 2022.

Yamaguchi was appearing in her sixth Japan Open final, while Sindhu had not beaten the Japanese in a completed match in four years. Their meeting at the Malaysia Open earlier this year ended with Yamaguchi retiring after the opening game.

Sindhu's last full-match victory over her came at the Thailand Open in 2022.

On Sunday, however, the



Indian dictated terms from the outset. She controlled the forecourt superbly, attacked with purpose rather than sheer power and repeatedly found answers whenever Yamaguchi threatened a comeback. WorldNews Coverage

Along with her powerful smashes, Sindhu's precise net play proved decisive. She repeatedly worked the shuttle tight to the net, forcing Yamaguchi to lift and creating opportunities to unleash her trademark cross-court and body smashes.

Sindhu raced to a 3-0 lead before a few unforced errors, coupled with some brilliant shot-making from Yamaguchi, allowed the Japanese to draw level at 3-3.

Both players traded errors in the opening exchanges before Yamaguchi's service error made it 5-5. Sindhu then began to seize control with superb net play, patiently constructing rallies before finishing them with a cross-court winner to move 8-6 ahead.

Another powerful smash extended her lead to 9-6, but two successive errors

handed Yamaguchi a route back into the contest. A body smash from the Japanese made it 9-9 before Sindhu misjudged a shuttle to trail by two points at the mid-game interval.

The momentum swung again after the break as Sindhu won a gruelling 36-shot rally to restore parity at 11-11. A thunderous cross-court smash put her ahead at 13-12 before Yamaguchi sent one long and the Indian won a net exchange, followed by a deep push to open up a 16-12 advantage.

Yamaguchi responded with a clever push to Sindhu's forehand and a return that clipped the back line, but Sindhu wrong-footed her rival with a disguised follow-up shot to stay ahead.

At 17-15, the pair produced a breathtaking 38-shot rally, with Yamaguchi's remarkable defence keeping her alive. Sindhu then allowed the Japanese to draw level.

The Indian, however, came up with her best badminton when it mattered most. A fierce cross-court smash and another Yamaguchi error gave her a 19-

17 lead. The Japanese then found the net to hand Sindhu three game points. She wrapped up the opening game with a precise push into Yamaguchi's backhand corner. WorldNews Coverage

Sindhu carried the momentum into the second game, dominating the forecourt and taking the shuttle early to keep Yamaguchi under constant pressure.

Another punishing 44-shot rally ended with a weary Yamaguchi hitting wide as Sindhu reeled off six straight points to surge to an 8-3 lead.

Although Sindhu briefly lost her rhythm with two net errors and another shot drifting long, allowing Yamaguchi to reduce the deficit to 8-7, the Indian quickly regained control to take an 11-7 lead at the interval.

Yamaguchi continued to spray her returns long and squandered another video challenge as Sindhu stretched the lead to 14-7. The Japanese mounted one last charge with a fine net shot, a deep flat push and a couple of errors from Sindhu to narrow the gap to 14-12, but a timely net error halted the comeback.

Two booming smashes carried Sindhu to 17-14, and another Yamaguchi error left the Indian three points away from the title.

A touch of nerves crept in as Sindhu twice found the net, allowing Yamaguchi to close to 19-17.

But the Japanese then sent another return wide.

Sindhu earned three championship points after Yamaguchi faltered at the net and sealed the title when the home favourite's return landed long, with the line call upheld after a video review. She celebrated the moment embracing her coach.

Rohit Sharma silences critics with historic Lord's ton, becomes 1st Indian to score ODI century at iconic venue

LONDON [UK], JULY 19 (ANI): Amid speculation of retirement from ODI cricket, India's batting heavyweight Rohit Sharma etched his name in the record books as he became the first Indian to score an ODI century at Lord's.

One of the most elegant white ball strikers, Sharma achieved this feat during India's third ODI against England on Sunday. Rohit responded in the best possible fashion, producing a memorable innings on one of cricket's grandest stages.

At 39 years and 80 days, Sharma became the oldest batter to score

an ODI century at Lord's and the oldest Indian to register an international century at the iconic venue across all formats. He surpassed legendary Sachin Tendulkar. Sharma now holds the record for the most ODI centuries by a visiting batter in a single country, with eight hundreds in England. His tally is matched only by England's Joe Root (10) and Marcus Trescothick (8) for the most ODI centuries scored in England overall. The innings gained extra significance as India faced a challenging chase after England posted a massive 387/3 in their first in-

ning. GeographicReference

Earlier, Ben Duckett produced a sensational 141 and combined with Jacob Bethell, who scored 91, to forge a record 192-run opening stand as England's batters dominated an inexperienced Indian pace attack in the absence of injured spearhead Jasprit Bumrah.

Facing a daunting chase and intense scrutiny, Rohit Sharma responded emphatically with a historic century that kept India's hopes alive and etched his name into Lord's history as the first Indian batter to score an ODI hundred at the iconic venue. (ANI)