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Chelsea drop first points at West Ham

Lacazette, Aubameyang help Arsenal edge past Everton



LONDON: West Ham United's Ukrainian striker Andriy Yarmolenko clears the ball during the English Premier League football match between West Ham United and Chelsea at The London Stadium, in east London yesterday. —AFP

LONDON: Chelsea lost their 100 percent Premier League record when London rivals West Ham United held them to a 0-0 draw yesterday. Needing a two-goal win to depose Liverpool at the top of the table, Chelsea struggled to make clear chances despite having the majority of possession and stayed third behind the Merseysiders and champions Manchester City.

The home side could have punished them but Michail Antonio, who was deputising for the injured Marko Arnautovic, missed two first-half chances and Andriy Yarmolenko headed wastefully wide.

West Ham, with only one win so far from their six matches, remain 17th, one place above the relegation zone. Despite having barely 30 percent of possession in the first half, West Ham finally came alive after 30 minutes with two good chances for Antonio.

Sent through by record signing Felipe Anderson he shot too high but then forced goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga into a good save after being set up by Yarmolenko. For all their dominance, Chelsea made barely one real opportunity before the interval when N'Golo Kante arrived to head wide from Willian's smart volleyed cross.

In the second half it was two of Chelsea's substitutes who went closest. Alvaro Morata's first attempt hit goalkeeper Lukasz Fabianski in the face and later Ross Barkley's curler was also kept out by the home goalkeeper.

Chelsea's third substitute was experienced defender Gary Cahill, getting a first opportunity under new manager Maurizio Sarri when replacing the injured Antonio Rudiger. The best chance of the game, how-

ever, fell West Ham's way when Yarmolenko was alone at the far post to meet a perfect cross from Robert Snodgrass, but put his header wide.

After losing their first four games but winning at Everton last weekend, West Ham are showing signs of improvement. "Signing nine players and with a new manager it was always going to be difficult," Antonio told Sky Sports. "Now we're starting to gel." Chelsea have another chance to knock Liverpool off the top when they play them at Stamford Bridge on Saturday-three days after the clubs meet in the League Cup at Anfield.

Meanwhile, Arsenal broke down a determined Everton defence to win 2-0 on Sunday, with Alexandre Lacazette and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scoring two second-half goals in two minutes to give

the Gunners their fourth straight Premier League win.

Everton had created most of the early chances as they looked for their first victory at Arsenal since January 1996, but they were unable to find their way past goalkeeper Petr Cech. French striker Lacazette broke the deadlock just short of the hour mark for the Gunners, running in from the left before elegantly curling the ball into the far corner just beyond the reach of outstretched England keeper Jordan Pickford.

Gabon international Aubameyang doubled the lead two minutes later from what appeared to be an offside position, sending Pickford the wrong way from close range. The win-and Arsenal's first clean sheet of the season-pushes the Gunners up to sixth in the table, while the Toffees stay in 12th place. — Reuters

Ton-ups Rohit, Dhawan crush Pakistan in Asia Cup

DUBAI: Openers Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan hit punishing centuries to steer an imperious India to a nine wicket win over a listless Pakistan in the Asia Cup match in Dubai yesterday. Sharma notched 119-ball 111 not out for his 19th one-day hundred while Dhawan made a 100-ball 114 for his eighth century as the pair put on 210 for the opening stand-second best in all India-Pakistan one-day internationals.

That super effort from the openers saw India overhaul the target with 10.3 overs to spare. The Super four win is the second for India over arch-rivals following their easy

eighth wicket win in the first round. The win is India's highest against Pakistan in terms of wickets, improving on the eight wicket win over Pakistan in Melbourne in 1985.

Pakistan were steered to 237-7 by Shoaib Malik who made 90-ball 78 after winning the toss and batting but it proved too little for the strong Indian batting line. Pakistan could have got Sharma out in the sixth over but Imam-ul-Haq dropped an easy catch off a luckless Shaheen Shah, giving the colourful Indian power to smash seven boundaries and four sixes. Sharma, who scored back to back fifties in the last two games, also became the ninth Indian batsman to complete 7,000 one-day runs in his 187th match when he reached 94, soon after he was dropped on 81 by Fakhar Zaman off Shadab Khan.

Dhawan matches his skipper shot for shot, firing 100-ball 114 with 16 boundaries and two sixes as Pakistani bowlers had no clue to the rasping and flowing strokes of the Indian openers. Pakistan's pace spearhead Mohammad Amir, brought back in one of two changes after dropped for the Afghanistan match, went wicketless for a fifth match in a

row, leaving the much vaunted Pakistan bowling biteless. Even when Dhawan got out in the 34th over with 38 needed it was through a run out. The best opening stand in Indo-Pak one-day internationals was 224 Mohammad Hafeez and Nasir Jamshed at Dhaka in 2012. Earlier, Malik scored a 90-ball 78 with four boundaries and two sixes, but India kept a tight check on Pakistan's progress.

Pakistan lost Imam (ten), Zaman (31) and Babar Azam (run out for nine) in an unimpressive start to their innings before Malik and skipper Sarfraz Ahmed added 107 for the fourth wicket.

Sarfraz scored a slow 66-ball 44 with only two boundaries before he became one of two Kuldeep Yadav's wicket who finished with 2-41. Pakistan's final over score depended on Malik who crucially fell in the 44th over, caught behind off a leg-side edge off Jasprit Bumrah.

Asif Ali smashed two sixes in his 21-ball 30 before he was bowled by leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal who took 2-38 in his nine overs. Bumrah finished with 2-29 in his ten overs. —AFP



DUBAI: Indian batsman Shikhar Dhawan celebrates after scoring a century (100 runs) during the one day international (ODI) Asia Cup cricket match between Pakistan and India at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium in Dubai yesterday. — AFP