

Sports

Anderson sparks collapse before openers pile on agony for India

England's best first day in a Test since the 2015 Ashes clash

LEEDS: England great James Anderson ripped through the top order as India collapsed to 78 all out in the third Test at Headingley on Wednesday before openers Rory Burns and Haseeb Hameed capped a near-perfect first day for Joe Root's men with an unbroken stand of 120.

Anderson took 3-6 in eight overs—a haul that included the prize dismissal of India captain Virat Kohli, who won the toss. Already the most successful fast bowler in Test history, Anderson now has 629 wickets at this level.

He was well supported by Sam Curran and Craig Overton, who both took two wickets in two balls. Overton finished with 3-14 in 10.4 overs after being recalled in place of injured fast bowler Mark Wood. Nevertheless, there remained the worry for England, beset by top-order woes during a run of seven Tests without a win, of a similar collapse.

But Burns and Hameed — England's 22nd Test-opening pair since Andrew Strauss retired nine years ago—saw them to a first-innings lead of 42 at stumps. Their stand was only England's second century opening partnership in a Test in five years.

'Great day'

Burns was 52 not out and Hameed, promoted to open after Dom Sibley was dropped, 60 not out at the close. "It's been a great day for us and topped off by being none down overnight," Overton told Sky Sports. Even dangerman Rishabh Pant, who has often revived an India innings, was unable to turn thing around with the wicketkeeper out for two. "They (England) bowled in good areas," Pant told reporters. "We could have applied (ourselves) much better but you can learn from it and move on."

This was England's best first day in a Test

since the 2015 Ashes clash at Trent Bridge where they dismissed Australia for 60, with Stuart Broad taking 8-15, before reaching stumps on 274-4 — with Root unbeaten on 124.

India, 56-4 at lunch on Wednesday, lost their last six wickets for 22 runs, with Rohit Sharma (19) and Ajinkya Rahane (18) the only batsmen to make double-figure scores. An unchanged India came into this match 1-0 up in the five-Test series following a superb 151-run win at Lord's last week.

England, by contrast, recalled Overton after Wood joined fellow quicks Broad, Jofra Archer and Olly Stone on the sidelines. Kohli won the toss and despite the overcast conditions that promised to aid Anderson, decided to bat.

But India, having seen Rahul and Rohit share a century opening stand at Lord's, were 1-1 off the fifth ball of the day. Rahul, fresh from his 129 at the 'home of cricket', fell for a duck when he edged a booming drive off Anderson to give wicketkeeper Jos Buttler the first of five catches in the innings.

The often gritty Chesteshwar Pujara lasted just nine balls for one, undone by a superb Anderson delivery that swung and seamed. Anderson and Kohli had exchanged angry words at Lord's after the England tailender had been subjected to a bouncer barrage from Jasprit Bumrah.

But there was little time for any more 'sledding' as Kohli, without a Test hundred in two years and averaging just 23 since January 2020, fell for seven when caught behind driving at Anderson. Rohit who made a fine 83 at Lord's, fell when he mishooked a looping bouncer from Overton to Ollie Robinson at mid-on.

Next ball India were 67-7 when Mohammed Shami, who made a Test-best 56 at Lord's, was out for a duck when he edged to Burns in the



LEEDS: England's captain Joe Root plays a shot on the second day of the third cricket Test match between England and India at Headingley cricket ground in Leeds, northern England, yesterday. —AFP

slips. Left-arm swing bowler Curran then had Ravindra Jadeja and Bumrah lbw with successive deliveries.

Hameed had managed just nine runs in total at Lord's—his first Test in five years following injuries and a career-threatening loss of form that saw him move from his native Lancashire to Notting-

hamshire. But, cutting strongly, he completed a 110-ball fifty—his third in Tests, with a 10th four although the edge off Bumrah was dropped by a diving Rohit at second slip. Burns, who had pulled Mohammed Siraj for six, followed up with a 123-ball fifty to the delight of a raucous and sun-drenched crowd. —AFP

Root leads tributes to brilliant former captain Ted Dexter

LEEDS: Joe Root led the tributes to Ted Dexter after it was announced yesterday that the former England captain had died aged 86. Dexter captained his country in 30 of his 62 Tests, with the attacking batsman scoring nine Test hundreds at an average of under 48.

The former Sussex skipper became England's chairman of selectors after his playing days were over as well as serving as president of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the owners of London ground Lord's — 'the home of cricket'.

"It's a really sad day, ex-captain and selector, played a huge amount for England, a brilliant servant to the game," said current England skipper Root, leading the team in the ongoing third Test against India at Headingley.

"It's terribly sad to hear and hopefully we can put on a per-

formance in his memory." Dexter, a stylish batsman, was an admirer of Root's elegance at the crease, with the Yorkshireman adding: "I never had the pleasure of spending much time with him, but he did send me some emails out of the blue when I wasn't playing so well telling me how to get back to where I was."

Great stylist'

Former England captain Mike Atherton told Sky Sports Dexter's style had made an indelible impression upon him. "People won't remember him for numbers, they will remember the way he played the game," said Atherton. "He was a great stylist who played with great flair and adventure."

"It's a day to celebrate a full and varied life, 86 — he squeezed every last drop out of life. I was very fond of him. He gave me my first cap and made me captain—and then resigned during my first game! "He'd turn up to selection meetings on his bike in his leathers, with his suit underneath with the averages in a briefcase." The England and Wales Cricket Board said Dexter "will be remembered both for his dashing and attractive strokeplay and his wide interests outside the game."

International Cricket Council (ICC) acting chief executive Geoff Allardice said Dexter was "one of the most accomplished batsmen of his era", adding he had "helped develop the players'



Ted Dexter

rankings that are so popular today".

"Ted was honoured to be one of this year's special inductees to the ICC Hall of Fame and it is really sad to hear the news of his passing." England's players and the match umpires at Headingley wore black armbands yesterday in memory of Dexter. —AGP