

RUGBY

# PERFECT CRUSADERS MARCH ON, JAGUARES BEAT REDS

**SYDNEY:** New Zealand's Canterbury Crusaders won their fifth-straight game to be one of only three unbeaten teams in this season's Super Rugby as Argentina's Jaguares won again this weekend. The seven-time champion Crusaders whipped the hapless Western Force of Australia 45-17 to stake their claim for this year's southern hemisphere provincial crown.

Fellow Kiwis Waikato Chiefs and South Africa's Western Stormers are also yet to lose with the Stormers denying Japan's Sunwolves 44-31 in Singapore while the Chiefs had a bye.

Across in Buenos Aires the Jaguares won for the fourth time this season, downing Australia's Queensland Reds 22-8 to tie

just one point off the lead held by the Golden Lions in the Africa 2 conference. The Lions overpowered the endangered Southern Kings 42-19 in an all-South African derby in Port Elizabeth, while the Coastal Sharks won a high-scoring derby 38-30 over the Central Cheetahs in Bloemfontein. There was little joy for the beleaguered Australian hopes with the ACT Brumbies succumbing to an 18-13 loss at home to New Zealand's Otago Highlanders, while the NSW Waratahs won a thrilling derby with a last-minute try 32-25 over the Rebels in Melbourne.

In the remaining game, the Blues downed South Africa's Northern Bulls 38-14 in Auckland, while the defending cham-

pions Wellington Hurricanes had a bye. The Crusaders posted seven tries to two and kept the Force scoreless in the second half to make it five wins from five this season. It was a lopsided defeat the Force could have done without amid speculation the Perth club faces the axe as governing body SANZAAR look to revamp the dysfunctional competition.

**SIDE-STEPPING HIGHLIGHT**

The Stormers survived a n audacious challenge from the struggling Sunwolves to maintain their unbeaten start, winning a 10-try thriller at Singapore's national stadium. Trailing for most of what was a high-paced, free-flowing match after being

caught out by the Sunwolves' innovative attack, the South Africans needed all their extra big-match experience to wear down the tournament newcomers, who faded badly in the last quarter of the match. "The Sunwolves are a smart side and they're very well coached," Stormers coach Robbie Fleck said.

"We knew it was going to be tough but they still surprised us with some of the things they did, especially when they kicked in behind us." The Jaguares fortunes continue to improve this season with a side-stepping try by winger Ramiro Moyano the highlight of a bruising battle with the Reds. Democratic Republic of Congo-born Madosh Tambwe scored his

first Super Rugby tries as the Lions pounded the Southern Kings. Tambwe took just four minutes to score, intercepting a pass before collecting a pass on the tryline to dot down for his second try. Teenager Curwin Bosch proved an outstanding back-up for injured skipper Patrick Lambie, kicking 18 points in the Sharks win over the Cheetahs. The 19-year-old fly-half slotted four penalties and three conversions from eight attempts and was voted man of the match as the Sharks made it four straight wins since losing the opening game of the season. Centre David Horwitz scored a try in the final minute to cap a second-half fightback to give the Waratahs a thrilling win over the Rebels.—AFP

# LATHAM SHINES IN NZ ZEALAND GLOOM

**HAMILTON:** A rejuvenated Tom Latham ensured a positive start to New Zealand's reply after Quinton de Kock bolstered South Africa with a defiant 90 on another wet day in the third Test in Hamilton. When bad light ended play four overs early yesterday, New Zealand were 67 without loss in reply to South Africa's 314.

Latham, who managed 24 in total in three previous innings in the series, was unbeaten on 42 after coming out on the right side of two reviews, with Jeet Raval on 25. With New Zealand needing to win to square the series, it proved a successful day for Latham who had a standout performance in the field highlighted by an instinctive catch at short leg to remove Faf du Plessis. But de Kock proved a much tougher obstacle on a frustrating day for the players when only 26 balls were possible between lunch and tea after rain also cost nearly three hours of play the previous day. Just as his 91 in the first innings in Wellington set up South Africa up for an eight-wicket victory, de Kock again tormented New Zealand with his trouble-free approach.

**SMART FIELDING**

When he went to the middle with the fall of Temba Bavuma's wicket, South Africa were 148 for five and he held the innings

together while the bottom half of the batting order added a further 166.

De Kock's 90 came off only 118 balls, highlighting why captain Faf du Plessis was determined to have him play despite the wicketkeeper-batsman suffering ligament damage to his right index finger. He hit 11 fours and two huge sixes, one off New Zealand's best performed bowler Matt Henry and one off Jeetan Patel, as he dominated the off-spinner who had claimed his wicket cheaply in the drawn first Test. But 10 runs short of his century he played across the line to Neil Wagner and was out lbw. South Africa resumed the day at 123 for four and after Henry removed Bavuma for 29, du Plessis progressed to 53 before a smart piece of fielding by Latham at short leg. On the third ball of Mitch Santner's opening over, Latham anticipated du Plessis was going to sweep and before the shot was played he was moving to his right where he flung out an arm to take the close-range catch. Latham took another classy catch, just above ground level to his right at second slip to remove Vernon Philander for 11 off Henry. Henry equalled his career best figures with four for 93, while Neil Wagner, who took three for an expensive 104, ended the South Africa innings with the wicket of the hard-hitting Kagiso Rabada who scored 34 off 31 deliveries. — AFP

**SCOREBOARD**

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day in the third and final Test between New Zealand and South Africa yesterday in Hamilton, New Zealand.

<b>South Africa 1st innings (Overnight: 123-4)</b>		du Plessis, 7-219 V. Philander, 8-249 K. Maharaj, 9-295 Q. de Kock, 10-314 K. Rabada	
D. Elgar b de Grandhomme	5	Bowling: M. Henry 24-2-93-4 (w-2), C. de Grandhomme 24-4-62-2, N. Wagner 25.2-2-104-3 (w-1), J. Patel 7-0-30-0, M. Santner 9-3-24-1.	
T. de Bruyn c Latham b Henry	0	<b>New Zealand 1st innings</b>	
H. Amla b de Grandhomme	50	T. Latham not out 42	
J. Duminy c Patel b Henry	20	J. Raval not out 25	
F. du Plessis c Latham b Santner	53	Extras 0	
T. Bavuma c Raval b Henry	29	Total (for no loss, 25.3 overs) 67	
Q. de Kock lbw b Wagner	90	Fall of wickets:	
V. Philander c Latham b Henry	11	To bat: K. Williamson, N. Broom, H. Nicholls, B. Watling, M. Santner, C. de Grandhomme, J. Patel, M. Henry, N. Wagner.	
K. Maharaj c Watling b Wagner	9	Bowling: V. Philander 8-2-15-0, M. Morkel 7-2-13-0, K. Rabada 5-1-25-0, K. Maharaj 5.3-0-14-0.	
K. Rabada c Watling b Wagner	34		
M. Morkel not out	9		
Extras (lb-1 w-3)	4		
Total (all out, 89.2 overs)	314		
Fall of wickets: 1-5 T. de Bruyn, 2-5 D. Elgar, 3-64 J. Duminy, 4-97 H. Amla, 5-148 T. Bavuma, 6-190 F.			



**HAMILTON:** Tom Latham of New Zealand (R) hits a shot on day two of the third Test cricket match between New Zealand and South Africa at Seddon Park in Hamilton yesterday. — AFP

# LEE MI-RIM GRABS KIA CLASSIC LEAD

**LOS ANGELES:** Lee Mi-Rim shrugged off an opening bogey to card six birdies in a five-under 67 on Saturday and seize a one-shot lead after three rounds of the LPGA Kia Classic in Carlsbad, California. With a 13-under total of 203, Lee was one in front of fellow South Korean Hur Mi-Jung, whose seven birdies in a six-under 66 included three in a row to cap her round.

It was a further two strokes back to Korea's Chun In-Gee, who signed for a 67, and American Cristie Kerr, the overnight leader who bogeyed the last for a one-under 71 that left her tied for third on 206.

Lee, who captured both of her LPGA tour titles in her rookie season in 2014, finds herself in a familiar position. Two years ago she also held the 54-hole lead, three strokes in front of Kerr—who went on to win the tournament.

After her bogey at the first, Lee got

going with three birdies in a row from the third through fifth holes, and she added birdies at the ninth, 10th and 16th to take the lead as Kerr endured a roller-coaster of a day. The US veteran had five birdies, but closed the round with the last of her four bogeys.

World number three Chun, who shared the first-round lead before spiraling to a 73 on Friday, clawed her way back up the leaderboard with six birdies in her five-under effort.

"Stay patient," she said of her mind-set, and it paid off with a "really good back nine" for the player whose only two LPGA victories have come in major championships. Defending champion and world number one Lydia Ko was absent for the weekend action, having missed the cut for just the second time in her LPGA career on Friday. —AFP



**DHARAMSALA:** Australia's wicketkeeper Matthew Wade (C) successfully takes a catch to dismiss India's Karun Nair (R) off the bowling of Nathan Lyon during the second day of play of the fourth and last Test cricket match between India and Australia at The Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium in Dharamsala yesterday. — AFP

**CRICKET**

# LYON ROARS FOR AUSTRALIA IN FOURTH INDIA TEST WITH 4 WKTS

**DHARAMSALA:** Off-spinner Nathan Lyon took four key wickets to fashion a late comeback for Australia on an engrossing second day in the decisive fourth Test against India yesterday.

The 29-year-old made the most of a lively track at Dharamsala, which is hosting its first Test, to return a rich haul of 4-67 in the final session of play.

Fast bowlers Josh Hazlewood (1-40) and Pat Cummins (1-59) also bowled their hearts out during frugal spells to restrict the hosts to 248-6 at stumps. India trail by 52 runs with four wickets in hand after Australia made 300 in their first knock, largely thanks to a fine 111 from captain Steve Smith.

At stumps Wriddhiman Saha was batting on 10 with Ravindra Jadeja on 16. With the series in the balance at 1-1, the game's two top-ranked sides have been locked in a battle of attrition, with neither willing to give an inch.

"I reckon it is an unbelievable feeling to be pretty evenly poised after day two," Lyon said after the day's play.

"I know we probably left a few runs out there, but to have India 240-6 odd after a pretty good day in the field, I am quite happy to be honest.

"Coming over here, everyone wrote us off and to be in this position in the last Test at 1-1 and the pressure slightly on India is fantastic."

The Indian batsmen were guilty of squandering good starts in a match they must win to regain the Border-Gavaskar trophy.

But Lokesh Rahul (60) and Cheteshwar Pujara (57) batted patiently to put on 87 for the second wicket, the best partnership so far for the hosts. "It's by far the best wicket we have played on, there's something in it for the spinners and the fast bowlers as well. The ball kept swinging the whole day," said Rahul.

"If you spend some time in the middle it's really good to bat on. All of us got starts but we couldn't convert. "But we are happy at the end of the day with 250-odd runs for six wickets. It wasn't really the worst day for us."

**AUSTRALIA COMEBACK**

Ajinkya Rahane, standing in for injured skipper Virat Kohli, also looked set for a big score but ended up gifting a catch to Smith off Lyon for 46 off 104 balls. Ravichandran Ashwin (30) was adjudged lbw off Lyon. The all-rounder opted for a review but the ball tracker showed the stumps would have been hit.

Lyon, who had conceded 163 runs while taking just one wicket in the previous drawn Test at Ranchi, remained wicketless in the first two sessions. But the bowler, whose experience as a curator gave him a sharp understanding of pitches, brought Australia back into the game in the final session through some classic old-fashioned spin. Lyon's first victim was Pujara, who was coming into the match on the back of an epic innings of 202 at Ranchi.

Pujara tried to defend but the ball ripped back in to hit the glove and then lob up to short leg, where Peter Handscomb pounced an easy catch. Pujara's 57 took his run tally past 400 in the series, behind only Smith who has 482 runs

**SCOREBOARD**

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day in the fourth and final Test between India and Australia yesterday in Dharamsala, India.

<b>Australia 1st innings 300</b> (S. Smith 111, M. Wade 57, D. Warner 56; K. Yadav 4-68)		W. Saha not out 10	
<b>India 1st innings (Overnight: 0-0)</b>		R. Jadeja not out 16	
L. Rahul c Warner b Cummins	60	Extras (b-4 lb-9) 13	
M. Vijay c Wade b Hazlewood	11	Total (for 6 wickets, 91 overs) 248	
C. Pujara c Handscomb b Lyon	57	Fall of wickets: 1-21 M. Vijay, 2-108 L. Rahul, 3-157 C. Pujara, 4-167 K. Nair, 5-216 A. Rahane, 6-221 R. Ashwin	
A. Rahane c Smith b Lyon	46	To bat: B. Kumar, K. Yadav, U. Yadav	
K. Nair c Wade b Lyon	5	Bowling: J. Hazlewood 18-6-40-1; P. Cummins 21-5-59-1; N. Lyon 28-5-67-4; S. O'Keefe 24-4-69-0.	
R. Ashwin lbw b Lyon	30		

from seven innings. The Indians would have been in further trouble but for Matthew Renshaw who dropped two catches, much to the frustration of the toiling bowlers.

But the Aussies have the chance to run through India's tail with the second new ball on Monday morning and grab the crucial first-

innings advantage. Day two also saw words being exchanged with long stares on a couple of occasions. But mostly the players remained within the bounds of good behaviour in what has otherwise been a fractious series. Australia, who triumphed at home against India in 2014-15, need just a draw to retain the trophy. — AFP

**GOLF**

# STROUD GRABS LEAD AT PUERTO RICO OPEN

**MIAMI:** Chris Stroud capped his five-under 67 with a birdie to seize a one-shot lead after three rounds of the US PGA Tour's Puerto Rico Open on Saturday.

Stroud broke out of a three-way tie atop the leaderboard, finishing 54 holes at Coco Beach Golf and Country Club with a 15-under par total of 201. He was one shot in front of fellow Americans D.A. Points and Bill Lunde, who had shared the second-round lead with Bryson DeChambeau and both carded 69s. DeChambeau fired a 70 to join a group of six players sharing fourth on 203 that also included England's Andrew Johnston, South Korean Kim Whee, Puerto Rican Rafael Campos, New Zealander Tim Wilkinson and American Jonathan Randolph. Stroud, who started the third round one shot off the lead, had five birdies without a bogey to put himself in position to challenge for a first US PGA Tour title yesterday. His previous best finish was a playoff loss at the Travelers Championship in 2013. "I feel like I'm way overdue," Stroud said. "I'm playing very, very well. I'm making some nice putts." He said his approach would be simple. "Nothing fancy—just go out there and hit a lot of fairways, a lot of greens. There's a lot of guys behind me. I'm just going to keep looking forward."

Points had four birdies and a bogey in his round, but couldn't find a birdie after the 12th.

Lunde, seeking a second US PGA victory almost seven years after capturing his first, had joined the second round leaders with three pars to end his weather-disrupted 68 on Saturday morning. He followed with a three-

under effort that included five birdies and two bogeys. Johnston stormed up the leaderboard with a bogey-free six-under par 66. His six birdies included two to cap his round.

Whee carded a 67 and Randolph a 68. Wilkinson followed up a second-round 63 with a 69 and Campos, who had seized sole possession of the lead with five birdies on the front nine, settled for a 69. The tournament offers a chance for lesser lights on the PGA Tour to contend while top-ranked talent plays at Austin, Texas, in the World Golf Championships Match-Play tournament. — AFP



**RIO GRANDE:** Chris Stroud plays his tee shot on the second hole during the final round of the Puerto Rico Open at Coco Beach yesterday in Rio Grande, Puerto Rico. — AFP