

Sports

IPL's foreign stars laud the Indian young guns

De Villiers hits fifty as Bangalore trump Hyderabad

DUBAI: Overseas stars including Australia's white-ball captain Aaron Finch praised young Indian talent in the IPL after batsman Devduti Padikkal smashed a half-century for Royal Challengers Bangalore. The 20-year-old left-handed opener proved his worth for Virat Kohli's team with a 42-ball 56 that set up an opening Indian Premier League win for last year's wooden spooners in Dubai on Monday.

Bangalore trumped Sunrisers Hyderabad, led by David Warner, and Padikkal's confidence and flair did not go unnoticed by his opening partner Finch. "Dev is a brilliant young player," Finch told reporters in a virtual press conference. "I think he

has shown over the last couple of years in Under-19 cricket, domestic cricket, how talented he is and how destructive he can be at the top of the order, so I loved opening with him. "He is such an exciting young player. My advice is just play your natural game, if you are feeling it against a particular bowler keep going."

South African veteran AB de Villiers also contributed with a 30-ball 51 for Bangalore, who are searching for their maiden IPL title. De Villiers too was impressed with Padikkal and the new crop of players who have made an early impression in the 53-day tournament. "Very competitive, the young

players coming and looking like international players is really exciting to watch," said de Villiers. "Padikkal is a shy and quiet guy but I don't have to say much really, he looks like a really good talent."

Warner's team, winners of the 2016 IPL, have also fielded up-and-coming Indian talent in former U-19 skipper Priyam Garg and allrounder Abhishek Sharma. Garg attempted a horrific scoop shot on his IPL debut only for the ball to hit his helmet grill and land on the stumps as he was bowled for 12. But Warner advised the youngsters to carry on playing their natural game. "Exciting times for Indian cricket and I can't wait to see what the young players pro-

duce," Warner said after his team's loss.

"There were three bizarre dismissals, but I encourage them to keep playing the way, not think too much about it. We will rely on our senior players to guide those guys in the middle. "Play your natural game and the that's the only way you can learn." Teenage leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi also had a good outing with Kings XI Punjab on Sunday when he returned impressive figures of 1-22 from his four overs. Kings XI lost the game to the Delhi Capitals in a super over but Bishnoi's exploits with the ball earned him rich praise from pundits including former Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar. —AFP

Lightning level Stanley Cup finals; Dallas Stars defeated

LOS ANGELES: The Tampa Bay Lightning held off a rally by the Dallas Stars to level their Stanley Cup final series with a 3-2 victory on Monday. A first period scoring blast featuring goals from Brayden Point, Ondrej Palat and Kevin Shattenkirk set up the win for Tampa Bay, beaten 4-1 in Saturday's finals opener in Edmonton. Joe Pavelski pulled a goal back for Dallas in the second period on a power play before Mattias Janmark added a second in the third period for the Stars.

Tampa Bay goalie Andrei Vasilevskiy finished with 27 saves, including 17 made during a ferocious Dallas onslaught in the second period. "This was an emotional game," Lightning forward Anthony Cirelli said. "There were ups and some downs. It's always good to come out with the win. "I thought we did a pretty good job of weathering the storm there. Whenever you can come out with a victory is a positive for us, so we'll take some video, we'll look at some good and the bad things, and move on."

Russian winger Nikita Kucherov was the architect of Tampa Bay's first period scoring blitz, providing two assists as his team scored three times in just 3min 53 seconds. Point and Palat scored Tampa Bay's opening two goals on power plays. "We had some good looks in the first game, we just couldn't score," Kucherov said. "I think we just stuck to what we have to do, keep it simple, shoot the puck at the net, get those rebounds. "Just keep it simple, that's the key to our success today and fortunately we got two goals today," he said. Dallas coach Rick Bowness, mean-



EDMONTON: Jamie Benn #14 and Tyler Seguin #91 of the Dallas Stars converge on Andrei Vasilevskiy #88 of the Tampa Bay Lightning in Game Two of the 2020 NHL Stanley Cup Final on September 21, 2020. — AFP

while, bemoaned his team's error-strewn first period that allowed Tampa Bay to take control of the contest.

"They won the first, we won the second," Bowness said. "But you can't be doing what we did in the last half of that first period. It's very simple to explain. "The penalties got us in trouble, no question. We had a lot of unforced turnovers," he said. The Lightning

are seeking to add a second title to the one they captured in 2004. They fell in six games to Chicago in the championship series in 2015. This year's Stanley Cup finals are being held at a neutral site with no fans in attendance after the season was halted earlier this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. Game three in the best-of-seven series takes place today. —AFP

Red Bull Flick: The Kuwait Championship underway

KUWAIT: Red Bull is excited to announce that Red Bull Flick, the online Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) tournament, will expand into the GCC. The anticipated Kuwait tournament will take place on October 9th and 10th, 2020. Kuwait will have a total of 128 teams entering, and 256 total players, over a 2-day period in October. Other Gulf countries hosting their own Red Bull Flick include the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Oman. The winners of each respective tournament will be eligible to win cash prizes in the amount of KD 400.

The top 2 country teams will also play in the Red Bull Flick EU Pro Invitational. Red Bull Flick is sure to attract both professional, avid semi-pro players, and amateurs to enter in the team-based battles. There are 5 new maps that have been built just for the occasion. Practice on these maps is highly encouraged for teams who wish to develop their own personal strategies. As of publication, signups are open and players are encouraged to enter in the tournament. Teams consist of two players.

Counter-Strike first launched 20 years ago and was a driving factor in the first-person shooter genre, where it was played alongside such games as Halo and others. Currently, the Valve and Hidden Path Entertainment game has moved on to a free-to-play model, where revenue is generated via sales within the game. The game is still played by professional esports athletes and weekend warriors alike, although this is a version of the game that very few will know firsthand.

The Red Bull Flick rules are not the standard garden variety, where teams must either defend or eliminate depending on the side. In Red Bull Flick, teams must hold the middle ground for a specific amount of time for each round. Barring that, they must hold the designated area for longer than the opposing team to claim their victory. When a team has 2 round wins against another team, the match is finished, and the winning team moves on to the next position in their brackets.

Other rules specific to Red Bull Flick are that both teams start on opposite sides of the map, all teams have the same weapon respawns for fairness, and the only advantage is the availability of a single AWP spawn in a difficult to reach and very risky spot. Rounds are played until the timer runs out. What has players and teams most enthusiastic is that any team can win it all. Due to the game rules and new maps, this has become a brand new game of CS:GO. The advantage will always go to the team that can react and play well together. To find out more about Red Bull Flick, visit @RedBullKuwait on Instagram and Twitter, and @RedBull on Facebook, or visit redbull.com/flickkuwait



News in brief

Premier League goal spree

LONDON: The Premier League set a new record for the highest number of goals in a single round of matches on Monday as Manchester City's Gabriel Jesus scored the milestone 44th against Wolves. After 39 goals were scored across Saturday and Sunday's eight games, City, Wolves and Aston Villa all netted on Monday to surpass the previous Premier League best of 43. In the 20-team Premier League era, 43 goals were scored in a single game-week across February 5 and 6, 2011. Jesus left it until the very last moment to set the record when he scored in stoppage-time of City's 3-1 win at Wolves. Earlier in the day, Aston Villa had beaten Sheffield United 1-0. Tottenham's 5-2 rout of Southampton followed Saturday's wins for Everton, 5-2 against West Bromwich Albion, and Leeds, 4-3 against Fulham, with six more added as Leicester beat Burnley 4-2. —AFP

Barcelona's Vidal joins Inter

MADRID: Inter Milan have completed a deal to sign Arturo Vidal from Barcelona for 1 million euros (\$1.17 million), the clubs announced yesterday. "Barcelona and Inter Milan have reached an agreement for the transfer of the player Arturo Vidal," Barca said in a statement. "The Italian team will pay FC Barcelona 1 million euros in variables." After joining in 2018, Vidal played 96 games for the Catalans and scored 11 goals, helping them win La Liga in his first year in Spain. But the 33-year-old was seen as expendable by the club after their dreadful end to last season, with Barca president Josep Maria Bartomeu admitting players would have to leave before new ones could come in. Vidal will be reunited with Antonio Conte at Inter, the coach he played for at Juventus between 2011 and 2015, before joining Bayern Munich and then Barca. —AFP

PSG submit Neymar video

RIO DE JANEIRO: Paris Saint-Germain have sent French football authorities a video that some lip-reading experts say confirms Marseille defender Alvaro Gonzalez used a racial slur against Neymar, leading to an on-pitch brawl, Brazilian media reported. A week after PSG's 1-0 loss to their arch rivals ended with Neymar slapping Gonzalez on the back of the head - triggering a melee that ended with five players sent off - Brazil's Globo Esporte said the Brazilian superstar's club had submitted video of the preceding minutes to the league "to attempt to prove that Neymar was the victim of racism." Brazilian news site UOL said Monday it had confirmed the information. Three Brazilian lip-reading experts interviewed by Globo TV Sunday agreed that Gonzalez had called Neymar "mono" - "monkey" in Spanish - just before the brawl, after watching the footage from French broadcaster Telefoot. —AFP

NFL fines teams, coaches

LOS ANGELES: Three NFL teams and their head coaches were hit with fines totaling more than \$1 million for failing to wear face coverings, reports said Monday. The NFL Network reported that the Denver Broncos, San Francisco 49ers and Seattle Seahawks had each been fined \$250,000 for breaching safety protocols set up to combat the threat of Covid-19. Broncos coach Vic Fangio, 49ers head coach Kyle Shanahan and Seahawks head coach Pete Carroll were also fined \$100,000 each for failing to wear masks. Fangio, Shanahan and Carroll were all seen not wearing mandated face coverings during their respective games at the weekend. The NFL's disciplinary action came a week after the league warned teams in a memo to follow safety protocols regarding Covid-19 measures or risk "accountability measures." —AFP