

England humiliate India, set up T20 WCup final with Pakistan

Hales, Buttler hammer brilliant unbeaten half-centuries

ADELAIDE: Alex Hales and Jos Buttler hammered brilliant unbeaten half-centuries as England crushed India by 10 wickets on Thursday to set up a Twenty20 World Cup final with Pakistan. Chasing 169 for victory in the second semi-final in Adelaide, Hales smashed seven sixes in his 86 and Buttler, who made 80, hit three in a spellbinding batting performance to cruise into Sunday's final in Melbourne with four overs to spare.

It was a far cry from earlier in the tournament when England were shocked by Ireland. "That feels a long time ago now," said Buttler. "The character we've shown to get through the tournament since then, and put in our best performance today, has been amazing." Hardik Pandya's 33-ball 63 guided India to 168-6, but the total proved inadequate for an inspired opening pair, as England chase their second T20 crown after their 2010 triumph.

England captain Buttler smashed Bhuvneshwar Kumar for three boundaries in the opening over of their chase and his side never looked back. He kept up the batting onslaught and Hales soon joined the big-hitting party as England raced to 63-0 in six overs. Hales reached his 50 off 28 balls and was severe on Axar Patel, who leaked 28 runs in his three overs as the match was torn away from India in a flurry of sixes and fours. Hales raised the team's 100 with another six off Pandya and Buttler soon changed gears to catch up with his partner.

The skipper reached his fifty with a six and a four off Pandya to douse any hopes of India attempting to end their world title drought since their 2013 Champions Trophy triumph. He fittingly hit the winning runs with a six off Mohammed Shami to set up a repeat of the 1992 50-over World Cup final between Pakistan and England, which Pakistan won. "We came here excited, it was a really good feeling when we came in," said Buttler. "We always want to start as fast as we can and aggressive. Adil Rashid was (batting) down at number 11 today, and that gives us the freedom to come out aggressive, that depth."

'Pretty disappointing'

Earlier, Virat Kohli made his fourth half-century of the tournament and put on a 61-run fourth-wicket stand with Pandya, who tore into the opposition attack in the final overs, taking 57 off the final three overs, including 20 off one from Sam Curran. But it proved too little, too late, after a sluggish start with the bat against some disciplined England bowling and then a ragged performance in the field. "It's pretty disappointing how we turned up today," said captain Rohit Sharma. "It was definitely not a wicket where a team can come and chase it down in 16 overs. The way we started with the ball was not ideal. We were a little nervous, but you have to give credit to the openers as well. They



ADELAIDE: England's Captain Jos Buttler jumps over India's Axar Patel as he runs between the wickets during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup 2022 semi-final cricket match between England and India on November 10, 2022. — AFP

played really well. "If we keep it tight and the batsman still score runs, we'll take it. But we didn't do that today."

Chris Jordan, in the side for the injured Mark Wood, picked up three wickets. England invited India to bat and KL Rahul began with a cracking boundary off Ben Stokes. Seamer Chris Woakes had Rahul caught behind off a rising delivery for five. Skipper Rohit Sharma hit four boundaries after a scratchy start as he and Kohli attempted to rebuild but Jordan broke through in his first over and ended a 43-run

partnership when Sharma mistimed to wide long-on with the score on 57.

Suryakumar Yadav smashed a six and four off Stokes but soon fell to Adil Rashid's leg-spin for 14. Kohli passed 4,000 T20 international runs with a boundary off Liam Livingstone that took India's total to 100-3 after 15 overs. Kohli, who leads the tournament batting chart with 296 runs, reached 50 off 39 balls but fell next delivery to a sharp catch at short third man by Rashid off Jordan. Pandya smashed four fours and five sixes before treading on his stumps to be out hit wicket off Jordan's final ball of the innings. — AFP



ADELAIDE: England's Sam Curran takes a catch to dismiss India's captain Rohit Sharma during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup 2022 semi-final cricket match between England and India on November 10, 2022. — AFP

Union back to 2nd in the Bundesliga

BERLIN: Unheralded high-flyers Union Berlin nipped past Freiburg into second in the Bundesliga on Wednesday as Xabi Alonso's Bayer Leverkusen continued their upwardly mobile trajectory since the 2010 World Cup winner's arrival as manager last month. Union relinquished a lead they had held since September at the weekend after a lopsided loss to Leverkusen, with Bayern Munich resuming their customary place at the head of the Bundesliga table.

But a 2-2 draw with Augsburg coupled with Freiburg's 3-1 loss at RB Leipzig saw them back into second on goal difference ahead of their last run out

before the World Cup hiatus next weekend - against Freiburg. Union's Dutch-Surinamese forward Sheraldo Becker has played a pivotal role in the side's table-storming form. And he secured Union's early opener only for Florian Niederlechner to level a minute later.

Kevin Behrens had Union back in front but Niederlechner struck again as half-time approached for the draw. Freiburg, who were the unbeaten table-toppers of their Europa League group, came unstuck at Leipzig, with Christopher Nkunku on the scoresheet for the visitors. He leads the Bundesliga scoring charts on 12 goals. In the evening's early kick-off Alonso's Leverkusen followed up their weekend demolition of Union with a come-from-behind 2-1 win in the Rhine derby at Cologne. Cologne took the lead on the half-hour through an unlikely source - Benno Schmitz.

A spectacular strike - "hang it in the Louvre" the club tweeted - was the defender's first goal in 100 matches for the club, and his first since 2014. Nadiem Amiri levelled for Leverkusen on 65 minutes from a deflected free-kick with French forward Moussa Diaby, author of a quick-fire double in Sunday's 5-0 rout of Union, securing the victory minutes later. This fourth success of the campaign lifted Alonso's side up to 13th, two points behind Cologne. "We all agreed that we were not playing good enough to compete at this level," said Alonso, the former Liverpool, Bayern Munich and Real Madrid midfielder.

"Second half - the energy, the intensity, the desire was there," added the 2010 World Cup winner with Spain who took up his debut first-team coaching job last month with Leverkusen one off the foot of the table. Elsewhere, Eintracht Frankfurt beat Hoffenheim 4-2 and Schalke edged Mainz 1-0. With this weekend's program of matches the last of 2022 it is Bayern Munich, who routed Werder Bremen 6-1 on Tuesday, who will go into the new year as league leaders with an unassailable four-point lead before their closing match of the year against Schalke on Saturday. — AFP



BERLIN: Union Berlin's German midfielder Rani Khedira (left) and Augsburg's Finnish midfielder Fredrik Jensen vie for the ball during the German first division Bundesliga football match on November 9, 2022. — AFP

Zain the 'Platinum Sponsor' of Kuwait Track Challenge



Zain joined in awarding the winners.

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, successfully concluded its platinum sponsorship of the Kuwait Track Challenge (KTC), held at Kuwait Motor Town in Arafjan. The event was attended by crowds of families and motorsports enthusiasts. Zain is a strong believer in the vital role played by private sector institutions in developing the local youth and sports sectors.

The company makes this belief a reality by supporting and shouldering many of the major competitions and sporting events in the

community, including this event that was held within a safe and professional setting and offered cash prizes worth over \$200,000 to the winners. Zain was present at Kuwait Motor Town in Arafjan during the event, where many social and fun activities were held for visitors, families, and motorsports enthusiasts. The main race, which featured three different categories, was held in a safe and professional environment that met international standards.

Zain's role not only focuses on economic and business activities,

but also extends to contribute significantly to various areas within the Kuwaiti society, including sports. The company has endless confidence in the competencies of Kuwaiti athletes and their capabilities in excelling in different fields, on both regional and international levels. Zain is also proud to continue supporting and sponsoring many Kuwaiti athletes who represent the nation across local, regional, and international arenas, and attain the highest accolades, many of which compete in motorsports.