

Ashes 2017-18: England v Australia

The battle for one of cricket's most coveted prizes gets underway in the 70th Ashes series – England currently hold the famous urn, and have won four of last five series

Australia captain hoping to win back Ashes Steven Smith

The Gabba, Brisbane Cap: 42,000

Sydney Cricket Ground, 48,000

WACA Ground, Perth 20,000

Adelaide Oval 53,000

Melbourne Cricket Ground 100,000

Bellerive Oval, Hobart 19,500

MATCH SCHEDULE

Nov 23	1st Test	Brisbane
Dec 2	2nd Test	Adelaide
Dec 14	3rd Test	Perth
Dec 26	4th Test	Melbourne
Jan 4	5th Test	Sydney
Jan 14	1st ODI	Melbourne
Jan 19	2nd ODI	Brisbane
Jan 21	3rd ODI	Sydney
Jan 26	4th ODI	Adelaide
Jan 28	5th ODI	Venue TBC
Feb 7	1st T20I	Hobart
Feb 10	2nd T20I	Melbourne

● Test match: Longest form of cricket, played over five days
● ODI: One Day International Limited to 50 overs
● T20I: Twenty20 International Shortest form, limited to 20 overs

Source: Cricinfo Picture: Getty Images © GRAPHIC NEWS

Kubica, Sirotkin to test with Williams

London

Polish driver Robert Kubica will test for Williams again in Abu Dhabi next week as he presses for a Formula One comeback with the former world champions.

The British-based team said the 32-year-old would join Russian Sergey Sirotkin and race regular Lance Stroll at a two-day post-

season tire test at the Yas Marina circuit.

The test is aimed at evaluating 2018 tires for Pirelli but also gives Williams another chance to assess Kubica before making a final decision on a replacement for retiring Brazilian Felipe Massa.

“Williams is excited to have this

opportunity to assess the new tires across such an interesting range of drivers,” the team said in a statement.

“Lance, as confirmed race driver for 2018, Robert with his huge experience, and Sergey as a very promising young talent in Formula One.”

Sirotkin, 22, is currently a development driver for the Renault team and has been backed by Russian billionaire Boris Rotenberg.

Kubica will drive the FW40 in the morning of the first day before handing over to Stroll. Sirotkin will be in the car on the second day with Kubica wrapping up the session in the late afternoon.

The Pole is seen as the favourite to take Massa's place but Williams denied on Tuesday that any deal was done.

Kubica, a race winner with BMW-Sauber in 2008, partially severed his right forearm in an horrific 2011 crash during a rally he entered for fun before the start of that year's Formula One season.

He has twice tested a 2014 Williams car this year after failing to secure a seat at Renault. (Reuters)



Robert Kubica of Poland

Europa League 2017-18

MATCHDAY 5: NOV 23

A	Maccabi Tel-Aviv ISR Slavia Prague CZE	Astana KAZ Villarreal ESP
B	Partizan SRB Young Boys SUI	Skenderbeu ALB Dynamo Kyiv UKR
C	Ludogorets BUL Basaksehir TUR	Sporting Braga POR Hoffenheim GER
D	AEK Athens GRE Rijeka CRO	AC Milan ITA Austria Vienna AUT
E	Olympique Lyon FRA Apollon Limassol CYP	Everton ENG Atalanta ITA
F	Lokomotiv RUS FC Copenhagen DEN	Sheriff Tiraspol MDA Fastav Zlin CZE
G	Viktoria Plzen CZE Steaua Bucharest ROM	Lugano SUI Hap. Beer-Sheva ISR
H	Koln GER Arsenal ENG	BATE Borisov BLR Red Star Belgrade SRB
I	Red Bull Salzburg AUT Viktoria POR	Konyaspor TUR Marseille FRA
J	Athletic Bilbao ESP Hertha Berlin GER	Ostersunds SWE Zorya Luhansk UKR
K	Lazio ITA Vitesse NED	Nice FRA Zulte Waregem BEL
L	Rosenborg NOR Real Sociedad ESP	Zenit RUS Vardar MKD

FUTURE MATCHDAYS

6. Dec 7 Last 32 draw: Dec 11

Willian José Real Sociedad striker netted four-goal haul in victory over Vardar

KEEP BALL: Real Sociedad, who last reached knock-out stages of a European competition in 2004, will guarantee Last 32 berth with draw at Rosenborg

Sociedad	Possession: 68%	Passes: 2,698
Nice	56%	2,673
Arsenal	60%	2,099
Milan	59%	2,022

Sources: UEFA, Gracenote

Picture: Getty Images

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QUALIFIED TEAMS
Five teams already through to Last 32

- Dynamo Kyiv
- Steaua Bucharest
- Arsenal
- Lazio
- Zenit St. Petersburg

War of words by Ashes captains

Brisbane

The war of words that has added spice to the lead-up to cricket's oldest enduring test series will give way to genuine hostilities on Thursday when bitter Ashes rivals Australia and England march out in front of a packed crowd at the Gabba.

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A temporary ceasefire was called on Wednesday

as Australia captain Steve Smith and his England counterpart Joe Root paused for photos under a blinding blue sky at the Brisbane stadium, but both captains have been looking to land a psychological blow on the eve of the first test.

The customary photo opportunity may have been the only chance to get a clear image from the entire day, with smoke and mirrors employed liberally by the captains during the pre-match media conferences.

While Root steadfastly declined to name his team, Smith threw a curve-ball by saying David Warner, his

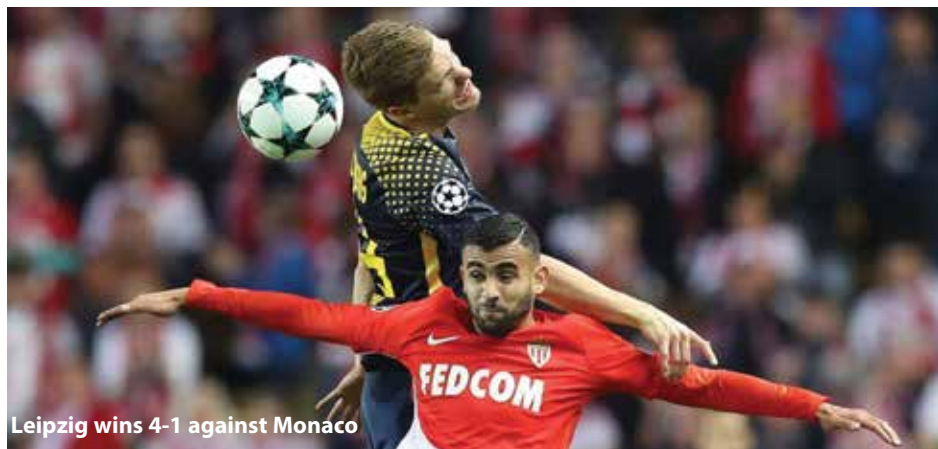
vice-captain, opener and best batsman, remained in doubt for the test as he battles to recover from a neck strain.

As to how Australia would deal with such a hammer blow as Warner's absence, Smith gave no answer.

It took the national board to clarify the situation, with Cricket Australia later revealing that all-rounder Glenn Maxwell had been rushed to Brisbane in readiness to slot in if Warner failed to prove his fitness.

Whether bluff or brewing crisis, Root was having none of it and said it would do nothing to change his team's preparations. (Reuters)

Australia's captain Steve Smith holds a replica of the Ashes urn with England's captain Joe Root



Leipzig wins 4-1 against Monaco

Monaco crash out of Champions League

Monaco

Last year's semi-finalists Monaco crashed out of the Champions League in the group stages when they were beaten at home 4-1 by Leipzig on Tuesday.

The principality side never recovered from going 3-0

down in the first half an hour following a Fabinho own goal and two goals by Timo Werner.

Radamel Falcao reduced the arrears, only for Naby Keita to put the visitors 4-1 up on the stroke of halftime.

The result left Monaco bottom of Group G on two

points from five games, with Leipzig on seven, level with second-placed Porto.

Besiktas top the Group with 11 points after their 1-1 home draw with Porto.

The defeat means Monaco will not even play in the Europa League this season. (Reuters)