

Sri Lanka steamroll Bangladesh to win first T20
Pallekele, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka cruised to a seven-wicket win over Bangladesh in the first T20I, chasing down 155 with an over to spare. Charith Asalanka sealed victory with a six, delighting a festive crowd.

Openers Pathum Nissanka and Kusal Mendis exploded out of the blocks, putting on 78 runs in just 28 balls — Sri Lanka’s highest powerplay score in T20Is. Nissanka smashed 42 off 16 balls, while Mendis anchored the chase with a classy 73 from 51 deliveries.

Kusal Perera chipped in with a brisk cameo as Sri Lanka dominated throughout.

Earlier, Bangladesh had a bright start with openers Parvez Hossain and Tanzid Hasan adding 46 in 30 balls. However, the middle order crumbled under pressure. Dasun Shanaka and Jeffrey Vandersay impressed with tight spells, restricting Bangladesh to 155 — a total that never truly threatened.

The second T20I will be played in Dambulla on Sunday.



Sri Lanka’s Avishka Fernando (L) and captain Charith Asalanka (R) celebrate their team’s victory

Swiatek swats Bencic aside

Reach Wimbledon final against Anisimova

● **Swiatek has largely gone under the radar at this year’s Wimbledon**

● **Four of her five major wins have come on the clay of the French Open**

● **She made her first grass-court final at Bad Homburg just two weeks ago**

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Iga Swiatek breezed into her first Wimbledon final on Thursday but hopes of a dream match-up with Aryna Sabalenka were dashed when the top seed was stunned by Amanda Anisimova.

Five-time Grand Slam champion Swiatek, not previously known for her prowess on grass, demolished former Olympic champion Belinda Bencic 6-2, 6-0 in just 71 minutes on Centre Court.

“Honestly, I never even dreamed that it’s going to be possible for me to play in the final,” said the 24-year-old eighth seed. “So I’m just super-excited and proud of myself and I don’t know, tennis keeps surprising me.

“I thought I had experienced everything on the court but I didn’t experience playing well on grass, so that’s the first time.

I’m super excited and just enjoying it.”

In baking conditions, Swiatek caught her Swiss opponent cold, racing into a 3-0 lead, and never relinquished her grip against her 35th-ranked opponent.

Bencic, who won gold at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, at least got on the board in the first set, but in the second set the rampant Swiatek went up another gear and her opponent had no answers.

Swiatek has largely gone under the radar at this year’s Wimbledon, dropping just one set so far while every seed above



her has been eliminated.

Four of her five major wins have come on the clay of the French Open, with her previous best performance at Wimbledon a run to the quarter-finals in 2023.

She made her first grass-court final at Bad Homburg just two weeks ago and is now into her second final on the surface.

Swiatek has won all five of her Grand Slam finals but standing in the way of a sixth major title is Anisimova in their first professional meeting.

Anisimova ousts Sabalenka

Anisimova, the American 13th seed, shattered Sabalenka’s Wimbledon title bid with a tense 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 victory.

World number one Sabalenka had

reached the previous three Grand Slam finals but came up short against Anisimova, who matched her blow for blow in a bruising encounter lasting just over two hour and a half hours.

“This doesn’t feel real right now, honestly,” said Anisimova. “Aryna is such a tough competitor

and I was absolutely dying out there. I don’t know how I pulled it out.” We’ve had so many tough battles and to come out on top and be in the final of Wimbledon is incredible.”

Anisimova is only the second player in the Open era to reach a women’s final at a Grand Slam after losing in qualifying at the previous year’s event.

The 23-year-old, who now has an impressive 6-3 winning record against Sabalenka, won the first set but the Belarusian hit back to level.

Anisimova was hailed as a teenage sensation after reaching the 2019 French Open semi-finals aged just 17.

But in 2023 she took an eight-month break from the court for mental health reasons, tumbling out the top 400.

This time last year, she was on the comeback trail but was ranked too low to get into the Wimbledon main draw and fell in qualifying.

YOU
KNOW WHAT

Iga Swiatek is the first player from Poland – male or female – to win a Grand Slam singles title.

Root’s 99 not out keeps India at bay in third Test

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Joe Root’s unbeaten 99 checked India’s progress on yesterday’s opening day of the third Test against England at Lord’s.

England were 251-4 at stumps, with Root coming in when they were faltering at 44-2 after pace-man Nitish Kumar Reddy struck twice in his first over to remove openers Ben Duckett and Zak Crawley.

But not for the first time in his 156 Test-career, the 34-year-old Root bailed England out of trouble. England captain Ben Stokes, who won the toss at a sun-drenched Lord’s, was 39 not out after helping Root, his predecessor as skipper, add an unbroken 79 for the fifth wicket.

Root also shared a grinding partnership of 109 in 35 overs with Ollie Pope, who made 44 after almost being out for a golden duck. Much of the pre-match

England 1st Innings	
Z. Crawley c Pant b Reddy	18
B. Duckett c Pant b Reddy	23
O. Pope c sub (Dhruv Jurel) b Jadeja	44
J. Root not out	99
H. Brook b Bumrah	11
B. Stokes not out	39
Extras (b4, lb11, nb2)	17
Total (4 wkts, 83 overs, 393 mins)	251
To bat: J Smith, C Woakes, B Carse, J Archer, S Bashir	
Fall of wickets: 1-43 (Duckett), 2-44 (Crawley), 3-153 (Pope), 4-172 (Brook)	
Bowling: Bumrah 18-3-35-1; Deep 17-2-75-0 (1nb); Siraj 14-5-33-0; Reddy 14-0-46-2; Jadeja 10-1-26-1 (1nb); Sundar 10-1-21-0	

England’s Joe Root (L) and England’s captain Ben Stokes (R) touch gloves in the middle on the opening day of the third cricket test match between England and India at Lord’s cricket ground in London

talk had focused on the return of Jasprit Bumrah, the world’s top-ranked Test bowler, after he was rested for India’s 336-run thrashing of England at Edgbaston last week that levelled the five-match series at 1-1.

But it was Reddy, the fourth

seamer deployed by India captain Shubman Gill on Thursday, who struck twice in four balls on the way to figures of 2-46 in 14 overs. With his third ball, the 22-year-old had left-hander Duckett (23) well caught down the legside by diving wicket-

keeper Rishabh Pant off a gloved pull.

Next ball, the often skittish Pope almost fell for a duck when he threw his bat at an outswinger, with Gill just unable to hold a tough chance low to his right in the gully.

But with the last ball of the over, Reddy produced a superb full-length delivery that swung late and straightened off the pitch before taking Crawley’s outside edge to give Pant a simple catch as the Kent batsman fell for 18.



Tendulkar says ‘life has come full circle’ with Lord’s portrait



India’s legendary batsman Sachin Tendulkar and his wife Anjali
London, United Kingdom

Sachin Tendulkar said “life has truly come full circle” after a portrait of the India cricket great was unveiled at Lord’s on Thursday.

Tendulkar is one of the greatest batsmen cricket has known, scoring 34,357 runs in Test matches, one-day internationals and one T20 for India in an international career that spanned 24 years from 1989 to 2013.

That total is over 6,000 more runs than the next highest of 28,016 compiled by Sri Lanka’s Kumar Sangakkara.

“I remember standing near the pavilion, soaking in the history and dreaming quietly,” Tendulkar said of his first visit to Lord’s in 1988 as a teenager in a post on X.

“Today, to have my portrait unveiled at this very place is a feeling that’s hard to put into words. Life has truly come full circle. I’m grateful, and filled with wonderful memories.”

Messi brace buoys Miami in 2-1 MLS victory over New England
Foxborough, United States

Lionel Messi scored twice in the first half of Inter Miami’s 2-1 victory over the New England Revolution on Wednesday, continuing a run of form unprecedented in Major League Soccer.

The 38-year-old Argentine star has scored two goals in each of his last four MLS games to become the first MLS player to score multiple goals in four straight games.

He launched the streak in late May with two goals in a 4-2 win over Montreal, followed by two in a 5-1 victory over Columbus.

Miami then paused their MLS campaign to compete in the Club World Cup -- where Messi scored one goal in four matches and Miami were eliminated in the round of 16 by Paris Saint-Germain.

Javier Mascherano’s team returned to MLS action on Saturday with a 4-1 victory at Montreal -- also fuelled by a brace from eight-time Ballon d’Or winner Messi.

In all Messi has 14 goals in 15 MLS games, putting him two behind leading scorer Sam Surridge, who has appeared in six more games for Nashville than Messi has played this season.