

Rohit, Jadeja star as India thrash B'desh

India Today | Dubai

India made little work of Bangladesh's meagre total of 173, as strong performances from skipper Rohit Sharma and the returning Ravindra Jadeja helped India beat Bangladesh by 7 wickets in their Super Four match of the Asia Cup in Dubai yesterday.

Shikhar Dhawan gave India the perfect start as he raced away to a 47-ball 40, before his opening partner anchored the chase with his 36 ODI fifty at the Dubai International Stadium.

Attacking from the start, Dhawan proved too hot to handle for the Bangladeshi pacers, but was trapped by the wily Shakib Al Hasan in front of the stumps.

Rohit though continued the good work, first partnering with Ambati Rayudu (13) and then MS Dhoni.

Dhoni was promoted up the batting order to much applause and even though the former World Cup-winning captain started timidly, he grew in confidence as the innings progressed.

But the star of the Indian chase was undoubtedly the India skipper, as he blasted the Bangladeshi bowlers all around the park. He finished his innings on an unbeaten 83, including 5 fours and 3 sixes.



Indian cricketer Ravindra Jadeja

But India's win was set up by Ravindra Jadeja's four-wicket haul, which helped India dis-

miss Bangladesh for 173.

The all-rounder, playing his first ODI since July 2017, broke

ASIA CUP SCOREBOARD

Bangladesh	
Total: (all out; 49.1 overs)	173
India:	
R. Sharma not out	83
S. Dhawan lbw b Shakib	40
A. Rayudu c Rahim b Rubel	13
M. Dhoni c Mithun b Mortaza	33
D. Karthik not out	1
Extras: (lb1, nb2, w1)	4
Total: (for three wkts; 36.2 overs)	174

Result: India win by seven wickets

the backbone of Bangladesh batting with his accurate left-arm spin and ended with impressive figures of four for 29 in 10 overs.

Bangladesh batsmen faltered again, having come a cropper in the run chase against Afghanistan on Thursday night. The seasoned pace duo of Bhuvneshwar Kumar (3/32) and Jasprit Bumrah (3/37) too made life tough for the opposition.

The saving grace for Bangladesh was the 66-run stand for the eighth wicket between Mehidy Hasan Miraz (42 off 50) and captain Mashrafe Mortaza (26 off 32) before the team was all out in 49.1 overs.

Bangladesh, who lost to Af-

ghanistan less than 24 hours ago and had to take the 90-minute journey from Abu Dhabi to Dubai, paid the price for reckless batting.

They lost their openers Liton Das (7) and Nazmul Hossain Shanto (7) by the sixth over.

From 15 for two, the experienced pairing of Shakib Al Hasan (21) and Mushfuqir Rahim had a task of rebuilding the innings but the former fell to a loose shot off Jadeja. The star Bangladesh all-rounder, having hit Jadeja for two boundaries in the 10th over, went for another one but his sweep went straight into the hands of Shikhar Dhawan at square leg.

Shahidi, Asghar lift Afghanistan to 257-6

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Hashmatullah Shahidi missed out on a maiden hundred by a mere three runs but still steered Afghanistan to a challenging 257-6 against Pakistan in the Asia Cup at Abu Dhabi yesterday. Shahidi hit three consecutive boundaries in the final over off Usman Shinwari, but failed to get to three figures off the last delivery after Afghanistan won the toss and batted in the Super Four clash.

Shahidi finished with a brilliantly-paced 118-ball 97 not out, and added 94 for the fourth wicket with his skipper Asghar Afghan, who smashed five sixes and two fours in his 56-ball 67.

But it was Shahidi who held one end against Pakistan's bowling in an innings which featured seven boundaries after left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz (3-57) had put the brakes on Afghanistan's early progress. Shahidi had added 63 for the third wicket with Rahmat Shah who scored a measured 36. The total is an improvement by Afghanistan after scoring 249 and 255 in their previous two wins against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Pakistani fielders dropped four catches -- three off debutant paceman Shaheen Shah Afridi who finished with 2-38. **At the time of closing Pakistan was 183/3.**

Simon finally beats Gasquet



Gilles Simon

Metz, France

Gilles Simon finally managed to beat his fellow Frenchman Richard Gasquet at the ninth attempt with a 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, victory in the Metz quarter-finals yesterday.

Aside from Gasquet winning every one of their eight previous encounters Simon arrived in Metz out of sorts, with only a US Open first round win since reaching the last 16 at Wimbledon in July.

The two-time Metz winner was more aggressive in the first set and broke to lead 4-2,

but was unable to do the same when serving for the set at 5-4.

In the tie-break, Gasquet, ranked 25th, took the first two points but Simon fought back to clinch the set in 59 minutes.

He then rolled through the second set without too many problems and will face 107th ranked Moldovan Radu Albot in the last four.

"It is very, very hard to win against a player you have never beaten, but I started well," said Simon, ranked 39th in the world.

"The tie-break in the first set was stressful but after that I played very well."

Stan Wawrinka dethrones Dzumhur

Saint Petersburg, Russia

Stan Wawrinka beat last year's St Petersburg champion Damir Dzumhur in straight sets to reach the semifinals yesterday.

The 33-year-old Swiss wild card beat the Bosnian, who was seeded sixth, 6-3, 6-4 in one hour and 11 minutes to level their head-to-head record at one all.

"The level of my play was good today and the win makes me feel positive," Wawrinka said.

In the last four, Wawrinka will face Slovak Martin Klizan, the 2012 champion, who battled back from a set down to beat seventh-seeded Denis Shapovalov of Canada 3-6, 7-5, 6-3.

"I expect an interesting match with Klizan in the semis," Wawrinka said. "We've played a couple of times in the past and it was always really tough."

Wawrinka, the former world number three who is down at 88 after struggling to find his best form following two operations on his left knee, looked nervous at the start dropping his serve early in the opening set.

He responded by breaking back twice to take the opener in 32 minutes.

In the second, Wawrinka broke early and experienced few troubles.

Earlier on Friday, fifth seed-



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WAWRINKA

ed Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut saw off Italian third seed Marco Cecchinato of Italy 7-6 (7/0), 6-3 in the pair's first ever meeting.

In the semis, the 26-year-old Bautista Agut will face the winner of the match between Austria's French Open runner-up Dominic Thiem, the top seed, and the local crowd favourite Daniil Medvedev, who is seeded eighth.

Federer mulling clay court return

Chicago, United States

World number two Roger Federer says he is mulling a return to the European clay-court season in 2019 following a two-year absence.

Federer, speaking to ESPN on the sidelines of this weekend's Laver Cup, has skipped the clay-court segment of the season since 2017 in order to conserve energy for Wimbledon and hard-court seasons.

However the 37-year-old revealed he is rethinking his scheduling for next season, and may yet play on clay.

"The clay-court season is under review," Federer told ESPN. "It's not off the table. I will know by the end of the year."

Three ATP Masters events are held on clay as well as several smaller tournaments in the build up to the French Open.

Federer said if he does opt to play the clay-court season it will require a significant tweak of his training regime.

"I would like to make up my mind ahead of time so I can plan my buildup, my fitness schedule, even the way I would approach my December practice sessions," Federer said. "It could benefit the clay-court season."