

# Kohli, Sharma trample Windies

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma notched up centuries to help India chase down a mammoth target

AFP | Guwahati, India

**S**kipper Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma hit sparkling centuries yesterday to lead India's eight-wicket demolition of West Indies in the first one-day international in Guwahati.

Kohli made 140 and Sharma took an unbeaten 152 for a record 246 runs to flay the West Indies bowling attack during their team's 323-run chase.

The hosts, who swept the two-Test series against the visiting Caribbean side, romped home with 47 balls to spare.

The effort from Kohli and Sharma easily overshadowed a dominant 106 by West Indies batsman Shermon Hetmyer in his team's 322-8 after being put into bat first.

In reply, India lost opener Shikhar Dhawan in just the second over of the innings after he was bowled by debutant fast bowler Oshane Thomas.

Kohli then took charge with Sharma, who was happy playing second fiddle to his in-form captain, as the duo put on India's biggest-ever ODI stand against West Indies for any wicket.

The skipper built on his quickfire fifty to get his 36th ODI ton in just 88 deliveries, hitting Roach for a boundary to make the three-figure mark amid loud cheers from a packed home crowd.

Sharma, who was relatively



Indian batsman and team captain Virat Kohli plays a shot

## 323

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quiet till his captain's 100, soon got cracking and reached his century with a boundary off spinner Ashley Nurse.

The two marauding batsmen started to toy with the opposition bowlers before Devendra Bishoo got Kohli stumped against the run of play. Kohli smashed 21 fours and 2 sixes.

Sharma went on to hit the win-

ning six with Ambati Rayudu, who remained unbeaten on 22, at the other end.

West Indies had their moments in the game when Hetmyer smashed six fours and six sixes during his 78-ball knock to give his side what looked like a competitive total.

Leg spinner Yuzvendra Chahal claimed three wickets, returning impressive figures of

Scoreboard	
<b>West Indies</b>	
K. Powell c Dhawan b Ahmed	51
C. Hemraj b Shami	9
S. Hope c Dhoni b Shami	32
M. Samuels lbw b Chahal	0
S. Hetmyer c Pant b Jadeja	106
R. Powell b Jadeja	22
J. Holder b Chahal	38
A. Nurse lbw b Chahal	2
D. Bishoo not out	22
K. Roach not out	26
Extras (lb6, w8)	14
Total (8 wickets, 50 overs)	322
Bowling: Shami 10-0-81-2 (w2), Yadav 10-0-64-0 (w3), Ahmed 10-0-64-1 (w3), Chahal 10-0-41-3, Jadeja 10-0-66-2	
<b>India (target 323)</b>	
R. Sharma not out	152
S. Dhawan b Thomas	4
V. Kohli st Hope b Bishoo	140
A. Rayudu not out	22
Extras (lb2, nb3, w3)	8
Total (2 wickets, 42.1 overs)	326
Bowling: Roach 7-0-52-0, Thomas 9-0-83-1 (w2, nb1), Holder 8-0-45-0 (w1), Nurse 7-0-63-0, Bishoo 10-0-72-1 (nb2), Hemraj 1.1-0-9-0	
<b>Toss: India</b>	
<b>Result: India won by 8 wickets</b>	
<b>Series: India lead the five-match series 1-0</b>	

3-41 from his 10 overs, to check West Indies' surge.

Hetmyer, who registered his third ODI century in just his 13th game, built crucial partnerships including a 60-run sixth wicket stand with skipper Jason Holder, who made 38.

Bishoo, on 22, and Kemar

Roach, on 26, put on 44 runs for their ninth wicket unbeaten stand to take West Indies well past the 300-run mark, which in the end proved insufficient to test the Indian batting.

The second ODI in the five-game series is scheduled for Wednesday in Visakhapatnam.

## Pliskova serves up Wozniacki upset

AFP | Singapore

**K**arolina Pliskova issued a warning to her opponents at the WTA Finals with a convincing straight-sets victory against defending champion Caroline Wozniacki.

The dynamic 26-year-old's easy 6-2, 6-4 triumph in Singapore was sweet revenge for Pliskova, who lost to Wozniacki in the semis at last year's WTA Finals.

Pliskova had strapping on her lower right leg but moved well against the sluggish second seed.

The hard-hitting Czech was not broken on serve for the entire match and fittingly closed it out with an ace.

"I felt good from the baseline and it was not all about my serve," Pliskova said after the match.

"She started a bit nervous in the beginning, it's always tough to defend a title."

Pliskova played down injury concerns.

"I don't know what is wrong with me, but, you know, it's the end of the season," she said.

"I have now two days, so I'm sure it's going to be fine."

The world number eight stunned Wozniacki with a brilliant first set highlighted by trademark booming ground strokes.

She saved two break points in her opening service game before overwhelming the Australian Open champion en route to winning five straight games.

Wozniacki, who had only played two top-10 players this



Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova hits a return against Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki

year before yesterday, struggled with rhythm in the first set and made several uncharacteristic errors.

"I think I was struggling a little bit with the timing in some of the points and just trying to find my rhythm," she said.

"I think there were times where I played really well, and I was trying to move her around, but there were also times when I just didn't time the ball perfectly."

The one-way traffic continued in the second set with Pliskova breaking immediately, saving three break points in the next game to the frustration of her opponent.

The Dane started to find her

groove but squandered break points in the eighth and 10th games in a disappointing start to her title defence.

### Svitolina beats curse

Earlier, a determined Svitolina ended her long-time jinx against former Wimbledon champ Kvitova, cruising to a straight sets win.

The world number six triumphed 6-3, 6-3 in just 89 minutes in the tournament opener, easily overcoming a lacklustre Kvitova, who had 29 unforced errors and seven double faults.

Svitolina had won just one set in seven straight harrowing defeats to the Czech but impres-

sively turned the tables.

"Winning this match definitely gives me lots of confidence," Svitolina told reporters after the match.

"I played good, quite solid from the baseline and putting pressure on Petra. I was really, really solid, and I think this was really the key."

Kvitova rued her subpar opening performance.

"Wasn't the best start, but the good thing is there is still a chance to play better and to improve and maybe go somewhere forward," she said.

Kvitova's trademark firepower moved Svitolina around the hard court but the Ukrainian's defence was up to the task.

## Messi to miss three weeks

AFP | Barcelona

**L**ionel Messi is expected to be out for three weeks with a fractured right arm but his last contribution was to help send Barcelona back to the top of La Liga on Saturday.

Messi scored and then went off injured as Barca beat Sevilla 4-2 at Camp Nou, in a six-goal thriller that never looked like ending in anything other than a home win.

Any joy at jumping above in-form Sevilla, however, was tarnished by Messi's injury, which will now rule him out of next weekend's Clasico against Real Madrid.

A Barcelona club statement read: "Tests carried out on Leo Messi have confirmed that he has a fracture of the radial bone in his right arm. He will be out for approximately three weeks."

It means Messi will also miss the Champions League match at home to Inter Milan on Wednesday, and probably the

return trip to Italy on November 6, as well as league games against Real Madrid and Rayo Vallecano in between.

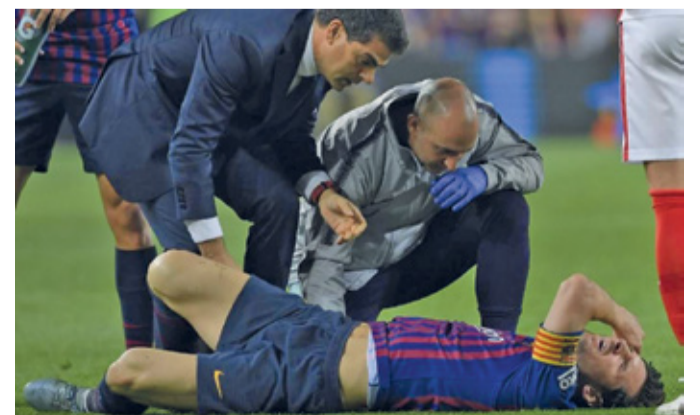
"It is clear it is a blow," Barca coach Ernesto Valverde said. "We know what he gives us and we know what he does to the opposition."

"We have to prepare ourselves, it is clear we are going to notice the loss of Messi but we have players that can cover."

Messi fell to the ground following a tussle with Sevilla's Franco Vazquez and, as his right hand tried to cushion the landing, his elbow appeared to buckle.

Messi was helped off the pitch by medical staff and, despite having his right arm heavily strapped, he was finally substituted in 26th minute.

"Emotionally, we know when he is there, he gives us more confidence because he is the best in the world," Gerard Pique said. "But it does not have to affect us."



Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi gestures in pain during the Spanish league football match FC Barcelona against Sevilla FC at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona