

'Really shocked to see...': Jim Courier on Djokovic, Sinner and other top 20 stars playing in ATP Tournaments before French Open

NEW DELHI, MAY 14:

With 13 out of the top 20 players in the world playing in the Geneva Open and Hamburg Open between May 17 to May 24 ahead of the French Open, it would mean that the likes of Novak Djokovic and world number one Jannik Sinner will not be travelling to France at least one week in advance. Four-time Grand Slam winner Jim Courier has criticised the top 20 players' move ahead of the French Open, which starts May 25 and finds this decision shocking. "With someone like Jannik Sinner there is a lot of insurance at play. For Novak Djokovic, he needs the matches because he has not played, and he is going to try and do what he did last year, which is get two or three matches and maybe try and pull the cord with a little bit of match toughness. But I am really shocked honestly, to see some of the names on here," Courier told The Tennis Channel.



While the Hamburg Open will see the participation of eight players out of the top 20 in world rankings, including Sinner, the Geneva Open will see the participation of five players out of the top 20 in world rankings, including Djokovic. Hamburg Open remains an ATP 500 tournament while Geneva Open is an ATP 250 tournament. Courier finds the top players playing in these tournaments days ahead of the French Open as having some 'commercial aspect'. "Let's set the table, these tournaments can pay appearance fees so some of these players will have accepted a big guarantee, I am talking hundreds of thousands of dollars just to show up and play and they don't have to win a match to get that money, so there is some commercial aspect to this. But the serious players who think they are going to win Roland Garros or challenge for Roland Garros, they do not play these tournaments," added Courier.

I think Bumrah deserves the captaincy: Ashwin

MUMBAI, MAY 14:

The recent retirements of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli have created a significant leadership vacuum in India's Test team, feels former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin while backing star quick Jasprit Bumrah to take over the reins of the side as they embark on a crucial tour of England for a five-Test rubber, marking the start of a new World Test Championship (WTC) cycle, and a transitional phase in Indian cricket. "I didn't have an idea that both (Rohit and Kohli) would retire together. This will be a testing time for Indian cricket, and I'll say this is truly now the beginning of the Gautam Gambhir era," Ashwin said. "The team that will tour



England will be a completely new team, a transformed team where Bumrah will probably be the senior-most player. He is obviously one of the captaincy options; I think he deserves the captaincy, but the selectors will take a decision

based on his physical capacity. "Their retirements will definitely create a leadership vacuum. You can't buy experience, especially on tours like this. Virat's energy and Rohit's composure will be missed."

'Karun Nair can be Virat Kohli's replacement at No. 4 in England Tests': Anil Kumble



MUMBAI, MAY 14:

As India moves into a hard transition following the retirements of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, former India captain Anil Kumble feels Karun Nair could be one of the gainers when the Test team for England is announced. Furthermore, a question over India's next No. 4 lingers as

the position sees uncertainty for the first time in over three decades after being dominated by Kohli and Sachin Tendulkar before him. India are staring at a steep challenge with the five-match Test tour starting next month and an inexperienced middle-order at their disposal. Kumble feels the 33-year-old Nair can be the immediate

solution for the Test side, also bringing his experience to replace Kohli at No. 4. "I don't think anybody thought through who's gonna bat at No.4. Rohit (Sharma) in Australia didn't play the first Test, so there was a change in the batting order. Once (KL) Rahul did well, Rohit dropped down the order and then he dropped himself from the XI in that last Test. So you sort of know who is the backup opener for India, but I don't think anyone thought through No.4," Kumble told. "Karun deserves to come back into the Indian team with the kind of domestic run he has had. So perhaps he could be the No.4 for India because I feel, you need a bit of experience. You need someone in England who has been there and done that. He has played County cricket, so he knows the conditions. Karun may be on the other side of 30, but he is still young," Kumble told.

Which is Lionel Messi's favourite goal from his career?



MUMBAI, MAY 14:

Messi has scored 860 goals as yet. Which one do you like the most, and which does he like the most? On May 22nd, Messi will reveal his favourite goal for a cause. "Choosing just one goal is very difficult, but doing it with this purpose is worth it," Messi said. "There's a very important objective behind it, and I'm very happy to be part of it," Messi said. He will do it for "A

Goal in Life," an artistic and charitable project. The initiative, led by the Inter Miami CF Foundation, and done with the digital artist Refik Anadol. The work will be a visualization of the selected goal and an artistic interpretation based on millions of data points that capture the emotional essence of that moment. The announcement of the selected goal will be on the Inter Miami CF Foundation's social media

channels. The final artwork will be unveiled on June 11 in New York at an event hosted by Christie's, the auction house. Refik Anadol is obviously thrilled: "It's an honor to collaborate with Messi on something that unites the emotional legacy of sport with the future of art. Using AI to visualize the memory of his favorite goal is both an artistic and ethical challenge. A vast majority of Messi's goals came for his boyhood club Barcelona, of course. From 2003 to 2021, he was with the Spanish giants, joining them as a teenager from Argentina and going on to have a career for the ages. In 778 appearances for Barcelona, he scored 672 goals during which he won 4 UEFA Champion League titles and 10 Spanish league titles among many other trophies. The list of his epic goals for Barcelona in themselves would make for a stunning compilation.

ILT20 Chief on rescheduling of tournament to December-January: 'Will provide the teams with the best opportunity to access a bigger pool of players'

NEW DELHI, MAY 14:

When asked about International League T20 (ILT20) and SA T20's schedule overlapping, the Commissioner of the SA20 league, Graeme Smith, was quite vocal about his disapproval of the UAE-based league. In addition to both these, there is also the Big Bash League happening in Australia at the same time, making it difficult for the leagues to have the best access to quality players across the globe.

"We feel that the December-January window will provide the teams with the best opportunity to access a bigger pool of players," ILT20 chief executive David White said in a statement. Unlike SA20, which follows the Indian Premier League model where a team can fill four overseas players in the playing XI in ILT20, a team can play with nine foreigners



in their playing XI. Additionally, SA20 has a limit of 19 players per franchise with a minimum of 11 South Africans. However, in ILT20, two local players are the minimum requirement for a team. Smith speaking at the captain's day press conference in Cape Town said during last season of SA20, "We see our-

selves as very different to the ILT20. We're a South African league, with a majority of South African players and our ultimate goal is to benefit South African players. We've been built up against ILT20, so it's very difficult for me to not come across like I'm bad-mouthing them, but I do feel like a league like that is not good for the game."

Yograj Singh on Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli's retirement: 'Greatest players should play till 50 years of age'

MUMBAI, MAY 14:

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli have announced their retirement from the longer format of the game in the space of a week, just ahead of the marquee England series. With both the veterans exiting in a short space of time, it creates an experience void on the side. However, the form of both players has been on the downward curve for a while in red-ball format, and the series against New Zealand (at home) and Australia (away) have seen some unpleasant results.

Yuvraj Singh's father, Yograj, though, believes that both of them still have something to offer. "Virat is a big player, so it will obviously be a loss. When many players were either removed, retired, or coerced into retirement in 2011, the team fell apart and has still not stood back up.



But everyone's time comes. I feel a lot of cricket is still left in Virat and Rohit," Yograj told.

Yuvi (Yuvraj Singh) that it was not the right move when he was retiring. One should walk away from the field when one can no longer walk," he added. "If you form a team full of youngsters, it will always fall apart."

has nothing more left to achieve. I think Rohit Sharma needed just one person to motivate him daily, for example, to go for a run at 5 AM," he added. "Rohit and Virender Sehwag are two people who retired too early... The greatest players should play till 50 years of age... I am sad about their retirement as no one is left to motivate the youngsters now."

KIYG 2025: UP's Kadir Khan breaks 400m record; Tushar Chaudhary sets snatch record in weightlifting on day 10

NEW DELHI, MAY 14:

Uttar Pradesh's Kadir Khan broke the 400m record twice inside 24 hours as Khelo India Youth Games 2025 saw another spate of good performances at the Patliputra Sports Complex here on Tuesday.

Aditya Pisal became the fastest boy in the Games with a record performance as Maharashtra continued to lead the medal tally.

In his maiden Khelo India Youth Games, Kadir Khan broke the 400m Games record on Monday and improved his 47.67 seconds in the final. He clocked 47.34 seconds to relegate Bihar's Piyush Raj (47.43) to the silver. Karnataka's Sayed Saaber (47.50 sec) won the bronze. Both Raj and Saaber improved on the previous meet record.

Speaking to SAI Media, Khan said, "I did not expect that I would be able to run so well. This was my first Khelo India Youth Games. Now my effort will be to improve my record in the next edition of Khelo India Youth Games. I



am happy that I was able to achieve my personal best in Patna."

On another sweltering day, Pisal clocked a record 10.62 seconds to erase the previous meet record of 10.63 seconds set by Sadanand Kumar in Panchkula in 2022. Bihar finished with a second silver when Prince Kumar (10.64 sec) finished behind Pisal in a thrilling finish. Pisal's statement Rudra Sachin Shini (10.78) won bronze. Bihar won a third medal, a bronze, when Vijay Kumar clocked 3:57.12 in the

boys' 1500 metres. The gold went to UP's Bablu Kumar, who timed 3:56.36 seconds.

Like the first three days in the weightlifting competition in Rajgir, Day 4 on Tuesday also saw records. Uttar Pradesh lifter Tushar Chaudhary's performance was the highlight of the day as he broke both the clean & jerk and total lift records held by Goldi Khan of Himachal Pradesh set at Indian Weightlifting Federation's National Championships in Nagercoil in January 2023.

With stiff competition from Tamil Nadu's R Kishore, who improved the snatch record twice and the overall lift record once, Chaudhary was unperturbed and produced a superlative performance to put his rival in shade and claim the gold. Chaudhary lifted 126kg in snatch and 163 in clean & jerk, a 10kg improvement in the discipline, and 7kg more than Goldi Khan's overall total.

In hockey at Rajgir, Odisha defeated Jharkhand 3-1 in a shootout to win the girls' gold. Regulation time ended 1-1. Madhya Pradesh won the bronze. In the men's final, Haryana beat Uttar Pradesh 1-0 to win the boys' gold. Punjab won the bronze.

Rajasthan were one of the biggest movers on the medal standings on Tuesday, mainly due to their cyclists. Rajasthan cyclists won five of the six medals on offer in the 30km boys and 20km girls Time Trials on the picturesque Marine Drive along River Ganga in Patna.

Wrestler Anshu loses Ranking Series selection trials

CHENNAI, MAY 14:

Double Olympian Anshu Malik lost the 57kg wrestling selection trial bout held at the IG Stadium, New Delhi on Tuesday. The trials were held to pick the national team for the Ulaanbaatar Open Ranking Series scheduled in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from May 29 to June 1.

Anshu, who represented the country in Tokyo and Paris in 57kg, initially didn't meet the criteria set by the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) for the trials but was later given a go ahead for the competition. Anshu had won a silver medal each in the 2021 World Championships and 2022 Commonwealth Games.

"She was trailing 0-7 with a few seconds remaining in the bout when she opted out due to an injury. It was her first bout in the trials and the winner, Neha Sangwan, went on to finish first in the weight category," a WFI source, who watched the bout from the sidelines, told.



Anshu, 23, who is part of TOPS core group, hadn't taken part in the last selection trials held in March to pick the team for the Asian Championships. According to the WFI criteria, only those who competed in the previous trials were eligible for the latest competition. Besides, the federation had decided to conduct

trials only in weight categories wherein Indian wrestlers had returned empty handed from the continental tournament. Sunil Kumar (87kg) and Nitesh (97kg) had won a bronze each in the Greco-Roman style while Udit (61kg silver), Deepak Punia (92kg silver) and Dinesh (125kg bronze) were the medallists in the freestyle in the Asian meet. The trials for men

IPL 2025 Restart: South Africa want their stars back home on May 26, says head coach Shukri Conrad

NEW DELHI, MAY 14:

South Africa want their players active in the Indian Premier League (IPL) to be back home by May 26, head coach Shukri Conrad has said. While the IPL 2025 final was scheduled for May 25, it has now been pushed to June 3 after the league was suspended amid rising cross-border tensions between India and Pakistan. Of the 20 South African players who are in India for the IPL, eight have been named in the Proteas squad for the upcoming World Test Championship (WTC) Final against Australia, scheduled to be held at Lord's from June 11.

"The initial agreement with the IPL and the BCCI was with the final being on the (May) 25th, our players would return on the 26th so that it allows them ample time before we fly out on the 30th. Nothing has changed from our perspective," Conrad told. The players who have named in the Proteas squad are Corbin Bosch (Mumbai Indians), Wiaan Mulder (Sunrisers Hyderabad) Marco Jansen (Punjab Kings), Aiden Markram (Lucknow Super Giants), Lungi Ngidi (Royal Challengers Bengaluru), Kagiso Rabada (Gujarat Titans), Ryan Rickelton (Mumbai Indians) and Tristan Stubbs (Delhi Capitals). Mulder is the only one who is confirmed to not have any more commitments in the IPL after May 25, with SRH having failed to make it to the playoffs and playing their final league game on that day.

Conrad said that, as things stand, Cricket South Africa (CSA) is not intending to change its stance on when they need the players to be back from India in time for the final. "That is the ongoing conversations that are being had between people in a higher pay grade than I am, i.e. the Director of Cricket (Enoch Nkwe) and Pholetsi Moseki (CSA CEO), so they're dealing with that. But as it stands, we're not budging on that, I don't think. We want our players back on the 26th, and hopefully that comes to fruition," Proteas men's head coach Shukri Conrad said.

Delhi Capitals sign Mustafizur Rahman as replacement for Jake Fraser-McGurk

MUMBAI, MAY 14:

Delhi Capitals announced that they have signed Mustafizur Rahman as a replacement for Jake Fraser-McGurk, who will not be returning to the Indian Premier League when the season resumes this Saturday. An announcement from IPL said that Fraser-McGurk had opted to leave from the remainder of the IPL 2025 season due to personal reasons.

Fraser-McGurk, signed by Delhi Capitals at the IPL mega auction for Rs 9 crore, had flown back to Australia when the IPL was suspended for a week as the India Pakistan conflict escalated. The game between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals was abruptly halted at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala due to blackouts in the city. The Punjab Kings vs Delhi Capitals match will now take place in Jaipur on May 24. Delhi's first match after the resumption of the league will be against Gujarat Titans on May 18 in the national capital.

Then, when both nations agreed to a ceasefire, the BCCI decided to resume the league from Saturday (where Royal Challengers Bengaluru will host Kolkata Knight Riders in Bengaluru). Delhi Capitals, who are in the race to qualify for the IPL 2025 playoffs, are waiting on a few overseas players to return. Mustafizur has so far played 57 IPL matches and has 61 wickets against his name. He has played 106 T20Is for Bangladesh, picking up 132 wickets from the same. The left-arm medium pacer will join DC for Rs 6 Crore. Mustafizur, who made his IPL debut in 2016, previously represented the Delhi Capitals during the 2022 and 2023 seasons. In 2022, he picked up eight wickets in eight matches with an economy of 7.62 and in the following season, he played two matches for Delhi Capitals.

wrestlers were held in Lucknow on Monday. A trial was held in Sunil's weight category too as he is said to be injured and cannot compete in the Ranking Series.

In the women's wrestling, Manisha clinched 62kg gold while Reetika returned with 76kg silver in the Asian event held in Amman, Jordan from March 25 to 20. Antim Panghal (53kg), Muskan (59kg) and Mansi Lather (68kg) had bagged a bronze each. The WFI had also given permission to Radhika to appear in the 68kg trials as she had submitted her medical certificate requesting to skip the previous trials. Besides, Mansi, the medallist in the division, is injured and hence out of contention.

The winners of the trials along with Asian Championships medallists will represent the country in the third Ranking Series of the year in Mongolia.