

Ellyse Perry speaks on inaugural women's Champions Trophy, Indian duo of Smriti-Harmanpreet

NEW DELHI, AUG 17:

Australian cricket icon Ellyse Perry spoke on the upcoming inaugural edition of the ICC Women's Champions Trophy, expressing her excitement for the tournament and how it is a great opportunity for women's cricket.

The ICC Women's Champions Trophy will take place from February next year, with the competition featuring six teams playing a round-robin format, in a T20I format.

Perry said, "It is another great opportunity for the women's game and for all the teams competing. From my perspective, it is a new event, so it is always exciting to be a part of something like that, and a new spot on the calendar, which will be great for everyone. You want to play every game well. This tournament will be physically and mentally a huge challenge, and preparing for those match-



es, everyone's going to have to be spot on. But yeah, the mindset remains the same, you just want to win every game. "Ellyse also delivered some high praise to Indian women's crick-

ing duo of Smriti Mandhana, her Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) teammate in the Women's Premier League (WPL) and Harmanpreet Kaur, the skipper of Mumbai Indians (MI). She said that it is the "amazing skill, incredible willpower and strong mind" of Smriti that makes her so successful.

The Aussie superstar also praised Harman's tenacity and competitiveness. "What makes Smriti so successful? Her amazing skill. I think she has got incredible willpower and a super-strong mind, the way she approaches the game, the way she prepares, the way she knows herself, the way she thinks about things, and the way that she likes challenges. She has got it all.

Harman, I think her greatest strength is her tenacity. She is a great competitor, and when she is going, she hits some of the biggest shots in the women's game," she added.

BWF World C'ships: PV Sindhu reaches Round of 32 with dominant win over Sophia Noble, Treesa-Gayatri down Paula-Lucia in doubles clash

MUMBAI, AUG 17:

Ace shuttler PV Sindhu made a strong start at the 2026 BWF World Championships, beating Ireland's Sophia Noble in straight games. Playing in front of her home crowd at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, Sindhu won the women's singles Round of 64 match 21-7, 21-11. Sindhu controlled the match from the beginning, using accurate drop shots and powerful smashes.

Noble struggled to keep up with Sindhu's speed and attacking play. Sindhu won the first game comfortably and continued her dominance in the second game. She stopped Noble's comeback attempts and finished



the match with ease. Sindhu has reached the Round of 32. She will next face Canada's Wen Yu Zhang on Tuesday. Notably, Sindhu has an impressive record at the BWF World Championships, having won five medals, one gold, two silver, and two bronze, to equal China's Zhang Ning for the most women's singles medals in the tournament's history.

‘Possibly the biggest upset’: Mark Waugh on Bangladesh’s win over Australia



MUMBAI, AUG 17:

With their nine-wicket win over hosts Australia in the first Test at Darwin, Bangladesh recorded their first ever win over Australia on Australian soil. The record win also saw Bangladesh becoming the quickest Asian team to score their first win in Australia and Sunday's loss was also the first time since 1995 that Australia lost a home Test against an

Asian team other than India. The nine-wicket win is also Bangladesh's second biggest win by wickets in Tests and former Australia batsman and selector Mark Waugh has termed Australia's loss as 'possibly the biggest upset'.

"This could possibly be the biggest upset I can remember in Australia," Mark Waugh said on Fox Cricket's coverage. The West Indies beat

Australia at the Gabba three or four years ago at the Gabba – that was an upset. But this one, given their best two bowlers (Nahid Rana and Shoriful Islam) are not playing, the rankings, Australian team back at full strength, it's a big one, this one." Waugh said

Sunday's win was also Bangladesh's second Test win in SENA countries. Their first such win came against New Zealand in 2022 when they defeated the hosts by eight wickets at Mount Maunganui. The win was also Bangladesh's second Test win against Australia in the seven Tests that the two countries have faced against each other.

Australia had announced a 13-member squad for the two Test series against Bangladesh with the Pat Cummins led Australian team going with Jack Weatherald as the second opener with Travis head and Marnus Labuschagne as the number three.

Unnati Hooda has the shots, but can she control her mind on World Championships debut

NEW DELHI, AUG 17:

India's women's singles debutant Unnati Hooda needs to believe she belongs on the big stage for the long haul.

"I am working mentally on taking my time on the court," the teenager says, ahead of her Round 1 match against Thet Htar Thuzar of Myanmar, realising that a first appearance can go in the wrong direction quickly if she doesn't compose herself through her inaugural Worlds.

The youngster could go deep if she can find her way around a navigable draw. If she gets past the first round, Unnati will probably need to beat 13th-seeded Canadian nemesis Michelle Li next (or Chiu Pin-Chian). The path isn't treacherous but it'll need her to be courageous and take on potentially 8th seed Tomoka Miyazaki in the pre-quarters. Chen Yufei is in her quarter, and though a medal is tough,



the World Championships is a good time to get ambitious.

"On the biggest stage, you need to work equally on the physical and mental aspects. So I've been working with a psychologist," Unnati says. "It's never easy given these are seeded players. We can't decide the result but what I'm capable of, I intend to do. I also have my qualities. I've come prepared."

Unnati says she is excited for the Worlds and sees it as a good opportunity to make a mark playing at home. What has changed since her early loss at the World Juniors, though, is her mindset.

"I know I need to adapt to different situations. And I need to reset (after losing a point) quickly. I feel confident because I have prepared well," she says.

Pakistan batter Shakeel feels hot conditions in England could suit spinners ahead of 1st Test at Leeds

MUMBAI, AUG 17:

Pakistan batter Saud Shakeel feels that the English conditions could suit his team, opining that hot weather in England could aid Pakistani spinners, noting that during the last Test series against New Zealand, the ball was "spinning plenty". Pakistan will start their three-match ICC World Test Championship (WTC) series against England from August 19 onwards at Headingley. Babar Azam-led Pakistan will be taking to the UK some useful spin options in Sajid Khan, Salman Ali Agha and the left-arm spinner Ali Usman. With an eight-wicket win over West Indies at Port of Spain during the month's start and then a seven-wicket win against Professional County Club Select XI at Beckenham, Pakistan is riding high on confidence. Shakeel was the star of the show during that win over that Professional County Club Select XI as he contributed a superb unbeaten century, while left-arm spinner Ali Usman collected a five-wicket haul to continue the good form he displayed against the West Indies. While Shakeel is unsure exactly what the conditions will look like when the first Test gets underway at Headingley, the left-hander thinks the recent hot summer in England may suit Pakistan's spinners as the match progresses. "I think the way the summer is here in England, the pitches might become quite dry and bring spin into it," Shakeel said, as quoted by the ICC. "In the (recent) New Zealand series here, in the last Test the ball was spinning plenty," he added. While the Test at Headingley will mark Shakeel's first in England, he does have some useful county experience in England, dating back to the 2023 County Championship with Yorkshire, where he could score just 71 runs in five innings.

After early success, India made to toil by Sri Lanka for big 1st-innings lead

NEW DELHI, AUG 17:

Day Three, generally considered the moving day in a Test, didn't exactly move the way India wanted. After they ended up with 462 in their first innings, the Galle weather was kind to them, ensuring no time was lost. And when a collective effort from their attack reduced Sri Lanka to 90/5 by the 27th over, the visitors smelt a big opening. Bowl out the opposition as quickly as possible and enforce the follow-on, giving ample time to their bowlers to force a win.

Instead, all-rounder Sonal Dinusha's maiden Test century and Niroshan Dickwella's 80 extricated Sri Lanka out of the hole, taking the team to 484 before being dismissed, ensuring India would have to bat again. With scattered thunderstorms predicted for the next two days, and the pitch on the slower side, India would need to play exceptional cricket from here to take a series lead.

Having taken stumps at 460/9 on Sunday, India didn't declare at their overnight



score, but their innings lasted only four more deliveries. So they didn't lose the advantage of letting their seamers make the most of the morning conditions. Thanks to the sweating under the covers, there was a bit of movement early on to go with the breeze. And immediately giving India the breakthrough was Mohammed Siraj, who made Nishan Fernando edge one to the cordon, where Devdutt Padikkal held on to a sharp catch.

But the seamers didn't cause much trouble thereafter, and

Shubman Gill turned to Manav Suthar, who struck with his first delivery, removing Dinesh Chandimal. Then Lahiru Udara gifted the spinner his second wicket before Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja got into the act to remove Kamindu Mendis and Dhanajaya de Silva respectively. Mendis was undone by the dip going with a drive, with Gill plucking a one-handed catch inches off the turf. De Silva was caught by KL Rahul, who ensured he stayed low at slip and got his fingers under-

neath the ball as it all began to unravel quickly for the home team.

The challenge began only after half the side was sent back to the pavilion. As soon as Dickwella got in, he chose to go on the offense, with his sweep shots in particular upsetting the Indian spinners.

Ahead of the Test, Dickwella's inclusion had become a big talking point, with questions raised over his career record (batting average 30.97, 21 50s and no centuries). Many asked why did the selectors go back to a 33-year-old who played his last Test in 2023. Even on the domestic circuit, he didn't have the numbers to warrant a comeback. But more than the batting, Sri Lanka claimed it was Dickwella's glove work that brought him into the XI.

With Dinusha measured in his approach, cutting out risk and playing deliveries on merit, Dickwella cut loose as and when he intended. At most times, it was the sweep shot he fell back on as the safest and most effective option.

Making of Navneet Kaur: From a cricket-loving home to India’s World Cup spark

MUMBAI, AUG 17:

If Navneet Kaur had grown up anywhere other than Shahbad, she might never have become a hockey player.

Cricket dominated her home. Her father was an avid follower of the sport, and one of her earliest sporting idols was India's captain, Harmanpreet Kaur. But growing up in Shahbad — the small Haryana town that has produced an assembly line of international hockey players — made a different future almost inevitable.

In Shahbad, hockey isn't a sport children discover. It's the sport that finds them. "My father wanted me to play cricket; he likes the sport a lot. But where I grew up in Shahbad, everyone played hockey. I thought, 'Okay, there's no cricket here, but if you want to go into sports, then try hockey,'" Navneet told.

She had another, more compelling reason: coach Baldev Singh, who was conferred the Padma Shri this year. "He has created many excellent international players. So that's why I started playing hockey," she



said.

The Women's Hockey World Cup, the 30-year-old reminded everyone why both Shahbad and Baldev continue to shape some of India's finest players.

With India holding Olympic silver medalists China to a 2-2 draw in their Pool D opener, ending a run of four straight defeats against the Asian heavyweights, the experienced forward produced a performance that was as influential as it was energetic. She scored, created openings, led the press

looking for an opportunity to play. I had no idea I'd end up playing here... or even get selected," she said.

That journey began under Baldev, the man who transformed Shahbad into one of Indian hockey's greatest talent factories, producing more than 80 internationals and eight Indian captains, including Rani Rampal. Navneet grew up watching two other former captains, Ritu Rani and Surinder Kaur, train under him. Before she was one of his students, she was an observer.

"He was very strict about discipline and demanded complete focus during training. Otherwise, you'd have to run laps of the ground," Navneet said. "If he saw potential in a player, he would pay extra attention. But he was never biased. All he wanted was to create opportunities for girls through hockey." Baldev had spotted the spark in her, and by 2013, Navneet was seen as one of India's brightest young prospects, even featuring in the bronze medal-winning team at the Junior World Cup.

Ayush Shetty upsets World no 1 and world champion Shi Yuqi



MUMBAI, AUG 17:

Underdog home favourite taking on World champion in first round of a World Championship is script for a blockbuster.

The script was delivered on Monday as Unseeded Ayush Shetty took down World no 1 Shi Yuqi 21-14, 13-21, 21-19 in a 73 minutes thriller.

Ayush survived a scare in the third game as he gave away a

lead of 17-6 before winning 21-19. "It was a bit immature of me and I knew he was not going to give me easy points," Ayush said after the win.

Backed by a partisan crowd at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi, Ayush started with a lead in the first game. He started with three consecutive points and never gave away the lead.

Ayush displayed immaculate

defence and used his booming smash effectively. He led 11-5 at the mid game break.

While Shi tried coming back after that with two powerful smashes and a couple of deceptive drops, Ayush held his fort with down the line smashes and placement of his drops.

After the change of sides in the second game, Shi started on the front foot with a 4-2 lead as Ayush faltered on the net. Shi used the faster side to his advantage and won three points on a trot but Ayush didn't let him run away with the lead. Going back to the faster side, Ayush started with the lead in the decider and scored one precise down the line smash and a powerful smash on Shi's body.

After two astonishing smashes, Ayush started forcing errors from Shi as the Chinese hit twice on net and lifted two shots outside. Ayush led 11-5 at the mid-game break.

‘What will Dhoni’s place be’: Former India captain asks CSK amid head coach search

NEW DELHI, AUG 17:

With former Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming taking over as England's red-ball coach following, the buzz has been about who will be the next head coach of the five-time IPL winning side. While there have been reports about former England batter Eoin Morgan and Brendon McCullum being considered for the role at CSK, former India captain Kris Srikkanth has urged the franchise to consider their batting coach and former Australian batsman Michael Hussey. Srikkanth also urged CSK to fix former India captain MS Dhoni's role in the side. Dhoni has not played for CSK since 2025. Faced with injury struggles, Dhoni did not appear for any match during the IPL 2026 season.

"Chennai Super Kings don't need anyone from outside when they have Mr. Cricket with him. Michael Hussey should be the automatic head coach. He will be the best choice. But what will MS Dhoni's place in CSK be going forward? That arrangement has to be fixed first, and only then will everything else fall in place," Srikkanth said. Fleming had spent 17 years with Chennai Super Kings as head coach and under his coaching, the side won five IPL titles. The former New Zealand captain had joined Chennai Super Kings as a player in the inaugural edition of the IPL in 2008 and took over the team's head coach in 2009. Apart from the five IPL titles, CSK also won two Champions League Twenty20 titles under Fleming and entered the IPL play-offs 12 times while being part of IPL finals ten times. Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, who had played for CSK in the past, also hinted on his Youtube channel that Morgan could take over as the head coach. "I have a feeling Eoin Morgan might be coming... His name is doing the rounds strongly...; early discussions are on, no doubt.

‘Bangladesh have been in their faces’ Warner’s brutal take on Australia’s loss

NEW DELHI, AUG 17:

Bangladesh became only the second Asian team except India to hand Australia a test loss since 1995 with their nine-wicket win over the hosts in the first Test at Darwin.

The Najmul Hussain Shantol-led Bangladesh team also scored their first ever Test win on Australian soil with their historic win and only their second win in Tests against Australia with the team reaching the target of 57 runs for the loss of one wicket in their second innings of the first Test.

Former Australian opener David Warner shared how the Bangladesh team outplayed Australia and how the Shantol led team believed in themselves. "They (Bangladesh) have outplayed them. They have been disciplined. They have been in the Australian faces. They believed in themselves. They were hungry. There is a method to it. They have outplayed Australia. I am so happy for them," Warner



told. Sunday's loss was Australia's only fourth loss in 17 Tests in the last two years. Australia posted their lowest total against Bangladesh with the team being bundled out for 198 runs in their first innings in the first Test at Darwin.

Warner shared how the Australian team would be keen to give a huge response in the second Test against Bangladesh. "There'll be a huge response. This is a massive thing in Australian sport.

Australia is supposed to dominate cricket in this country. You lose an Ashes series or you lose a Test series against India, like Australia did, and you know what the media headlines are going to be. But from that standpoint, the players wouldn't be worrying about that. They'll be just filthy and sort of disgusted, in a way, about their performance, but they know that there's a job at hand," Warner added.