

Short Takes

Mumbai loses Full Member status in BCCI, northeastern states included

Mumbai, March 19 : Record Ranji Trophy champions Mumbai have been deprived of their Full Member status in the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), while the Committee of Administrators (COA) has granted Full Membership to all northeastern states.

With the removal of the Full Member status, Mumbai, Vidarbha, Saurashtra and Baroda have also lost their voting rights as the Supreme Court-appointed COA on Saturday night listed the amended memorandum of rules and regulations that will now govern BCCI. Only the states, all of 30, have been given Full Member status.

"In States with multiple Existing Members, the full membership shall rotate annually among such Existing Members such that only one of them will exercise the rights and privileges of a Full Member at any given point of time. The rotation shall be as per the policy framed by the BCCI," the new constitution posted on the BCCI website says.

Under the one-state-one-vote rule, Maharashtra Cricket Association and Gujarat Cricket Association have been picked from their respective states. Cricket Club of India (CCI) and National Cricket Club (NCC) have also been removed, along with all government outfits.

"Each State shall be represented by a state cricket association duly recognised by the BCCI and such associations shall be Full Members. No State shall have more than one Full Member at any given point of time," a note said.

"At the Annual General Meeting/Special General Meeting, each Full Member shall have one vote. The Associate Members shall have no vote."

Apart from the 70-year age-limit for an office bearer, it has been clarified that the nine-year cumulative clause for an office-bearer won't be calculated separately in the cricket board and state association.

Among other things, it has also been noted that the BCCI shall appoint an independent auditor to scrutinise the statement of accounts with regard to the payments made by the Board to the member and all further payments due to a member, associate member and an affiliate member shall be released after the audit report.

The appointment of an ombudsman has also been included. The decision snaps the BCCI President's power in dealing with the finality in case of dispute regarding a vote.

Third Test: India force upper hand on 4th day

Ranchi, March 19 : Superb batting by Cheteshwar Pujara and Wriddhiman Saha coupled with excellent bowling by Ravindra Jadeja put India in a strong position on the fourth day of the third cricket Test against Australia here on Sunday.

Pujara scored a double-century and Saha notched up a ton as the duo produced a partnership of 199 runs to enable India declare their first innings at 603/9 for a lead of 152 runs.

Australia had scored 451 in their first innings.

Pujara scored 202 runs off a marathon 525 deliveries with 21 hits to the ropes. This was the third Test double-century for Pujara and his second against Australia.

The Saurashtra batsman also created the record of most balls faced in an innings by an Indian batsman.

He is the first Indian to face more than 400 balls in a Test innings at home since V.V.S. Laxman batted 452 deliveries during his 281-run knock against Australia during the Kolkata Test in 2001.

Pujara's marathon innings came to an end soon after the double-century when he tried to loft a Nathan Lyon delivery over midwicket and Glenn Maxwell pulled off an excellent catch.

Saha was also in excellent form at the other end, scoring 117 runs. His third century in the longest format of the game came off 233 deliveries and included eight boundaries and a six.

The hosts' first essay consumed 210 overs, the most



numbers of overs that India have ever batted against Australia in a single innings. The previous highest was 202 overs during the Adelaide Test in 2004.

Among the other Indian batsmen, opener Murali Vijay scored 82, while Jadeja remained unbeaten on 54.

Fast bowler Pat Cummins was the most successful among the Australian bowlers with figures of 4/106.

Left-arm spinner Steve O'Keefe returned figures of 3/199 while pacer Josh Hazlewood and off-spinner Lyon claimed a wicket each.

After skipper Virat Kohli declared the India innings with less than hour to go for stumps, left-arm spinner Jadeja claimed the wickets of David and Nathan Lyon to leave Australia struggling at 23/2 in their second outting when play was called for the day.

Jadeja notched up figures of 6/2 off the 3.2 overs he has bowled so far.

The visitors now trail India by 129 runs.

Earlier, resuming the penultimate day at 360/6, Pujara and Saha batted steadily as the hosts closed the deficit slowly but surely.

The two stitched together an unbeaten 107-run stand for the seventh wicket, with Pujara batting on 164 and Saha on 59. This is the highest run partnership in the innings.

Both batsmen survived two LBW appeals before lunch as they were on the right side of their respective Decision Review System (DRS) calls.

Throughout his marathon stay at the crease, Pujara was involved in a total of six partnerships.

The Saurashtra right-hander, who was rock solid on the backfoot, took a liking to Steve O'Keefe's bowling,

scoring a lot of runs off the left-arm spinner.

But what got captain Virat Kohli smiling was the fact that India got both their reviews right on the money. First Saha was given out when he was batting on 19 and the score was 362/6.

But after the diminutive wicketkeeper-batsman went upstairs, replays showed the ball was missing leg stump.

Pujara was next, taking the DRS after umpire Ian Gould had adjudged him leg before to a Lyon delivery. But reviews showed that the delivery pitched on the off-stump line and turned a tad too much to miss the leg stump, forcing the umpire to reverse his original decision. Pujara was an epitome of concentration as he brought up his 150 in typical fashion, stealing a run with a defensive jab.

Shortly before the lunch interval, Lyon again appealed and then referred, this time for caught behind when Saha executed a sweep shot.

But replays found no evidence of contact leaving the visitors more frustrated.

Pujara and Saha batted the entire post-lunch session as well before going back in quick succession after the tea break.

After Lyon had sent back Pujara, Saha fell just three overs later when he tried to chip an O'Keefe delivery over cover only to see Maxwell pull off another excellent catch.

Jadeja and Umesh Yadav then added 54 runs between them before Kohli decided to announce the declaration.

China to host major world badminton events in 2018, 2019

Beijing, March 19 : The Chinese city of Nanjing was awarded the right to host next year's BWF World Championships, while another Chinese city Nanning was selected to stage the BWF Sudirman Cup 2019, the World Badminton Federation (BWF) announced on Saturday.

BWF Council Members made the decision following six bid presentations for four major events in 2018 and 2019, reports Xinhua news agency.

"Our major events showcase the best of badminton, with all of our elite athletes competing. We are excited at the

prospect of breaking new ground by going to cities that have not had the honour of hosting our major events before. This is significant for the development of our sport," BWF president Poul-Erik Hoyer said.

Bangkok became the first Thai city to host a BWF major event as it was named to host next year's BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals.

The Swiss city of Basel beat Tokyo to host the BWF World Championships 2019. Tokyo originally planned to bid to stage the event ahead of the 2020 Olympic Games.

Balotelli restrained, Nice drop points again in Ligue 1 title race

Paris, March 19 : Italian forward Mario Balotelli could not find the net as Nice dropped two crucial points in their bid for French Ligue 1 football championship after a 1-1 draw with Nantes.

With two consecutive draws -- second on Saturday, Nice remained third with a four-point gap from league leaders Monaco, who will visit Caen on Sunday. Defending champions Paris Saint-Germain led Nice by one point at second, with a highly-anticipated clash with Lyon at the Parc des Princes, reports Xinhua news agency.

Balotelli did not prove himself after Nice top scorer Allassane Plea was out of the season. He was often isolated up front, as Nantes

did an excellent job on cutting his connection with teammates.

Argentine striker Emiliano Sala earned Nantes a 1-0 lead in the 22nd minute, before Nice tied the game on Jean-Michel Seri's superb shot from the edge of the box just five minutes later.

Prejuce Nakoulma, who joined Nantes in winter transfer window, saw his header hit the crossbar in the 55th minute.

With a 5-1 home win over Montpellier, Bordeaux caught up with fifth-placed Marseille on 46 points, just trailing by goal difference.

Also on Saturday, Angers crushed over Guingamp 3-0, Nancy lost to bottom-ranked Lorient 3-2, and Toulouse had a goalless draw with Rennes.

Bangladesh beat Sri Lanka to win 100th Test



Colombo, March 19 : Bangladesh racked up a thrilling four-wicket victory over Sri Lanka riding a brilliant all-round performance from Shakib Al Hasan to seal a memorable 100th Test win here on Sunday.

Chasing 191 to win, Tamim Iqbal struck a fine 82 before skipper Mushfiqur Rahim (22 not out) carried Bangladesh over the finishing line on a dramatic final day at the P Sara Oval here.

It sealed the tourists' first win over the Sri Lanka in the format as they squared the two-match series 1-1. The fact that it comes on their century of Tests added to the weight of the triumph.

Bangladesh became the fourth team to win their 100th Test matches after Australia, the West Indies and Pakistan. After playing 100th Test, Bangladesh have nine wins, out of which four are away from him.

"This was a very important win," Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan said after the match.

"It wasn't easy. We had to come back strongly after the first Test. I just play my shots. As I said, the way (Dinesh) Chandimal batted in the first innings it told me if I apply myself I could score runs," the southpaw added.

Skipper Mushfiqur added, "Obviously, feel great. The bowlers did a great job - Mustafiz and Shakib's spells were outstanding on a flat track. It

showed the character of the team. The boys really stepped up under pressure and there were lot of partnerships in the bowling. I really enjoyed it. If you look at the last few series, we have played some good cricket." On Sunday, the momentum swung like a pendulum through the three sessions before Bangladesh came out on top.

With the track producing sharp turn and bounce, Sri Lanka skipper and birthday boy Rangana Herath landed a double blow by removing Soumya Sarkar (10) and Imrul Kayes (0) early on in their chase.

Bangladesh were reduced to 22/2 before lunch, but Tamim and Sabbir Rahman (41) then showed great resilience and temperament to put Bangladesh back on course with a 109-run partnership.

Sri Lanka's chinaman Lakshan Sandakan bled too many runs and Herath stuck with Dilruwan Perera who soon repaid his faith by taking out Tamim and Sabbir before tea.

But Bangladesh had chopped the target down under 50 by then.

Bangladesh looked to the experience of the Shakib-Mushfiqur pair, particularly after the all-rounder's century in a 100-plus partnership between them in the first innings.

But Perera once again struck after tea break to remove Shakib who played on to leave his team five wickets down, still 29 away from the coast.

Whatever fear of defeat

had loomed at that point disappeared when Mushfiqur took charge. He overturned an on-field lbw decision, paired in a decisive 27-run partnership with young Mosaddek Hossain (13) before Mehedi Hasan Miraz (2) swept one away for the winning runs. In the morning, Bangladesh bowled Sri Lanka out for 319 and were set a 191-run target.

Tail-enders Dilruwan (50) and Suranga Lakmal (42) continued to frustrate the Tigers' bowlers with an 80-run stand for the ninth wicket in the morning after they resumed on the overnight tally of 268/8.

Perera was eventually run out after his fourth Test half-century. Lakmal soon followed him back when he holed out at long-off to give Shakib Al Hasan his fourth wicket.

Shakib returned 4/74 while Mustafizur picked up 3/78 for Bangladesh. Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Taijul Islam chipped in with a wicket apiece.

Alaves, Betis win in La Liga



Madrid, March 19 : Deyverson's 44th-minute goal gave Alaves a 1-0 win in the Basque football derby at home against Real Sociedad, while Real Betis beat Osasuna 2-0 in La Liga.

Alaves would have won by more goals on Saturday but for a stunning performance from Real Sociedad keeper Geronimo Rulli who produced a series of saves to keep the home side at bay, reports Xinhua news agency.

he win took Alaves' points tally to 40 from 28 games as they remained in the 10th position, while Sociedad remained sixth.

Finally, Betis moved a step closer to assuring their top flight survival by giving another blow to Osasuna with first half goals from Rafa Navarro and Ruben Castro in a straightforward 2-0 win in Seville.

Following the win, Betis moved to the 13th spot with 31 points from 28

games, while Osasuna remained in the 20th spot with 11 points from 28 matches.

Earlier in the day, league leaders Real Madrid registered a narrow 2-1 win away against Athletic Club Bilbao.

Madrid can thank a solid defensive display and goals from Karim Benzema and Casemiro for the victory against a rival, who could count themselves slightly unlucky not to have taken a point since they saw more of the ball.

The key to the game was the home side's failure to consolidate following Aritz Aduriz's 65th minute equalizer and allowing Casemiro a simple finish following a corner three minutes later for the deciding goal.

The day kicked off with Eibar and Espanyol drawing a forgettable encounter 1-1. Eibar opened the scoring through Kiko Garcia after 20 minutes, but Jose Jurado equalized an error strewn game five minutes after halftime.

Bremen upset Leipzig 3-0, Cologne crush Hertha Berlin in Bundesliga

Berlin, March 19 : Werder Bremen shocked runners-up Leipzig with a 3-0 victory on home soil whereas Cologne eased 4-2 past Hertha Berlin in the 25th round of the Bundesliga football championship.

Second-placed Leipzig on Saturday dropped points again after suffering the second loss in a row as Bremen extended their unbeaten run to five games thanks to the goals from Zlatko Junuzovic, Florian Grillitsch and Florian Kainz, reports Xinhua news agency.

The visitors took the reins from the kick-off to ensure the first chance of the match through Timo Werner, who capitalised on a through ball to test Bremen goalkeeper Felix Wiedwald from inside the box with 11 minutes played.

In the opening period, Bremen lacked in penetration while Leipzig came close with another chance as Emil Forsberg pulled wide from the inside left in the 26th minute.

However, Bremen opened the scoring out of the blue as Leipzig were unable to clear the ball from the edge of the box, allowing Junuzovic to drill the ball into the bottom left with 34

minutes into the game.

Leipzig almost equalised the scores before the break but Marcel Sabitzer's effort from the edge of the box got denied by the left post.

After the restart, Leipzig remained in control of the ball but they were unable to overcome Bremen's well-positioned defence.

Meanwhile, the hosts staged a clinical chance conversion as Junuzovic's low free-kick into the box found Grillitsch, who fired past Leipzig goalie Peter Gulacsi to double the lead in the 56th minute.

Leipzig pressed frenetically to reduce the arrears but Bremen caught the visitors flat-footed on a fast break to put the result beyond doubt as Kainz poked home a follow-up shot from close range in the dying minutes of the game.

With the result, Leipzig suffer a setback in the title race as front runners Bayern Munich will have the chance to extend their advantage on Sunday. Bremen's five-game unbeaten run move them on the 13th place.

Cologne returned to winning ways after Anthony Modeste provided a trick to down Hertha Berlin 4-2.

Cologne secured a bright start on home soil as Yuya Osako unleashed a hammer from 20 metres to break the deadlock with just six minutes into the encounter.

Anthony Modeste doubled the lead for the hosts 30 minutes later when he volleyed home Osako's cross from 16 metres. Only moments later, things went from bad to worse for Berlin as Modeste wrapped up his brace after beating onrushing goalkeeper Rune Jarstein to make it 3-0.

Hertha Berlin were able to pull one back as Vedad Ibisevic converted a foul play penalty to reduce the arrears to 3-1 with 50 minutes played.

Cologne continued their relentless performance as Modeste marked his 22nd goal of the season to make it 4-1 on the scoreboards.

The visitors kept it bowling and reduced the lead again as Anthony Brooks headed home a corner in the 69th minute. However, Berlin's second goal came too late as Cologne protected their two-goal lead to the end.

Cologne reaped their first win since February to climb onto the 6th place whereas Berlin stay on the 5th position.

Rooney still has lot to offer to Man United, feels Gary Neville



Manchester, March 19 : Former Manchester United captain Gary Neville feels out-of-favour striker Wayne Rooney might reconsider his potential decision of leaving the city-based football club going by the ongoing English Premier League (EPL) season.

Rooney is United's all-time record goalscorer but the 31-year-old's future is far from certain amid his reduced role under United head coach Jose Mourinho and interest from the Chinese Super League (CSL).

"Him being there next season is doubtful just because of the noise," Neville was quoted as saying by Omnisport on Saturday. "I hope he's there next season. I think Wayne still has a lot to offer, but he wants to play more often."

So far, Rooney has featured 18 times for the Red Devils, his appearances coming from the bench with as Mourinho favouring Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Henrikh Mkhitaryan, Juan Mata and Anthony Martial in the attacking roles.

"He's not playing as much football as he'd like. Knowing him, he's the type of footballer that would like to play every minute of every day," he said.

"There's definitely some doubt, but there's still two to three months left in the season. United have plenty to play for, including qualifying for the Champions

League. "My view would be, maybe his mind can be changed by what happens in those months. With Ibrahimovic missing it is an opportunity for Marcus Rashford, but also for Rooney potentially."

Neville, who won eight English Premier League (EPL) titles with Rooney at United under Alex Ferguson, said people will remember his contribution once he retires.

"Look at life nowadays and social media, we're so quick to judge everybody. He is going through a period of his career where obviously the performances and appearances aren't the same as they were. People tend to forget what happened previously," he reflected.

"All he needs to do is retire and all of a sudden everybody would remember the greatness of him. We are seeing it with (Arsene) Wenger, Rooney, Steven Gerrard, you see this approach towards them and then they retire and people respect and enjoy what they've seen for the last 15 years.

"He will get the credit he deserves eventually because he's had a magnificent career. He deserves a tremendous amount of credit for what he's achieved in terms of club and country appearances, goals, commitment and leadership. He is just going through a natural period that most players do."