

# Sooryavanshi, Ferreira take RR to 214/6 against GT in IPL Qualifier 2

**MULLANPUR:** Rajasthan Royals rode on a magnificent 96 from teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and a late flourish from Donovan Ferreira to post a formidable 214 for six against Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 2 of the Indian Premier League here on Friday.

Sooryavanshi struck seven sixes and eight fours during his 47-ball knock, once again falling agonisingly short of a century. The 16-year-old was dismissed for 96 while attempting an upper cut off Kagiso Rabada, with Prasidh Krishna completing the catch at third-man.

Despite missing out on a third IPL hundred, the youngster produced another

innings of remarkable maturity and class under pressure. With Rajasthan Royals losing Yashasvi Jaiswal and Dhruv Jurel inside the opening two overs, Sooryavanshi curbed his natural aggression and rebuilt the innings before launching an assault in the latter stages.

Unlike several of his explosive knocks this season, the left-hander adopted a measured approach early on, reaching his half-century in 31 deliveries — his slowest IPL fifty to date. Having steadied the innings, he switched gears seamlessly, collecting his next 46 runs in just 16 balls to propel Royals towards a commanding total.

The innings also saw



Sooryavanshi achieve another milestone as he became the fastest Indian batter to complete 1,000 IPL runs, underlining his extraordinary rise in the tournament.

Hyderabad, he missed the fastest IPL hundred by just three runs before being dismissed on 97. On Friday, he once again departed with the milestone in sight, walking back to a standing ovation from teammates and spectators alike.

While wickets continued to fall at the other end, Sooryavanshi ensured the innings never lost momentum. Ravindra Jadeja provided valuable support with an unbeaten 45, anchoring the closing stages of the innings. Ferreira then supplied the finishing touches with a blistering unbeaten 38 off only 11 deliveries, smashing four sixes and two boundaries to lift Rajasthan Royals beyond the 200-run

mark.

For Gujarat Titans, Jason Holder was the most economical bowler, returning figures of two for 27 from his four overs.

Earlier, Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag won the toss and elected to bat first. The winner of the contest will advance to the IPL 2026 final, where defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru await. The title clash is scheduled to be played on May 31 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

**Brief Scores:** Rajasthan Royals 214/6 in 20 overs (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi 96, Ravindra Jadeja 45 not out, Donovan Ferreira 38 not out; Jason Holder 2/27)

## Tickner five-for wraps up innings win for New Zealand

**NEW DELHI:** Half-centuries from Stephen Doherty and Lorcan Tucker and a cameo from Mark Adair delayed the inevitable for Ireland before they slid to defeat by an innings and 79 runs against New Zealand. They had begun the third day on 65 for 2, following on with two more days to play and trailing by 246 runs.

They were bowled out for 232 in their second innings, with Blair Tickner hastening New Zealand's march to victory with his maiden five-wicket haul in Test cricket.

Temperatures finally dropped below 20 degrees Celsius in Belfast — signalling respite from a heat wave in the region — and rain brought an early end to the first session. By then, Ireland had been reduced to 131 for 5.

Nathan Smith — who had taken a six-for in the first

innings — plucked out night-watcher Thomas Mayes within the first five overs of play. A full inswinger had Mayes edging to second slip. At the other end, opener Doherty, who resumed on 26, was nimble-footed in response to early swing.

Despite the overhead clouds, Smith from one end and Tickner from the other bowled with a short-ball plan in mind. The strategy paid dividends when Tickner picked up his third wicket of the innings, in the 26th over: he angled a bouncer into Harry Tector's shoulders, and he ducked into the ball, which pinged off his bat handle to second slip.

More concerning for Ireland was Curtis Campher retiring hurt on 4, another consequence of a bouncer. He had been struggling against the short deliveries.

## Kamaljeet's ton steers Press Club 11 to 25-run victory over Lucky Star

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** A blistering century from Kamaljeet and a disciplined bowling display helped Press Club 11 register a 25-run victory over Lucky Star in a T20 match played at the Jammu University Cricket Ground, here today.

Opting to bat first after winning the toss, Press Club 11 posted a formidable 209 for five in their allotted 20 overs. The innings revolved around a sensational knock from Kamaljeet, who smashed 117 runs off just 53 deliveries. His dazzling innings, studded with 18 boundaries and five sixes, put the bowlers under relentless pressure and laid the foundation for a challenging total.

The centurion received valuable support from skipper Rohit Sharma, who struck 43 off 33 balls with the help of three fours and two sixes. Amit Kumar contributed 17 runs, while Ashu Kumar added 13. Rahul Khatri remained unbeaten on four.

For Lucky Star, Mukesh Kumar emerged as the most successful bowler with figures of two for 32 from his four overs. Tony and Rohit claimed one wicket each. Chasing a daunting target, Lucky Star suffered an early setback when opener Gaurav was dismissed off the very first ball of the innings. Yash Khajuria provid-



ed the breakthrough, striking immediately to hand Press Club 11 the ideal start in defence of their total.

Despite the early blow, Lucky Star battled hard and kept the contest alive before eventually finishing on 184 for seven in their stipulated 20 overs, falling 25 runs short of the target.

Press Club 11's bowlers executed their plans effectively to contain the chase. Dinesh Mahajan led the attack with an impressive spell of two wickets for 15 runs in two overs. Captain Rohit Sharma, Yash Khajuria, Ashu Kumar and Varun Sharma chipped in with a wicket apiece as the bowling unit combined well to seal victory. Kamaljeet's explosive centu-

ry and the collective effort with the ball proved decisive as Press Club 11 completed a convincing win. Speaking during the post-match presentation ceremony, Press Club 11 captain Rohit Sharma congratulated the Lucky Star captain and his team for their spirited effort, saying they fought hard and made the contest highly competitive. The Press Club 11 skipper also expressed gratitude to Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu, Prof. Umesh Rai, and Director Sports, Dawood Baba, for their continued support to Press Club 11 in promoting sporting culture among the youth and spreading awareness against the growing menace of drug abuse through sports.

## Asian U20 Athletics C'ships: Pooja breaks 12-year-old high jump national record

**HONG KONG:** High jumper Pooja, 19, recorded a new personal best of 1.93m and broke the 12-year-old national record of 1.92m set by Sahana Kumari at the Asian U20 Athletics Championships in Hong Kong on Friday.

This is the second time Pooja has gone past her personal best this season after breaching the 1.90m mark at the Indian Athletics Series, New Delhi in April.

With the mark of 1.93m, Pooja won the gold medal making it her second medal at the Asian U20 Championships. With this gold medal, she now holds both senior and junior titles at the continental level.

She also breached the Commonwealth Games qualification mark set by Athletics Federation of India.

After her jump at the Indian Athletics Series, Pooja had said that she is close to the national record and will get



it soon. "My eyes are firmly set on the Asian Games but I have to break the national record for CWG. That was my target today but I couldn't get it," Pooja had told The Indian Express after her jump in New Delhi. "After a point, getting a new personal best is not easy. We have to go step by step. I have improved my personal best after eight months this time. I believe the national record is near and hopefully

I will get it soon." This is the first time any Indian high jumper has gone beyond the 1.92m mark after Sahana Kumari's national record mark of 1.92m in 2012. After her personal best at the Asian Athletics Championships last year, Pooja was forced off the track due to a grade-2 ligament tear. However, after returning from injury, Pooja started training under a new coach,

Sergey Biran from Uzbekistan. Sergey is the husband of Svetlana Radzivil, a three-time Asian Games champion and brings immense knowledge of the sport. This is India's fourth gold of the event with Nitin Gupta (5000m racewalk), Amanat Kamboj (Discus Throw), and Rahul Jakhar (Decathlon) also winning the title. India also won two silver and two bronze medals.

## Rishabh Pant steps down as LSG captain

**LUCKNOW:** Rishabh Pant has stepped down as Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) captain after the team finished at the bottom of the league standings in IPL 2026.

Pant informed the franchise of his decision on Friday, and the development was announced via a statement from LSG's director of cricket Tom Moody.

"Rishabh approached the franchise with this request and we have respectfully accepted it," Moody said. "These decisions are never easy. We are grateful for everything Rishabh has brought to this dressing room as captain. Our focus now is on the collective - rebuilding and restructuring to reach the best standards."

Later, on ESPNcricinfo's Time Out, Moody added: "At the end of the day, Rishabh has recognised that it's time



to move on from captaincy for now and focus as the player.

"The last couple of years have been difficult for him. He hasn't reached the heights he would've expected for himself. It's the right decision - certainly the right decision for him, it's the right decision for the franchise. Let's hope this is the corner he turns that enables him to play the brand of cricket we recognise alongside him.

"I made the statement at the end of our last game that we needed to consider a leadership reset. And I think everyone knew that. In the last three years for the franchise, they've come seventh, seventh and tenth. So we need to look at things."

As for Pant's future at LSG, Moody said that was an "obvious question", but one whose answer would only be possible after a full season review.

"We as a franchise recognise that the tournament's not even finished yet," Moody told ESPNcricinfo. "It's going to take a long time for us to debrief, review the whole squad. [We need to see] what are we looking to do, what brand of cricket are we wanting to play, and who's going to be playing those roles moving forward."

Pant, 28, was the second captain at LSG after KL Rahul, who had led the team from 2022 to 2024. After being released by Delhi Capitals, Pant was bought by LSG at the IPL 2025 mega auction for INR 27 crore (USD 3.21 million approximately), making him the most expensive player in the league's history. In his inaugural message, Pant declared he would give his "200%" to LSG and was "looking forward to have a new beginning with new

energy and just have a blast out there, and have lots of fun."

There was little joy, however for captain or team. Under Pant's leadership, LSG won 10 and lost 18 matches, finishing seventh in IPL 2025 and tenth in 2026. His own batting form has been poor in both seasons: he scored only 269 runs at a strike rate of 133.16 in IPL 2025, and 312 runs at a strike rate of 138.05 in IPL 2026.

In Friday's statement, Moody did not mention a timeline for naming a new LSG captain. It remains to be seen whether the franchise, which is owned by the RPSG group, will wait for the IPL auction, likely in December, to name one. LSG have several senior overseas players like Mitchell Marsh, Aiden Markram and Nicholas Pooran who are likely to be among the contenders.

## How Pigeons Use Iron-Rich Liver Cells To Find Their Way Home



**A** surprising gut feeling may help pigeons find their way home.

Animals use various techniques to navigate including following the stars and remembering key landmarks. Birds, fish and turtles orient themselves using Earth's magnetic field as a compass. But it's not yet clear how exactly they do this. Pigeons are a well-known group of frequent flyers that can traverse hundreds of miles (hundreds of kilometers) in a single day. For thousands of years, humans have used them to carry news, notes and military messages.

Scientists have long tried to untangle how pigeons travel without getting lost. Some think the birds detect magnetic cues using light-sensitive molecules in their eyes, while others suggest it happens in the beak or inner ear.

"The magnetic sense has been this mystery for almost 100 years," said Martin Wikelski with the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior in Germany.

In a new study, Wikelski and other researchers decided to draw back the curtain on pigeons' nav-

igational secrets. They searched for magnetic clues in the birds' organs and found a strong signal in an unexpected place: the liver.

Specialized immune cells in the pigeon's liver break down red blood cells and store iron. When scientists temporarily stripped pigeons of those immune cells and let them fly, the birds "just couldn't find their way," said Christian Kurts with the University of Bonn in Germany. That suggested the iron-rich liver cells might play a role in their sense of direction.

The birds' magnetic compasses only got scrambled on overcast days. That's because they also use the sun as a navigational guide.

Scientists have previously wondered whether immune cells could be involved in magnetosensing, but the new study published Thursday in the journal *Science* is the first to present a full-fledged theory. "I would never have guessed it, but once it was explained to me, it makes sense," said behavioral ecologist Albert Kao with the University of Massachusetts Boston, who had no role in the study.

The immune cells are located near nerve fibers in the liver. That might be how they transmit their "magnetic sense" to the brain "and help the pigeons to navigate," said study co-author Clivia Lisowski with the University of Bonn.

The researchers think other birds and animals like mice could operate using a similar magnetic GPS. But outside experts say more work is needed to verify the pigeons navigate this way and to firm up how these signals get to the brain. While the researchers found the strongest magnetic signal in the pigeons' livers, such immune cells have also been spotted in other areas including the beak and spleen.

It's possible this magnetic puzzle doesn't have a single answer, wrote veterinary pathologist Simon Spiro and biologist Hal Drakesmith in an accompanying editorial. The birds could use different techniques to sense magnetic fields depending on the task, be it traveling long distances or finding a specific destination.

"Indeed, it could be prudent to have more than one way of getting home in the dark," they wrote.

## NASA Shares Stunning View Of Earth's Night Lights As Seen From Space

**N**ASA has shared a new set of images, which show Earth at night as seen from above, with city lights, coastlines, and natural features glowing against the dark planet. The stunning photos reveal how human settlements light up the surface.

On one side, bright clusters mark major cities; meanwhile, thinner lines trace highways and borders. On the other hand, darker areas show oceans, deserts and forests where little artificial light reaches.

These particular images were captured by astronauts when the International Space Station (ISS) passed over the Gulf of Thailand.

"It's always nighttime somewhere," NASA wrote on Instagram. "Pause your scrolling to enjoy some night sky views of Earth



from above. These photos were snapped by our astronauts aboard the @ISS as they passed over the Gulf of Thailand.

"The dots of blue and green are the lights of squid-fishing boats. The lights attract

plankton and small fish, which lure squid toward the nets," NASA explained. From space, the contrast between lit and unlit regions makes continents and country outlines clearly visible. Astronauts often

describe night passes over Earth as one of the most striking sights from the ISS. The images highlight not just population centres, but also how energy use and development vary across the globe.

"Beautiful reminder that the universe is bigger than our daily problems," one user wrote in the comment bright clusters mark major cities; meanwhile, thinner lines trace highways and borders. On the other hand, darker areas show oceans, deserts and forests where little artificial light reaches. These particular images were captured by astronauts when the International Space Station (ISS) passed over the Gulf of Thailand.

"It's always nighttime somewhere," NASA wrote on Instagram. "Pause your scrolling to enjoy some night sky section."

"Nasa, you are my dream. I hope I will work with you," said one user.

"Even at night, our home is beautiful," another user stated. "Love the contrast here," one user added.