



# Afridi, Malik take Sultans to winning stand in low-scoring match

**DUBAI:** Islamabad United Vice Captain Shadab Khan turned the low-scoring match interesting after taking two wickets against Multan Sultans in the 125 run-chase in the first fixture of the day at the Dubai International Stadium.

Fast bowler Waqas Maqsood drew the first blood with the wicket of Johnson Charles.

Shadab's run out of opener Shan Masood from backward point tilted the game in its favor and took LBW wicket of Middle-order batsman Hamad Azam.

**First Innings:** Fast bowler Junaid Khan, Ali Shafiq and leg spinner Shahid Afridi took two wickets each to restrict Islamabad United to mere 125 with seven wickets loss.

Except for opener Luke Ronchi, who scored 51 off 33 balls, not a single United batsman in the opening and middle order, was able to generate the required momentum. Tailenders Samit Patel and Faheem Ashraf with their 29-run partnership dragged the score to 125. After depositing a victory



DUBAI: Afridi kids watch the PSL match.



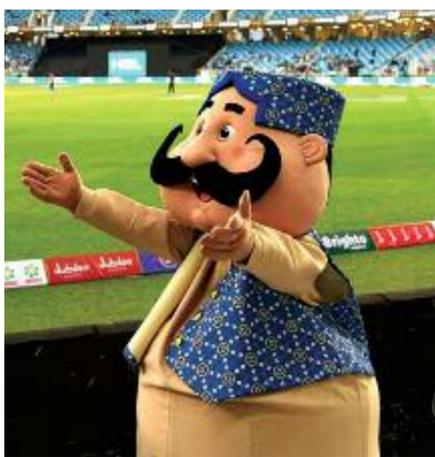
in their opening match of the fourth edition of Pakistan Super League, defending champions Islamabad United are facing Multan Sultans.

United, the champions of 2016 and 2018, came from behind to beat a new-look Lahore Qalandars by five wickets on Thursday, chasing down 172 with four balls remaining.

The Mohammad Sami-led side have been boosted by the return to form of bowling all-rounder Faheem Ashraf, who was awarded Player of the Match for his two wickets for 24 and an 11-ball 23 not out that helped Islamabad in the chase. Asif Ali is also back in form, with 36 not out from 19 balls against Qalandars, while Waqas Maqsood also caught the eye with his economical one for 25 at an economy of 6.25. On

the other hand, Multan will come into the game looking for their first victory of the tournament, having lost their opening match to Karachi Kings by seven runs. Sultans will be looking for inspiration in captain Shoaib Malik who scored a quick 24-ball 50 but could not save his team from defeat.

Bowler Chris Green will once again be on the radar after picking up three for 32 the best of all the Sultans bowlers on Friday night. However, they will be looking for much-improved bowling display with the likes of Junaid Khan and Mohammad Ilyas who both went for 10 and 11 runs per over respectively. In the second game of the day, Lahore Qalandars will take on Karachi Kings. —APP



DUBAI: The Fan celebrate the PSL match.

## Gladiators beat Zalmi by six wickets in PSL clash

**DUBAI:** Quetta Gladiators beat Peshawar Zalmi by six wickets in the third match of Pakistan Super League in Dubai. Batting first Kamran Akmal and Misbah-ul-Haq both scored 49 each for Zalmi and set a target of 156 runs for Gladiators to chase. Mohammad Nawaz dismissed two Zalmi batsmen, while Ghulam Mudassar and Irfan Junior took one wicket each. Chasing 156 and having lost Ahmed Shehzad off the first ball, Umar Akmal quickly came to the Gladiators rescue and hit 75 off 50 deliveries. His partner 62-run partnership with skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed reset the game for Quetta as he comfortably chased the score to give Quetta the win. Sohail Maqsood also chipped in with 26 runs for his side off 29. Quetta will next take on defending champions Islamabad United on Sunday who beat Lahore Qalandars in their opening match of the tournament.

**Squads:** Quetta Gladiators Sarfraz Ahmed (c), Umar Akmal, Ahmed Shehzad, Shane Watson, Rilee Rossouw, Mohammad Nawaz, Anwar Ali, Mohammad Azam Khan, Saud Shakeel, Sunil Narine, Sohail Tanvir, Dwayne Bravo, Fawad Ahmed, Jalat Khan, Mohammad Asghar, Danish Aziz, Ahsan Ali, Ghulam Mudassar, Naseem Shah, Harry Gurney

**Peshawar Zalmi:** Darren Sammy (c), Kamran Akmal, Wahab Riaz, Hasan Ali, Sameen Gul, Khalid Usman, Umaid Asif, Liam Dawson, Misbah-ul-Haq, Kieron Pollard, David Malan, Umar Amin, Sohail Maqsood, Wayne Madson, Nabi Gul, Jamal Anwar, Chris Jordan, Ibtisam Sheikh, Samiullah, Waqar Salamkheil. —Cricinfo



## PSL franchise owners, siblings allowed to sit in players, match officials' area

The Business Report

**DUBAI:** A new rule approved by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has allowed owners of all six Pakistan Super League (PSL) teams to sit in the area designated for players and match officials during the ongoing fourth edition of the league.

However, this rule has restricted Qalandars team manager Sameen Rana from performing his duty freely.

According to a PCB source, the cricket board has conditionally allowed team owners and their siblings to enter players and match officials' area, however, they will have to meet certain reg-

ulations. "If owners or their siblings want to sit in PMOA during matches, they will have to inform PCB's security and vigilance department at least 24 hours before the game," the source



said. "They will also not be allowed to leave PMOA once they have entered it and will not be able to use any communication devices."

However, owing to the rule Lahore Qalandars manager Sameen Rana, who is also the brother of team owner Fawad Rana, was not allowed to carry his device during Qalandars game against United on Thursday night, a source told Private tv. "Sameen falls in the category of siblings, that's why he was not allowed to carry his phone," the source said. In normal circumstances, the team manager is allowed to carry communication devices in PMOA to perform his duty.

## Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay to present joint 2030 WC bid

**MOSCOW:** Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay are to submit a joint bid to host the 2030 World Cup, Chile's President Sebastian Pinera announced.

Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay had already submitted a joint bid to host the centenary edition of football's most prestigious tournament, but Pinera said on Twitter that those countries' presidents had agreed to Chile's participation in the "joint candidacy".

Argentina and Uruguay originally announced their intention to submit a joint bid in 2017 before Paraguay joined the coalition later that year.

In December last year, Bolivia's football-mad president Evo

Morales offered those three countries help in their bid, proposing "two or three departments as sub-seats" for the competition. Had his offer been accepted, it would have meant the Hernando Siles Reyes stadium in La Paz potentially included as a host venue. Pinera said he had been touting his idea to the presidents of Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay for several months. Uruguay hosted and won the inaugural World Cup in 1930, Chile was the venue in 1962 and Argentina emulated its neighbor's achievement by lifting the trophy on home soil in 1978.

Like Morales, Mauricio Macri of Argentina, Uruguay's Tabare

Vazquez and Paraguayan Mario Abdó Benítez are all passionate about football having all been president of a club in their countries. Pinera is a billionaire businessman who started out as a teacher and has no previous connection to football.

The South American bid faces competition from Morocco and potentially several other joint bids, including one from Britain and Ireland and another by an eastern European confederation of Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has even mooted a joint bid with Morocco, which has failed five times in bidding to host the World Cup, and Portugal. —AFP

## Quick Read

### 'Exceptional talent' in PSL to be considered for WC: Sarfaraz

The Business Report

**DUBAI:** Pakistan's cricket captain Sarfaraz Ahmed said Friday the Pakistan Super League (PSL) was an opportunity for young cricketers to prove their worth ahead of the World Cup. Speaking to the media after leading Quetta Gladiators to a comfortable win against Peshawar Zalmi, the wicket-keeper said those who perform exceptionally in the tournament would be considered for the mega event. "The selection committee and management will surely consider if any exceptional talent is spotted during the PSL who can be picked for the national team," Sarfaraz said. He also praised Umar Akmal, who scored a match-winning 75 to help Gladiators win their first match in the PSL's fourth edition. "Umar is a talented player and he can always do well for his team. If he continues to play like this, I'm sure he will soon make a comeback," the 31-year-old said. Reacting to his side's six-wicket win, the Sarfaraz said it was always important to win the inaugural match and get the momentum in the beginning. "At the same time, it is important to keep that momentum", he said. "We will try to continue with same momentum and passion in the tournament," Sarfaraz added.



### Medvedev ends Tsonga renaissance in Rotterdam

**NETHERLANDS:** Daniil Medvedev ended Jo-Wilfried Tsonga's seven-match win streak on Saturday when the Russian triumphed 6-4, 6-2 in the Rotterdam Open quarter-finals. Tsonga, ranked a lowly 140 after 2018 knee surgery, had been on a roll in the Dutch port city, following his title victory last week in Montpellier. But fifth seed Medvedev arrived in Rotterdam buoyed by a title of his own after lifting the Sofia trophy five days ago. Medvedev outlasted 33-year-old Tsonga in a 90-minute struggle to reach the semi-finals and a meeting with Gael Monfils. The French showman took 69 minutes to advance to his second straight semi-final of the season with his 6-1, 6-2 thrashing of Bosnian Damir Dzumhur. Medvedev improved to 14-2 this season after advancing with seven aces and saving both break points he faced against Tsonga who suffered only his third loss of 2019. Monfils finished runner-up in Rotterdam 2016 to Martin Klizan and lost to Rafael Nadal in the 2009 title match at the Ahoy Arena. Dzumhur had beaten third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in the opening round. Top seed Kei Nishikori was playing taking on Hungarian Marton Fucsovics for a semi-final spot. —AFP



### Isner reaches semi-finals of New York Open

**LOS ANGELES:** Top seeded John Isner was one of three Americans to reach the semi-finals of the ATP New York Open with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Australian seventh seed Jordan Thompson. Isner will now face compatriot Reilly Opelka, who defeated Spain's Guillermo Garcia-Lopez 6-3, 6-4. It will be a rematch from the Australian Open, when Opelka defeated Isner in four sets. The other semi-final will see Sam Querrey square off against Canadian Brayden Schnur. Querrey defeated Jason Jung 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 and Schnur rallied to beat Italy's Paolo Lorenzi 6-7 (7/9), 7-6 (7/5), 7-5 in a pair of three-set matches. —AFP



### Halep and Mertens win through to Qatar final

**DOHA:** Simona Halep won five games in a row in the deciding set of an astonishing match against Elina Svitolina in Doha on Saturday to power through to the Qatar Open final. Seemingly down and almost out at 1-4 in the third set, world number three Halep was roared on by a large and noisy set of Romanian fans to secure a remarkable 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 victory over the Ukrainian. She will play Belgium's Elise Mertens in Saturday's final after the world number 21 surprisingly beat three-time Grand Slam champion Angelique Kerber 6-4, 2-6, 6-1 in the other last four match. Halep described her dramatic win as "unbelievable". "I didn't give up, I promised myself I would never give up against her again because I lost two matches very bad," said Halep. She added: "She played amazing. She moved very well, she hit the ball strong, she didn't miss much." —AFP



### FIFA president 'optimistic' about 48-team Qatar World Cup

**ISTANBUL:** FIFA President Gianni Infantino said on Friday he was "optimistic" about organising the 2022 World Cup in Qatar with 48 teams instead of 32 but warned that it would be "not easy". "I'm optimistic but is it easy? No, it's not easy, I have to be honest," said the boss of the International Football Federation at a press conference in Istanbul after a three-day executive summit. —AFP

## Guptill century secures ODI series for New Zealand over Bangladesh

**CHRISTCHURCH:** A rejuvenated Martin Guptill wound back the clock with his second century in as many games as a clinical New Zealand clinched their one-day series against Bangladesh in Christchurch on Saturday.

The long-serving opener, who had a disappointing recent series against India, rated his 118 as a more satisfying knock than the unbeaten 117 when he returned to form in the first match against Bangladesh.

"There was a lot of flow and rhythm in that one," he said after New Zealand comfortably knocked off their 227-run target for the loss of two wickets and with 13.5 overs to spare. "It felt like I got back to where I was a couple of years ago." Guptill cut, drove and pulled

the Bangladesh attack apart as New Zealand cruised to victory and went 2-0 up in the three-match series.

With the World Cup looming, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson was pleased to see his side had taken lessons from the 4-1 drubbing inflicted by India. "It was what we were wanting," he said.

"That was a really tough series and (the) guys got taught some harsh lessons and it's important you learn from those. "Today and in the last game there were a couple of nice performances obviously led by Martin Guptill."

Against India's tight bowling, Guptill was restricted to a top score of 15. But against a less confining Bangladesh attack, he scored freely, with 14 fours and four sixes from the 88 deliveries he faced. After rolling Bangladesh for 226,

Guptill made a flying start in New Zealand's reply as they passed through 10 overs at 59 for one while Bangladesh were 32 for two at the same stage.

Mustafizur Rahman claimed the early wicket of Henry Nicholls for 14, leaving Kane Williamson to partner Guptill in a 143-run stand for the second wicket.

When Guptill went in similar fashion to Nicholls, caught on the boundary by Liton Das off Mustafizur Rahman in the 29th over, New Zealand were 188 for two. Williamson and Ross Taylor then guided the home side to the finish with Williamson not out 65 and Taylor on 21.

After Williamson won the toss and opted to bowl under cloudy skies, the Bangladesh top order again failed to fire. They were in trouble at 93 for five after 21 overs before Mohammad

Mithun and Sabbir Rahman provided some backbone for the innings, putting on 75 for the sixth wicket.

Mithun again played the anchor role, as he did with his hard-fought 62 in the first match. In game two, he scored 57 off 69 deliveries before he was bowled by Todd Astle, while Sabbir contributed 43 off 65. New Zealand assisted the Bangladesh cause with 23 extras and some sloppy fielding while Rahman had fortune on his side when an edge off a Todd Astle delivery nicked the stumps but the bails stayed on. Colin de Grandhomme had an eventful first over that lasted 11 deliveries, included five wides and also produced the wicket of Soumya Sarkar who was caught by Ross Taylor for 22. But Taylor dropped two catches in the following overs. —AFP

