

# The Peninsula SPORT

Tuesday 14 February 2017

**QATAR UAE EXCHANGE**

Send money online from anywhere in Qatar. [www.uaexchange.com/qat](http://www.uaexchange.com/qat)



**PAGE | 21**  
**Spith rolls to 4-stroke victory at Pebble Beach**

**PAGE | 22**  
**Root replaces Cook as England Test captain**



**National Car Rental** **Alamo**

**Quality Cars Best Prices**

Call: 5547 8150

## Jankovic books place in main draw

**Armstrong Vas**  
**The Peninsula**

**F**ormer World No.1 Jelena Jankovic booked a place in the main draw of the WTA Qatar Open with a fighting 6-1, 6-7, 6-4 win over Bulgaria's Tsvetana Pironkova yesterday.

At the Khalifa International Tennis Complex, Jankovic, now ranked 50, withstood a tough challenge from the 65th ranked player to win in two hours 34 minutes.

The Serbian, aiming to claw her way back into top twenty, started in brilliant fashion to take the first set, dropping just one game on the way.

In the second, Jankovic could not maintain the same level of consistency and made many unforced errors with her opponent latching on to the opening to take a run-away 5-1 lead.

The 29-year-old Bulgarian, who has one career title against her name compared to Jankovic's 15, had an upper hand early into the second half, but then flattered to wrap up proceedings unable to help her serve twice.

The 31-year-old Jankovic, the 2008 Australian Open finalist, made a splendid recovery to tie the score at five-all. From there on, both the players held their nerves and the issue was decided in the tie-breaker in favour of Pironkova.

The third set also turned into a close one but Jankovic, earned a break point in the ninth game and then held her serve to win 6-4 and qualify for the main draw.

Jankovic will take on Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia next.

Joining Jankovic into the main draw were the US trio of Christina McHale, Madison Brengle and Lauren Davis.

Christina McHale made it into the main draw beating Johanna Larsson 7-6, 6-4.

Larsson had earlier

**QATAR TOTAL OPEN RESULTS**

**Qualifying - Second round**  
 Johanna Larsson (SWE) bt Ekaterina Alexandrova (RUS) 6-2, 3-6, 6-2  
 Camila Giorgi (ITA) bt Annika Beck (GER) 6-2, 4-6, 6-3

**Qualifying - Final round**  
 Christina McHale (USA) bt Johanna Larsson (SWE) 7-6 (4), 6-4  
 Lauren Davis (USA) bt Camila Giorgi (ITA) 5-7, 5-2  
 Madison Brengle (USA) bt Saisai Zheng (CHN) 6-2, 6-2  
 Jelena Jankovic (SRB) bt Tsvetana Pironkova (BUL) 6-1, 6-7, 6-4

Serbia's Jelena Jankovic hits a return to Bulgaria's Tsvetana Pironkova during their WTA Qatar Open qualifier at the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex in Doha yesterday. The Former World No.1 Jankovic won 6-1, 6-7, 6-4.

Pictures by Hussain Syed

progressed to the final round of qualifying by beating Ekaterina Alexandrova of Russia in three sets, 6-2, 3-6, 6-2.

Brengle brushed Zheng Saisai of China aside 6-2, 6-1 to make it into the main draw.

The American needed only an hour and four minutes to progress, picking up easy points against her opponent's error-strewn game.

Earlier, Camila Giorgi sprang a shock on seventh seed Annika Beck, taking it to a deciding set before wrapping it up 6-2, 4-6, 6-3.

The Italian could not continue her run against Davis in the final round of qualifying, however, forced into

retirement with the score at 7-5, 2-5.

Caroline Garcia of France will face Brengle, while Roberta Vinci wills square to Davis and Elena Vesnina of Russia faces McHale.

In all, 32 players, five of the world's top 10, are competing in the singles while 16 pairs are showcasing their skills in the doubles of the six-day tournament in Doha.

There will be a new champion at the Qatar Open this year, as last year's winner, Carla Suarez Navarro of Spain withdrew on account of injury.

World No. 2 Angelique Kerber - still searching for form and eager to get back

her top rank - leads the field. Kerber has made a slow start to the season, but has an opportunity to rediscover her form and get back into her strides.

Kerber has got a bye into the second round, where she will play the winner of today's tie between young Russian, Daria Kasatkina or Romanian, Irina-Camelia Begu.

If Kerber wins her second round tie it is seen to meet the winner of Swiss Timea Bacsinszky vs Yulia Putintseva of Russia in the quarterfinals.

Bacsinszky enters the tournament on a high after her Fed Cup heroics for Switzerland. If the Swiss gets past Putintseva, she will have a

challenge at hand from Olympic champion, Monica Puig of Puerto Rico, who opens against Germany's Laura Siegemund.

One of the interesting clashes of the tournament could possibly be between Agnieszka Radwanska and Caroline Wozniacki.

Radwanska has got a bye into the second round, but could crash straight into Wozniacki when she eventually takes to the court.

Wozniacki must first get past Dutchwoman Kiki Bertens before the Radwanska clash.

Another seed, Dominika Cibulkova has also got a bye and a potential second round meeting with the dangerous but unpredictable Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova is on the cards.

The big-hitting Czech Karolina is a firm favourite to move on to the semi-finals. Being one of the top four seeds at the tournament, the world number three gets a bye into the second round, where she will take one either Caroline Garcia of France or a qualifier.



Long queue at the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex as fans eagerly wait for autographs of their favourite tennis stars.

**THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT QATAR TOTAL OPEN**

[www.wtatennis.com](http://www.wtatennis.com)

- The 2017 Doha winner will join an illustrious list of champions.**  
 With defending champion Carla Suarez Navarro forced to withdraw due to injury, the draw guarantees a new champion from the field of 28 women. Starting in 2001, Qatar Total Open's honor roll boasts seven players who won - or went on to win - Grand Slam titles, and five World No.1s.
- Kerber begins her quest to reclaim No.1.**  
 Kerber fell from the top spot after Serena Williams won her 23rd Grand Slam title at the Australian Open, but all is not lost for the German. Should she reach the final in Doha, she could return to No.1 at the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, where she'd also have to reach the final.
- Pliskova rides Fed Cup victories into Doha.**  
 Pliskova began 2017 riding a nine-match winning streak through the Brisbane International and into the quarterfinals in Melbourne. The Czech shook off the surprise loss to Mirjana Lucic-Baroni with a dominating display over Fed Cup weekend, where she earned wins over Lara Arruabarrena and a 60-minute romp past reigning French Open champion Garbine Muguruza.
- Can Cibulkova shake off Aussie disappointment?**  
 Dominika Cibulkova ended 2016 on a career-high, winning the BNP Paribas WTA Finals Singapore presented by S.C. Global, but the World No.5 fell before the second week in Australia to an inspired Ekaterina Makarova. The Slovak is the No.3 seed in Doha.
- Will Wozniacki renew her rivalry with Radwanska in Doha?**  
 The Asian Swing was dominated by the head-to-head between Agnieszka Radwanska and Caroline Wozniacki. The resurgent Dane upset Radwanska en route to the Toray Pan Pacific Open title but the Pole got the better of Wozniacki in Wuhan and Beijing. If she beat Kiki Bertens, she'll face the No.4 seed in the second round.
- Muguruza aims for Fed Cup revenge.**  
 Muguruza shakes off a tough defeat against Pliskova and has a chance to avenge the loss in Doha, as they're projected to meet in the quarterfinals.
- Fed Cup heroes face off.**  
 After a long Fed Cup weekend, plenty of players will aim to take that momentum into the Middle East. One of the must-watch first round includes Yulia Putintseva, who reached her first WTA final in St. Petersburg and helped Kazakhstan into World Group II Play-Offs, and No.7 seed Timea Bacsinszky, who led Switzerland into the World Group I semifinals.

## Al Attiyah leads star cast at Qatar Open Shotgun Championship

**The Peninsula**

**T**he 2012 London Games bronze medalist Nasser Saleh Al Attiyah will lead Qatar challenge at the Qatar Open Shotgun Championship which begins today at the Losail Shooting Complex.

Around 300 shooters from 32 countries - including world champions and Olympic medal winners - will be seen in action during the nine-day event which will be contested in the Trap, Double Trap and Skeet categories, by both men and women, besides the junior events for both boys and girls, officials of Qatar Shooting and Archery Association (QSAA) announced yesterday.

"Many Olympic and World champions will here in Qatar for the championship," said Ali Mohamed Al Kuwari, President of QSAA.

"We hope we will have a nice weather in the coming days and hopefully there will not be any disruption on account of rains. The Qatar Open Shotgun Championship has always been held in the February window and has no history of been affected by rains. Hopefully, the weather stays good and rain has no effect on the championship," added Ali Kuwari.

The QSAA president said the preparation for the smooth conduct of the championship have been put in place.

Hosts Qatar has 49 shooters taking part in the championship, which will serve as a preparation for the upcoming World Cup in India, which starts on February 23 in New Delhi.

The hosts along with Russia will have the highest number of shooters taking part in the championship.

Kuwait is sending 32



Qatar Shooting and Archery Association (QSAA) President Ali Mohamed Al Kuwari addressing the media while QSAA and Qatar Open Shotgun Championship officials look on during a press conference held in Doha yesterday.

shooters to Qatar, while 32 marksmen will try their luck for Kazakhstan. Azerbaijan (12), Great Britain (10), Italy (10) and Oman (11) will make their presence felt on the shooting range and

will be aiming to take home the maximum number of medals from the event.

Shooters from Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Saudi Arabia,

Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, UAE and USA will also be seen in action.

Besides Qatar hero Al Attiyah,

the other prominent shooters vying for top honours at the championship include Juan Jose Amorena Aramburu of Spain, Satu Mäkelinmäki of Finland, Anthony Teras of France, Steven Scott and Amber Hill Great Britain, Marco Innocent, Alessandro Chianese, Antonino Barilla, Daniele Di Spigno and Stefano Alles of Italy, Abdulrahman Al Falhan, Talal Al Rashidi and Shahad Al Hawak of Kuwait, Ray Bassil of Lebanon, Tatiana Barsuk, Elena Tkach, Alexey Alipov, Svetlana Demina and Vasily Mosin of Russia, Michal Slamka, Danka Bartekova, Zuzana Stefeceková Rehak of Slovakia, Saif Bin Futais of UAE and Olga Panarina of Kazakhstan.

Today, the pre-event training for Trap will be held for men's, women's boys and girls, while the finals of the women's trap event will be held tomorrow. The championship ends on February 21.

# Fed Cup: US down Germany in clash marred by anthem gaffe

Los Angeles  
AFP

**C**oco Vandeweghe defeated Andrea Petkovic on Sunday to deliver the killing blow in a nightmare Fed Cup tie for Germany that had kicked off with a first-day national anthem gaffe.

Petkovic and her teammates were angered Saturday when an American soloist sang an old version of the German anthem that begins with a stanza considered overtly nationalist — "Deutschland, Deutschland ueber alles" — a reference to German supremacy.

Singing that version is unwelcome in Germany because of its strong links to the Nazi era, with only the third stanza of the old anthem now used.

"I have never felt so disrespected in my life," Petkovic said on Saturday.

"It was an absolute effrontery and insolence of the very worst kind."

Things would get no better for Germany on the court in Maui, Hawaii.

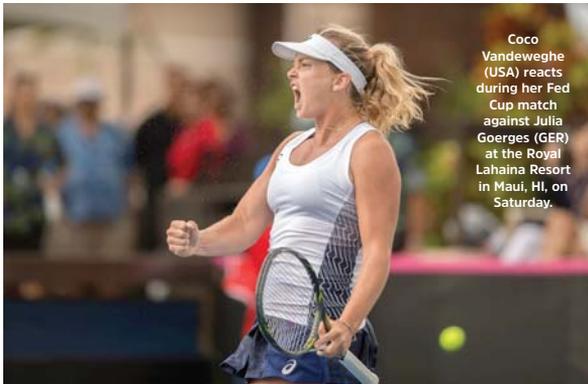
Petkovic, a 12-time Fed Cup singles winner, lost to Alison Riske 7-6 (12/10), 6-2 in Saturday's only completed match.

The US women took a 2-0 lead in the best-of-five tie when Julia Georges, who was in tears after the anthem error, retired Sunday with a knee injury in a rain-disrupted match with CoCo Vandeweghe leading 6-3, 3-1.

Georges was hurt slipping on a rain-slicked baseline on the last point played Saturday.

Petkovic was up again on Sunday with the tie on the line, taking on shock Australian Open semi-finalist Vandeweghe.

Petkovic broke Vandeweghe



**Coco Vandeweghe (USA) reacts during her Fed Cup match against Julia Georges (GER) at the Royal Lahaina Resort in Maui, HI, on Saturday.**



**I have never felt so disrespected in my life. It was an absolute effrontery and insolence of the very worst kind: Andrea Petkovic**



in three of her first four service games to take the first set 6-3, and was up 4-2 in the second when the American took a medical timeout for heat illness.

From there it was all Vandeweghe — she won the next 10 games to win the match 3-6,

6-4, 6-0 and put the United States into a semi-final tie in April with defending champions the Czech Republic, who beat Spain 3-2.

Petkovic, irked by an extended break allotted to Vandeweghe at the end of the second set, couldn't regain her focus.

She finished with 11 double faults, including two in the final game of the match.

She was then left to stand and watch as Vandeweghe celebrated with her teammates before belatedly shaking hands with her foe.

Although Petkovic had reacted angrily to the anthem mix-up on Saturday, on Sunday she took to Twitter to offer a "less emotional" explanation of her feelings.

"We were mainly (stunned) and did not know how we react. We feared the whole thing could

fall back on us," Petkovic said.

"With (time) and a little more rationality, I can classify it as a mistake (for) which the Americans apologised to us. And again it is not the worst thing which happened to me in life. But it is the worst thing which happened to me in my Fed Cup life ever," she said.

The team and a handful of supporters tried in vain to sing the correct version — "Unity, Rights and Freedom" — but couldn't make themselves heard.

Germany captain Barbara Rittner said she had even pondered snatching the microphone from the singer.

"I could have cried, because it is always a special moment, which gives you goosebumps, when you hear the anthem being played," Rittner said.

The president of the US Tennis Association, Katrina Adams, immediately apologised to

## WORLD GROUP RESULTS

**In Ostrava (Indoor, hard)**  
Czech Republic 3 Spain 2  
Sunday

Karolina Pliskova (CZE) bt Garbine Mugurusa (ESP) 6-2, 6-2  
Barbora Strycova (CZE) bt Lara Arruabarrena (ESP) 6-4, 6-4

Sara Sorribes Tormo/Maria Jose Martinez Sanchez (ESP) bt Katerina Siniakova/Lucie Safarova (CZE) 6-3, 4-6, 10-7

**In Hawaii**  
United States 4 Germany 0  
Sunday

CoCo Vandeweghe (USA) bt Julia Georges (GER) 6-3, 3-1, retired (match continued from Saturday)

CoCo Vandeweghe (USA) bt Andrea Petkovic (GER) 3-6, 6-4, 6-0  
Bethanie Mattek-Sands/Shelby Rogers (USA) bt Laura Siegemund/Carina Witthoeft (GER) 4-1, retired

**In Minsk**  
Belarus 4 Netherlands 1  
Sunday

Aleksandra Szarowich (BLR) bt Kiki Bertens (NED) 6-3, 6-4

Aryna Sabalenka (BLR) bt Michaela Krajcik (NED) 7-6 (7/5), 6-4  
Olga Govortsova/Vera Lapko (BLR) bt Cindy Burger/Arantxa Rus (NED) 6-4, 6-2

**In Geneva**  
Switzerland 4 France 1  
Sunday

Timea Bacsinszky (SUI) bt Kristina Mladenovic (FRA) 7-6 (7A), 4-6, 7-5  
Belinda Bencic (SUI) bt Pauline Parmentier (FRA) 6-3, 6-4

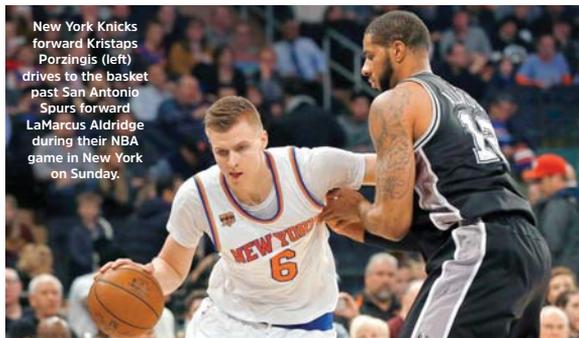
Martina Hingis/Timea Bacsinszky (SUI) bt Amanda Hesse/Kristina Mladenovic (FRA) 6-4, 6-4

Rittner in person and promised to investigate.

"The USA extends a sincere apology to the German Fed Cup team & fans 4 the outdated National Anthem," the US Tennis Association tweeted.

"This mistake will not occur again."

The German tennis federation replied tersely, "@usta we hope so...", prompting the USA to respond, "@DTB Tennis We can assure that it won't. Again, our sincere apologies."



**New York Knicks forward Kristaps Porzingis (left) drives to the basket past San Antonio Spurs forward LaMarcus Aldridge during their NBA game in New York on Sunday.**

# NBA: Knicks stop the rot with win

New York  
AFP

**T**he New York Knicks' latest tough week ended on a high note on Sunday as Carmelo Anthony and company shocked the San Antonio Spurs 94-90 at Madison Square Garden.

A victory over the second-best team in the NBA was a welcome change of fortune for the Knicks, who are languishing well out of playoff contention in the Eastern Conference amid tensions between Anthony and club president Phil Jackson.

A feud between owner James Dolan and popular ex-Knicks Charles Oakley also boiled over in ugly fashion on Wednesday.

Anthony said he was doing his best to ignore the noise.

| NBA SCORES |     |             |     |
|------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| Sacramento | 105 | New Orleans | 99  |
| Detroit    | 102 | Toronto     | 101 |
| Minnesota  | 117 | Chicago     | 89  |
| NY Knicks  | 94  | San Antonio | 90  |

Instead, Anthony said, he and his teammates were focused on delivering the kind of consistent performance they've had trouble sustaining through four quarters this season.

Anthony scored 25 points and pulled down seven rebounds, Derrick Rose added 18 and Kristaps Porzingis contributed 16 with seven rebounds and four blocked shots to help the Knicks end a four-game skid.

New York came up big defensively, too, holding the Spurs to a season-low 36.3 percent shooting in the upset.

Kawhi Leonard paced the Spurs with 36 points and LaMarcus Aldridge added 15, but veteran point guard Tony Parker missed all three of his field goal attempts and finished with zero points and four assists in 31 minutes on the floor.

A jump shot from Leonard cut New York's lead to 88-86 with 1:43 to play, but Anthony responded with two straight baskets that rebuilt the Knicks' lead to 92-86 with 33 seconds remaining and the Spurs wouldn't get the deficit below four points the rest of the way.

Dolan sat Sunday next to Latrell Sprewell, another ex-Knicks with whom he's feuded. Sprewell called the Oakley incident "disappointing" in a outside TV interview, saying it was time to "iron out" the situation "and get past it."

# Spith rolls to 4-stroke victory at Pebble Beach

San Francisco  
AFP

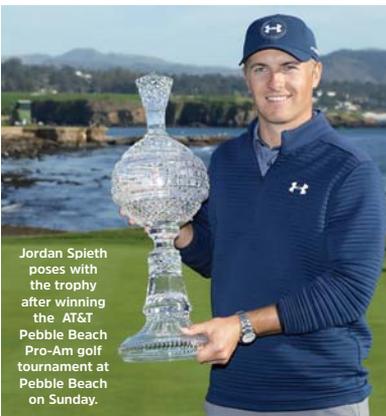
**T**wo-time major champion Jordan Spieth fired a bogey-free two-under par 70 on Sunday to win the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am and capture his ninth career US PGA Tour title.

The 23-year-old American birdied the second and second-to-last holes in the final round at Pebble Beach Golf Links, the only course used on Sunday after three layouts were played over the tournament's first three rounds.

Spieth finished on 19-under par 268, having seized a six-stroke lead after 54 holes with back-to-back 65s Friday and Saturday that allowed him to cruise to a four-stroke triumph over fellow American Kelly Kraft.

"It's unbelievable. We had just a fantastic weekend," Spieth said. "I hit 17 greens today. It was just kind of a dream round when you are leading by a bunch. Finally got one to go in

| PRO-AM SCORES       |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| -19 Jordan Spieth   | 68 65 65 70 |
| -15 Kelly Kraft     | 69 70 66 67 |
| -14 Dustin Johnson  | 70 69 66 68 |
| -13 Brandt Snedeker | 68 69 67 70 |
| -12 Gary Woodland   | 70 73 67 65 |
| -12 Jason Day       | 69 64 75 67 |
| -12 Jon Rahm        | 73 67 67 68 |



**Jordan Spieth poses with the trophy after winning the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am golf tournament on Sunday.**

at 17." In his 100th career PGA event, Spieth birdied the par-5 second hole after reaching the green in two shots and tapping in and then made 14 pars before sinking a 30-foot birdie putt at the 31-17th.

"I kept saying, 'I don't like playing boring golf,'" Spieth said. "But that's what was needed today and that's how we closed it out."

Spieth, who won the 2015 Masters and US Open, captured his first title of the year and became the first player 23-or-under to win by three or more shots five times.

Only 14-time major winner Tiger Woods has won nine PGA titles at a younger age, about a month quicker than Spieth, who also became the second-youngest Pebble Beach champion after compatriot John Cook in 1981.

# Czechs make light of Kvitova absence to reach semis

London  
Reuters

**C**hampions, the Czech Republic made light of the absence of Petra Kvitova as they eased into the Fed Cup semi-finals for a ninth year in succession with a 3-2 defeat of Spain on Sunday.

After the opening day of the tie in Ostrava had been shared 1-1, world number three Karolina Pliskova powered past French Open champion Garbine Mugurusa 6-2 6-2 before Barbara Strycova beat Lara Arruabarrena 6-4 6-4.

Strycova dedicated the win to double Wimbledon champion Kvitova who is recovering from a serious hand injury sustained during an attempted robbery at her home late last year.

"Of course we are thinking about her every day and we were talking to her," Strycova said.

"Of course this was for her. We hope she comes back and we will welcome her with open arms."

Belarus also reached the semi-finals without the services of their top player Victoria Azarenka, who has just had a baby.

They beat the Netherlands 4-1 with 18-year-old Aryna Sabalenka securing the decisive point on her debut.

They will face Switzerland in the semis after they beat France 3-1. The Czechs will face the United States, who beat Germany 4-0 in Hawaii.

CoCo Vandeweghe defeated Andrea Petkovic on Sunday to deliver the killing blow to Germany.



It was Spieth's first triumph since winning the Australian Open last November. Spieth lost in his first four attempts to win when leading after 54 holes but since then has won six of seven such opportunities, faltering only with an epic back-nine collapse at last year's Masters.

Reigning US Open champion Dustin Johnson was third on 273 with fellow American Brandt Snedeker another shot back and world number one Jason Day of Australia on 275 alongside Spain's Jon Rahm and American Gary Woodland. Kraft fired a 67 but never came nearer than three shots to Spieth in settling for his best career PGA finish.

"This is great," Kraft said. "My game is really good. I haven't been clicking all four rounds and everything clicked here. What a fabulous place to do it."



India's cricket team poses with the trophy after winning a solo Test match against Bangladesh at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad yesterday.

# India crush Bangladesh in warning to Australia

Hyderabad  
AFP

India issued a battle cry to Australia yesterday after wrapping up a comprehensive 208-run victory over Bangladesh with a devastating display of spin bowling by Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja.

Chasing 459 for victory on the final day of their first Test on Indian soil, Bangladesh were bowled out for 250 in an extended afternoon session after stubborn resistance from their lower order.

Ashwin and Jadeja shared eight second innings wickets to help India extend their unbeaten run to 19 Tests, leaving them in prime form for a series against arch rivals Australia later this month.

Indian skipper Virat Kohli, man of the match for his 204 in the first innings, paid tribute to Bangladesh for their fighting performance but made clear that thoughts had already turned to Australia.

"Everyone's minds and hearts are on that series and we are keen to start the first Test," said Kohli after seeing off Bangladesh in Hyderabad.

"Everyone is raring to go... It's a very big series for us."

Australia, currently number two in the Test rankings, land in Mumbai yesterday for a four-Test series against Kohli's top-ranked team. Despite the comprehensive nature of the result, Bangladesh emerged with some credit for taking the one-off contest into the afternoon of the final day and Kohli said India would need to be more

## SCOREBOARD

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| India (1 innings):  | 687-6 dec  |
| Bangladesh (0 innings):   | 388        |
| India (2 innings):  | 159-4 dec  |
| Bangladesh (1 innings):   |            |
| T Sangak (Kohli b Ashwin)   | 3          |
| S Nazim (Rahane b Jadeja)   | 42         |
| M Hasan (Rahane b Ashwin)   | 27         |
| Mamudullah (Kumar b Sharma)   | 64         |
| S A Hossain (Jadeja b Jadeja)   | 22         |
| M Zahim (Jadeja b Ashwin)   | 23         |
| S Rahman (bw Sharma)  | 22         |
| M Hasan (Saha b Jadeja)   | 23         |
| K Islam (Rahul (not out))   | 3          |
| T Islam (Rahul b Jadeja)  | 6          |
| T Ahmed (b Ashwin)  | 1          |
| Extras (B-4, LB-7, NB-3)  | 14         |
| <b>Total (all out)</b>  | <b>250</b> |
| <b>Fall of wickets:</b> 1-11, 2-71, 3-75, 4-106, 5-162, 6-213, 7-225, 8-242, 9-249, 10-250.                     |            |
| <b>Bowling:</b> Kumar 8-4-15-0, Ashwin 30-3-10-73-4, Sharma 13-3-40-2 (nb), Hasib 12-2-33-0, Jadeja 31-15-79-4. |            |

50 while young spinner Mehedi Hasan made a gutsy 61-ball 23 to delay the inevitable against the world's number Test side.

But the match ended when Ashwin, who in his 45th Test had become the fastest bowler to claim 250 Test wickets on Sunday, trapped Taskin Ahmed lbw to finish with figures of four for 73.

There was some drama after the umpire originally turned down his appeal but had to change his mind after the decision was reviewed by the Indian team.

Ashwin also dismissed first innings centurion Mushfiqur Rahim (23) in the morning session to snuff Bangladesh's only real hope of saving the match, while Jadeja accounted for star batsman Shakib Al Hasan (22).

Mahmudullah then put on fighting partnerships with their captain Rahim and Sabir Rahman to resist the Indian attack on what still seemed to be a decent batting track.

India had bowled out Bangladesh for 388 in their second innings and decided to build on their 299-run lead after not enforcing the follow-on.

Ninth-ranked Bangladesh were always left playing catch-up after the hosts posted a mammoth 687-6 declared in their first innings. The result meant India maintained their unbeaten record against the minnows and now have seven wins and two draws in nine encounters.

The Australia series begins on February 23, with the first Test in Pune followed by matches in Bangalore, Ranchi and Dharamsala.

ruthless in future. "Closing off games is very important. Especially in Test cricket you don't want to give oppositions any chance to get into the game and that's something we need to keep repeating," Kohli told reporters.

Kohli, second only to Australian skipper Steve Smith in the batting rankings, will go into the series in red-hot form after hitting his fourth double century since July. The Indian skipper said he had been making sure that he does "not get ahead of myself" and said the team's recent run was about more than just his batting.

Monday's result had appeared in little doubt after Bangladesh had been set such a massive total in their second innings and the tourists began the final day on 103-3.

Mahmudullah (64) shrugged off poor form to register his 13th Test

# Root replaces Cook as England Test captain

London  
Reuters

Joe Root said he felt "privileged, humbled and very excited" to be named England Test cricket captain yesterday, replacing Alastair Cook who resigned last week after four and a half years in charge.

Colin Graves, chairman of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), said in a statement that the Yorkshire batsman had been the perfect choice.

"I'm delighted that he has accepted the role and will now help to take the team to the next level," he added.

Durham's 25-year-old all-rounder Ben Stokes was named vice-captain, the role previously held by Root.

Root, 26, has scored 4,594 Test runs since his debut in 2012 and will become England's 80th Test skipper with his first game in charge set to be against South Africa at Lord's on July 6.

Cook, 32, resigned on Feb. 6 after captaining England for a record 59 Tests.

Root, third in the world Test batting rankings, had been the standout candidate despite concerns that the extra responsibility could affect his form.

The Yorkshireman

## ROOT'S FACTFILE

|                       |                                    |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Name:                 | Joseph Edward Root                 |
| Date of Birth:        | Dec 30, 1990                       |
| Place of Birth:       | Sheffield                          |
| Role:                 | Top-order batsman                  |
| Domestic team:        | Yorkshire                          |
| International team:   | England                            |
| Test debut:           | December 13 (against India, 2012.) |
| Test caps:            | 53                                 |
| Test runs:            | 4,594                              |
| Test batting average: | 52.80                              |
| Test 100s/50s:        | 11/27                              |
| Top score:            | 254 (against Pakistan, 2016)       |
| One-day debut:        | Jan 11, 2013, against India        |
| One-day caps:         | 80                                 |
| One-day runs:         | 3,149                              |
| One-day average:      | 46.30                              |
| One-day 100s/50s:     | 8/19                               |
| Top score:            | 125 (against South Africa, 2016)   |

for me it's a huge support to know that they are there to help and advise."

Root made his Test debut in December, 2012 at the age of 21 and has scored 11 centuries in the longest format of the game.

The ECB said director of England Cricket, Andrew Strauss and head coach Trevor Bayliss had held conversations with three players before the selectors made their decision.

Root did not hesitate when the offer was made.

"Joe is the right man to be our next Test captain and I'm thrilled that he has accepted the role," said Strauss.

"He is universally respected by his team mates, passionate about driving the Test team forward and extremely excited about the prospect of leading his country."

"I'm also delighted that Ben Stokes will take over from Joe as vice-captain of the team. He has real presence and influence within the team environment that serve as a great source of support for Joe."

England face a busy year with a home series against South Africa and West Indies followed by the Ashes at the end of 2017 in Australia.

described the new role as a "huge honour".

"We have a very good group of players and I'm looking forward to leading them out in the summer, building on Alastair's achievements and making the most of our talents in the years ahead," he said.

"The senior guys in the changing room play a very influential role and whilst there's a natural progression



This file photo taken on December 11, 2016 shows England's Joe Root as he plays a shot on the fourth day of the fourth Test against India at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. Root yesterday has been named as new Test captain of England.

# PCB vows strong stand in corruption probe

Lahore  
AFP

Pakistani cricket officials said yesterday they would make an example of openers Sharjeel Khan and Khalid Latif if found guilty in a corruption probe that threatens to torpedo the Pakistan Super League (PSL).

The pair, suspended after being accused of meeting a suspicious person linked to an international betting syndicate, could face up to a life ban from international and domestic cricket under Pakistan Cricket Board corruption rules.

PCB chief Shaharyar Khan (pictured) said officials are seeking a "deterrent" punishment if the Islamabad United players, who have been sent home from the continuing PSL tournament in the United Arab Emirates, are found guilty of spot-fixing.

The PCB will take a strong stand so that players no longer



think "they can do something and play after four or five years, so that no one dares to do it again", he told media in Dubai, where the Twenty20 tournament is being held due to security fears in Pakistan.

Shaharyar Khan also voiced frustration over the allegations, which Latif and Sharjeel have denied, and the effect they have had on the highly anticipated PSL, in only its second year.

"The whole nation takes a keen interest in the PSL, so it's an important event and any stigma... is disappointing," he said.

"More so because players are regularly given lectures on how to avoid corruption."

Khan said a tribunal would be formed to hear the PSL case, after which a disciplinary committee would be set up. The PCB is also keeping the

International Cricket Council informed.

Three other players — Mohammad Irfan (Islamabad United), Zulfiqar Babar (Quetta Gladiators) and Shahzaib Hasan (Karachi Kings) were also investigated.

"No action will be taken against Hasan and Babar as they are clear. Irfan is still under investigation and may be served a show cause notice," said Khan.

Both Latif and Sharjeel have denied any involvement.

"I have not done anything wrong and my Allah knows that," Latif told media in Karachi.

Sharjeel has played one Test, 25 one-day and 15 Twenty20 internationals, and recently landed a contract to play English county cricket later this year.

Latif has played five one-day and 13 Twenty20 internationals.

# We need Test experience, says Bangladesh captain

Hyderabad  
AFP

Bangladesh skipper Mushfiqur Rahim said yesterday his side desperately needed more Test experience to be competitive against top teams after their 208-run thumping in their first five-day game on Indian soil.

Ninth-ranked Bangladesh have won just three of their 44 away Tests since gaining five-day status in 2000, but Rahim believes the team is improving with every passing year.

"The more Tests we play, the better we will become as a unit," Rahim told reporters after their loss.

"We have been playing a little better than in the last five years, so hopefully we will step up and the boys will improve with experience."

Indian spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja claimed four wickets each to see off Bangladesh,

who started the day on 103 for three.

"If you look at our bowling line-up, apart from Shakib (Al Hasan) there is hardly a player who has played more than 10-12 Tests," Rahim said, pointing to his side's lack of experience.

"It doesn't matter how many runs you score, but it's important to restrict the opposition batting."

Rahim also lamented the absence of a quality batsman like Virat Kohli, the Indian skipper whose blazing 204 helped the home side amass a crushing 687-6 declared in the first innings.

Where Kohli averages above 50 in all the three formats, Bangladesh boasts only Shakib Al Hasan, who averages above 40 in just Tests.

Rahim said a player like Kohli would have prevented Bangladesh from needing to field seven batsmen on the final day.

## Bayern set sights on Arsenal

Berlin  
AFP

Bayern Munich turn their focus on Arsenal and the Champions League tomorrow, having effectively ended the title-race in the Bundesliga with a fifth straight-crown now theirs to lose.

With a third of the German league season still to play, Bayern hold a commanding seven-point lead as all their main rivals lost at the weekend.

Their nearest challenger, RB Leipzig, kept Bayern off top spot for three weeks late last year after a flying start to their first Bundesliga season.

But when the sides met in Munich last December, Bayern floored Red Bull-backed Leipzig with all goals coming in a commanding first-half display in a 3-0 win.

Second-placed RB are seven points short of Bayern, but in the chasing pack Eintracht Frankfurt, Borussia Dortmund and Hoffenheim are at least 15 points adrift of Munich.

On Saturday, their rivals' defeats played into Bayern's hands.

But their seemingly unstoppable path to a fifth title in a row has turned the Bundesliga into a one-horse race.

It has been nearly five years since Bayern's domination of German football was last questioned.

Borussia Dortmund hammered them 5-2 in the German Cup final on May 12, 2012 -- a week after Borussia were confirmed league champions with Bayern eight points behind.

Since then, no German rival has got close to the Bavarians.

In the 2012/13 season, with Jupp Heynckes as coach, they became the first German club to win the treble of European, league and cup titles.

Bayern won the Bundesliga with a 25-point gap over nearest rival Dortmund.

The domination continued in each of Pep Guardiola's three years in charge, securing the 2013/14 title that March with a record seven games left to eventually finish with a 19-point gap.



# Emery and PSG look to get one over Barcelona

Paris  
AFP

Paris Saint-Germain host Barcelona in the first leg of their Champions League last-16 tie today with their Spanish coach Unai Emery desperate to improve his awful personal record against the Catalans.

Emery was brought to the French capital last year as the successor to Laurent Blanc in order to help take PSG to the next level in Europe after four consecutive quarter-final exits in the Champions League.

But finishing second in their group behind Arsenal exposed PSG to a tougher draw in the first knockout round and now they must beat the Spanish champions -- the second leg will be at the Camp Nou next month -- just to make it to the last eight again.

Emery, the former Sevilla boss, has come up against Barcelona 23 times in his coaching career and won just once, in La Liga last season.

Paris, meanwhile, have been knocked out of the Champions League by Barcelona twice in recent

### CHAMPIONS LEAGUE Round of 16

► Paris Saint-Germain host Catalans in the first leg of their Champions League last-16 tie.

► Coach Unai Emery desperate to improve his awful personal record against the strong Catalans.

campaigns, losing in the quarter-finals in 2013 and again in 2015 to Lionel Messi, Neymar and co.

But there is a newfound confidence at the Parc des Princes after a fine start to 2017 which has seen them win 10 and draw one of their last 11 games in all competitions. "We believe in ourselves and this game comes at a good time for us. If it had come at the start of the season I would have been more worried, but everything has changed," PSG's Italian midfielder Marco Verratti said after Friday's 3-0 win at Bordeaux in Ligue 1, in which Edinson Cavani scored twice.

The French champions have beaten Barcelona in

the recent past, claiming a 3-2 win in the group stage in September 2014.

They are also a formidable proposition at the Parc des Princes, having lost just once there in Europe in the last decade.

"It's a huge challenge. Simply put, we will have to play two huge matches," Brazilian left-back Maxwell, a former Barcelona player, told PSG's website.

"No-one enters this competition hoping to cross paths with them. Still, it's up to us to make the difference."

Emery will be unable to utilise veteran midfielder Thiago Motta, another Barcelona player, due to suspension. Meanwhile, one winger from Angel Di Maria, Lucas Moura and January signing Julian Draxler will have to settle for a place on the bench.

Barcelona travel to France buoyed by a crushing 6-0 win at Alaves in La Liga at the weekend in which Luis Suarez scored twice.

That result means Luis Enrique's side have now lost just once in 22 games although it was overshadowed by an awful ankle

### UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

#### Round of 16 Fixtures

(All matches at 19.45GMT)

Today:

Benfica vs Borussia Dortmund

Paris Saint Germain vs Barcelona

Tomorrow:

Bayern Munich vs Arsenal

Real Madrid vs Napoli

injury suffered by right-back Alex Vidal which rules him out for the rest of the season.

Javier Mascherano and Arda Turan are sidelined too, although one man who could feature is Rafinha, who was named in the squad but will need a mask to protect a broken nose.

Barcelona are still fighting on three fronts, keeping alive the prospect of another La Liga, Copa del Rey and Champions League treble to match those achieved in 2009 and 2015.

"It's not really something we talk about amongst ourselves but all the players have it in mind," the club's former PSG defender Lucas Digne said.

"As long as we are still in every competition, it is very important. This club is born to win trophies."

## QSL: Lekhwiya looking to extend dominance

Chinthana Wasala  
The Peninsula

Table toppers Lekhwiya will be looking to extend their dominance against Umm Salal in the Qatar Stars League when the action resumes tomorrow at the Al Gharafa Stadium.

Coach Djamel Belmadi's men have enjoyed an astonishing unbeaten run this season, having won 15 games, drawing on five occasions to collect 50 points.

On the other hand, Umm Salal had mixed fortunes throughout the league. The Orange Fortress have won five games, losing seven and they managed to draw on eight occasions.

Lekhwiya Coach Belmadi stressed that his side were fully focused on the match.

"We are heading into the Umm Salal tie at full concentration and we are aiming as ever to pick up three points again."

"Umm Salal are a good side, who will be a major challenge for us. They are a tough side to break down, but we have no alternative to win in order to keep our lead at the top of the table" noted the Algerian coach.

Lekhwiya currently have a three point lead at the top of the standings ahead of their closest rivals Al Sadd who are at the second position, and Belmadi noted that he wants his side to be in good form ahead of their AFC Champions League match against Al Jazira.

"Our focus now is on this league match and the need to get three points, and then we can look forward to the AFC Champions League in good spirits."

However, Lekhwiya will miss the services of Khalid Mufthah and Chico Flores for tomorrow's game due to suspension, while Mohammed Muntari is a long term injury concern for them. "We have a strong bench and my players will be able to step up and cover for these absentees," Belmadi said.

On the other hand, Umm Salal will be heading into the match, following a 1-1 draw with Al Ahli last time out.

Orange Fortress coach Mahmoud Jaber understands how tough the game will be for his side.

"We are playing against the league leaders, who are fighting for the title. We must be at full concentration for Lekhwiya."

"We played well in the last game against Al Ahli, and we will be looking to continue this positive sequence of results in the league" added the Egyptian coach.

Jaber also added that his side will be without Captain Jawad Ahnash who will be out of the game through injury.

"I have confidence in my team to play well, I believe we will need some luck if we are to defeat Lekhwiya."

"Lekhwiya want to stay as league leaders and we want to keep our form in the league, it will be an interesting battle for the points," he said.

In another crunch tie, Al Sadd take on Al Arabi at Al Sadd Stadium on Thursday.

Al Sadd are brimming with confidence after registering an impressive 3-1 win over Al Wakrah last time out, and simultaneously closed the gap on title rivals Lekhwiya to just three points after the league leaders drew with Al Rayyan 1-1.

Wolves' star midfielder Xavi grabbed a brace in the game and is only one goal away from registering his most goals in a league season, a tally of ten goals.

As for Al Arabi, they picked up a shock 2-0 win over Al Gharafa.

Al Rayyan will meet Muaither SC at the same venue. The final fixture of the day will take place at Al Khor club when Al Kharaitiyat meet El Jaish.

## Ibra coy on Man United contract extension

Manchester  
Reuters

Manchester United striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic has yet to commit his future to the Premier League club despite the Swede saying he has fulfilled the requirements needed to extend his contract.

The 35-year-old has silenced critics who suggested he may struggle to adapt to the pace and intensity of the English game, scoring 20 goals since moving to Old Trafford from Paris St Germain on a free transfer in July.

Manager Jose Mourinho said in November that United planned to exercise their option to extend Ibrahimovic's contract, which runs out at the end of the current campaign, for a second season.

"Something like that, I have to score 100 goals," Ibrahimovic told British media when asked if he has triggered the extension clause with goals and appearances.

"The option is already fulfilled. But there's nothing done yet. From my side. We'll wait and see. Let's see what happens."

## Dortmund hope for big-stage lift against Benfica

Berlin  
Reuters

Borussia Dortmund have shown two faces this season, with their lacklustre domestic form in stark contrast to their scintillating European run, which they hope to extend against Benfica in the Champions League round of 16 today.

With just two wins from their past seven Bundesliga games, Thomas Tuchel's team have long dropped out of the title race and Saturday's shock 2-1 loss to bottom side Darmstadt 98 left them 15 points adrift of leaders Bayern Munich.

But the Ruhr valley club have been sensational in the Champions League, thriving on the big stage and scoring a record 21 goals to top their group ahead of Real Madrid.

The 1997 European champions and finalists four years ago will be hoping they can replicate that form for their first leg in Lisbon.

"In our two matches against Leipzig (league) and Hertha Berlin (German Cup) we played two matches where we were in the spotlight," Tuchel said after the loss to Darmstadt. "That's when we seem to be focused best and sharp and that's when we reach our maximum."

"Against Darmstadt 98 there was nothing to win. The game was under the radar and everyone expected us to do so. It seems we have trouble being really sharp at games without the big stage."

There are few bigger football stages than Benfica's iconic Estadio da Luz but Tuchel's biggest concern remains Dortmund's back-line which has proved shaky throughout the season.

Forwards Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Marco Reus have provided a constant stream of goals but keeping a clean sheet has proved far trickier.



Benfica's Brazilian defender Jardel (centre) controls the ball past team-mates as they take part in a training session at Benfica's training grounds in Seixal yesterday.

Frailty at the back was evident again on Saturday when Darmstadt twice outsmarted defenders, leaving Dortmund to wonder how they lost the game.

Benfica's dress rehearsal was far more successful as the Portuguese look to reach the quarter-finals for the

third time in the past six seasons. They beat Arouca 3-0 on Friday to remain top of the Portuguese league, ahead of rivals Porto, and earn an extra day's rest over the Germans.

Greece international forward Kostas Mitroglou made it 12 goals in as many games

while Andre Carrillo scored for the first time since August.

They will be without suspended Serbian Andrija Zivkovic when they host the Germans but, with four wins in the past five matches, they could not have wished for better form going into the game.