

Briton stretches championship lead from 17 points to 30 ahead of Vettel

Hamilton triumphs, wrecks Ferrari's party in Italy



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton competes ahead of Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen during the Italian Formula One Grand Prix at the Autodromo Nazionale circuit in Monza on Sept 2. (AFP)

MONZA, Italy, Sept 2, (AFP): Championship leader Lewis Hamilton delivered one of his greatest races Sunday when he wrecked Ferrari's homecoming party as he stormed to a record-equalling fifth Monza victory at the Italian Grand Prix.

The defending world champion produced a perfectly-judged race of raw aggression and astute tyre-management in his Mercedes to finish 8.7 seconds ahead of Kimi Raikkonen, who had claimed pole position in a Ferrari front row with the fastest lap in Formula One history.

The Briton's 68th career victory and sixth this year stretched his championship lead from 17 points to 30 ahead of Sebastian Vettel, who finished fourth in the second Ferrari after spinning on the opening lap following a clash with the Briton as he passed him at the second chicane.

Hamilton's Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas came home third ahead of Vettel with Max Verstappen taking fifth place in the classified result, after finishing third on the track, following a time penalty for a late brush with Bottas.



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton holds his trophy on the podium after winning the Italian Formula One Grand Prix at the Autodromo Nazionale circuit in Monza on Sept 2. (AFP)

The Briton's fifth win in Italy brought him level with seven-time champion Michael Schumacher in the record books, but his triumph was unpopular with the massed Italian fans.

"I want to give it up to Ferrari who put up a great challenge and gave us a great fight," said Hamilton.

"I want to thank the guys here and everyone back home - without their belief it wouldn't have been possible."

"There's been a lot of negativity, but there were a lot of British flags out there today. They know who they are. In future, I only want to turn a negative to a positive. Thanks to Valtteri too! We never give up."

A disappointed Raikkonen said: "I was quick enough, but unfortunately our rear tyres went and it was a losing battle from that point. I tried, but it was impossible..."

Bottas said: "I was really trying to do everything I can to get to the podium - as a team, we take this result. We got more points than Ferrari in their home."

After a dry morning, there was rain in the air. When the lights went out, Raikkonen pulled away to lead, as Hamilton attacked.

Within seconds, he passed the German on the outside at the Roggia chicane. Taken by surprise, Vettel could only under-steer into the Briton's sidepod before spinning off.

He rejoined 18th while the defending champion chased after the Finn. "That was silly," said Vettel. "Where did he want to go?"

A safety car was deployed, enabling Vettel to pit for a new wing. Racing resumed on lap four as the stewards announced they were taking no action, declaring it a "racing incident".

Castres hold off Lyon 19-16

Agen edge Perpignan, Top 14 minnows dig in

Roosters win NRL minor premiership

SYDNEY, Sept 2, (AP): Brisbane will host St George Illawarra and Penrith will meet the New Zealand Warriors in next weekend's first round of playoff matches in Australia's National Rugby League.

The Broncos beat Manly 48-16 in the last match of the regular season on Sunday to move from eighth to sixth place and to secure home advantage in their elimination final.

The Warriors dropped from sixth to eighth place, despite a 20-16 win over Canberra in their final match. They beat Penrith 36-16 in Auckland two weeks ago to qualify for the playoffs for the first time in seven years but now face a rematch on the Panthers' home turf.

The Sydney Roosters won the minor premiership when they beat last-placed Parramatta 44-10 on Saturday.

They will host Cronulla in the first qualifying final while the Melbourne Storm, knocked out of first place when they lost 22-16 to Penrith in the final round, will play Souths.

In one of the closest finishes in recent seasons, the top four teams all finished with 16 wins and on 34 points, separated only by points differential.

The next four teams were tied on 15 wins and 32 points, again separated by points for and against.

The Roosters came into their last match needing to beat Parramatta by 27 points to edge defending champion Melbourne.

They were on target to achieve their 27-point winning margin when they led 14-0 after 28 minutes. Parramatta showed a spark of resistance when it cut the lead to 14-6 at halftime and to 20-10 after eight minutes of the second half.

But the Roosters eased away with three second-half tries to Latrell Mitchell and a double on either side of halftime by Blake Ferguson.

AGEN, France, Sept 2, (AFP): Agen put their backroom worries and a painful opening day thumping behind them on Sunday when they edged promoted Perpignan 25-23 in a Top 14 encounter between two sides tipped for relegation.

Agen took a hiding going down 67-23 at Clermont last weekend and then announced midweek that their inspirational coach Mauricio Reggiardo would be moving on to Castres next season.

Reggiardo's charges quickly racked up three tries Sunday with two from Jake McIntyre either side of Sam Vaka's effort.

But they were pegged back as Perpignan, who lost down 46-15 to Stade Francais last week, rallied in a no-holds-barred bid for the points after Enzo Selponi got their second try on 68 minutes.

"We needed this win. That was a really high pressure match. Those four points will give us a bit of peace of mind this week," said Reggiardo.

"But we have work to do, that was not a mature performance and we failed to respect our opponents at a key moment of the game," he said.

Perpignan boss Christian Lanta said his side were kicking themselves for failing to turn their late rally into points.

"Even after the last penalty there were three times we could have scored a try," he said.

"But that was a balanced and brave performance and we showed some of the qualities that got us promoted," he said.



Racing 92's France outside centre Virimi Vakatawa runs with the ball during the French Top 14 rugby union match between Racing 92 and Clermont on Sept 2, at the U Arena in Nanterre, near Paris. (AFP)

Moeen bowls England to series victory over India

Kohli survives controversial review

SOUTHAMPTON, United Kingdom, Sept 2, (AFP): Moeen Ali bowled England to a series-clinching 60-run win in the fourth Test against India at Southampton on Sunday.

Victory, achieved with more than a day to spare, left England an unassailable 3-1 up in the five-match series against India, the world's number one ranked Test side, ahead of Friday's finale at The Oval.

India, set 245 to win, were dismissed for 184 with recalled off-spinner Ali taking four for 71 in 26 overs on a wearing pitch, including the key wicket of star batsman Virat Kohli (58).

CRICKET

That gave Ali a match return of nine for 134 following his first-innings five for 63.

It was another star turn at Hampshire's headquarters from Ali, who took six for 67 when England beat India by 266 runs in the corresponding Test at Southampton four years ago.

While India captain Kohli and his deputy Ajinkya Rahane (51) were sharing a century stand for the fourth wicket, the tourists had hope of chasing down their stiff target.

But after Ali dismissed both senior batsmen either side of tea, India lost four wickets for 13 runs before Sam Curran, capping another fine all-round display, ended the match by having Ravichandran Ashwin lbw for 25.

After they were dismissed for 271 in their second innings, England made early inroads into India's top order.

K.L. Rahul was bowled for a duck by a Stuart Broad delivery that kept cruelly low.

James Anderson, surprisingly, wicketless in an India first innings of 273 that featured Cheteshwar Pujara's excellent 132 not out, then struck twice.



England's Moeen Ali (center), celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of India's Ajinkya Rahane for 21 during the fourth day of the fourth Test cricket match between England and India at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, southwest England on Sept 2. (AFP)

He had Pujara lbw for just five on Sunday and his next over saw Shikhar Dhawan (17) well caught in the gully by Ben Stokes.

That double strike left paceman Anderson on 559 Test wickets and just four behind retired Australia great Glenn McGrath's mark of 563, the most taken in Tests by any fast bowler.

India were again looking for another major innings from Kohli, who had already scored two hundreds this series and would pass 500 runs for the campaign during Sunday's innings.

England thought they had the world's number-one ranked batsman lbw for nine to Ali.

But after England's review of an original not out decision from Kumar Dharmasena, third umpire Joel Wilson ruled there had been an inside edge.

At lunch, India were 46 for three with Kohli 10 not out and Rahane unbeaten on 13.



India's captain Virat Kohli bats during the fourth day of the fourth Test cricket match between England and India at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, southwest England on Sept 2. (AFP)

Kohli had moved on to 15 when he survived another huge lbw appeal from Ali.

Although he looked out, with the ball striking him low down and in front of the stumps, Dharmasena's decision was upheld on review because the ball had pitched outside off stump with the batsman playing a shot.

Kohli went to fifty with just a third four in 114 balls when he clipped Anderson off his pads through square leg.

It had seemed as if England had missed a huge chance when Alastair Cook dropped Kohli off Ali at short leg.

But the very next ball saw Kohli get a thin glove and this time Cook made no mistake.

Kohli reviewed, but to no avail, before appearing to exchange angry words with Broad.

The scale of India's task was evident from the fact they had only three times before scored 200 or more in the fourth innings to win a Test match outside of Asia.

Greipel takes Tour of Britain's 1st stage

King crowned on Vuelta 9th stage, Yates in red

LA COVATILLA, España, Sept 2, (AFP): American Ben King, of the Dimension Data team, claimed his second stage win of the Tour of Spain on Sunday after riding solo to victory on stage nine.

Britain's Simon Yates (Mitchelton) took over the leader's red jersey from Frenchman Rudy Molard (Cofidis) following the 200-kilometre race to the ski resort of La Covatilla.

standings ahead of Monday's rest day. Nairo Quintana, also of Movistar, finished among the chasers to move up to third place overall at 14sec behind Yates.

Days after breaking his Grand Tour victory duck on the race, King laid the foundations for his second stage win when he broke free from an 11-strong leading group around 10km before the start of the final climb.

The American's bid looked to be hanging in the balance when Dutchman Bauke Mollema (Trek) launched an audacious bid to reel him in.

Starting the climb a minute and a half behind King, Mollema dug deep to haul himself to within 15sec of the 29-year-old American, who appeared to be tiring in the final kilometers.

But the road - in the shape of flatter gradients - came to King's rescue, handing the American respite and a chance to recover before the final push for the finish.

Also: NEWPORT, United Kingdom: Andre Greipel won the opening stage of the Tour of Britain as the German powered to the finish line in a bunch sprint on Sunday.

Lotto Soudal rider Greipel beat Australia's Caleb Ewan, riding for Mitchelton, and Fernando Gaviria of QuickStep at the end of the 174.8-kilometres stage from Pembre Country Park in Carmarthenshire.

Tour de France winner Geraint Thomas was 77th and his Team Sky colleague Chris Froome, the fourth-time Tour de France winner competing at his national tour for the first time since 2009, finished 64th.



Stage winner Team Dimension Data's US cyclist Benjamin King celebrates as he crosses the finish line of the ninth stage of the 73rd edition of 'La Vuelta' Tour of Spain cycling race, a 200.8km route from Talavera de la Reina to La Covatilla on Sept 2. (AFP)

England vs India Scoreboard

SOUTHAMPTON, United Kingdom, Sept 2, (AFP): Completed scoreboard on the fourth day of the fourth Test between England and India at Southampton on Sunday: ENGLAND 1st Innings 246 (S. Curran 78; J. Bumrah 3-46) INDIA 1st Innings 273 (C. Pujara 132 n.o.; M. Ali 5-63; S. Broad 3-63) ENGLAND 2nd Innings (over-night) 260-8

A. Cook c Rahul b Bumrah12 K. Jennings lbw b Shami36 M. Ali c Rahul b Sharma9 J. Root run out (Shami)48 J. Bairstow b Shami0 B. Stokes c Rahane b Ashwin30 J. Buttler lbw b Sharma69 S. Curran run out (Sharma/Pant) 46 A. Rashid c Pant b Shami11 S. Broad c Pant b Shami0 J. Anderson not out1 Extras: (lb2, wt)9 Total: (all out, 96.1 overs, 423 mins) 271

Fall of wickets: 1-24 (Cook), 2-33 (Ali), 3-92 (Jennings), 4-92 (Bairstow), 5-122 (Root), 6-178 (Stokes), 7-233 (Buttler), 8-260 (Rashid), 9-260 (Broad), 10-271 (Curran)

Bowling: Ashwin 37.1-7-84-1; Bumrah 19.3-51-1; Sharma 15-4-38-2; Shami 16-0-57-4; Pandya 9-0-34-0

INDIA 2nd Innings (target: 245) S. Dhawan c Stokes b Anderson 17 K.L. Rahul b Broad0 C. Pujara lbw b Anderson5

V. Kohli c Cook b Ali58 A. Rahane lbw b Ali51 H. Pandya c Root b Stokes0 R. Pant c Cook b Ali18 R. Ashwin lbw b Curran25 I. Sharma lbw b Stokes0 M. Shami c Anderson b Ali8 J. Bumrah not out0 Extras: (lb1, wt)2 Total: (all out, 69.4 overs, 293 mins) 184

Fall of wickets: 1-4 (Rahul), 2-17 (Pujara), 3-22 (Dhawan), 4-123 (Kohli), 5-127 (Pandya), 6-150 (Pant), 7-153 (Rahane), 8-154 (Sharma), 9-163 (Shami), 10-184 (Ashwin)

Bowling: Anderson 11-2-33-2; Broad 10-2-23-1; Ali 26-3-71-4; Stokes 12-3-34-2 (1w); Curran 3.4-2-1-1; Rashid 7-3-21-0

Result: England won by 60 runs Series: England lead five-match series 3-1

Toss: England Umpires: Kumar Dharmasena (SRI), Bruce Oxenford (AUS) TV umpire: Joel Wilson (WIS) Match referee: Andy Pycroft (ZIM) Retaining Fixture

Sep 07-11: 5th Test, The Oval Previous Results Aug 01-04: 1st Test, Edgbaston: England won by 31 runs Aug 09-12: 2nd Test, Lord's: England won by an innings and 159 runs Aug 18-22, 3rd Test, Trent Bridge: India won by 203 runs