



India's Shreyas Iyer plays a defensive shot during day one of their first Test cricket match with New Zealand in Kanpur, India. (AP)

# Sports

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Play called off owing to bad light

## Iyer, Jadeja revive India to 258-4 vs NZ on Day 1

KANPUR, India, Nov 25, (AP) — Shreyas Iyer and Ravindra Jadeja revived India in an unbeaten partnership of 113 to 258-4 against New Zealand at stumps on the first day of the first cricket Test on Thursday.

India were reduced to 145-4 half-way through the middle session but Iyer progressed to 75 not out in his Test debut, and Jadeja was 50 not out.

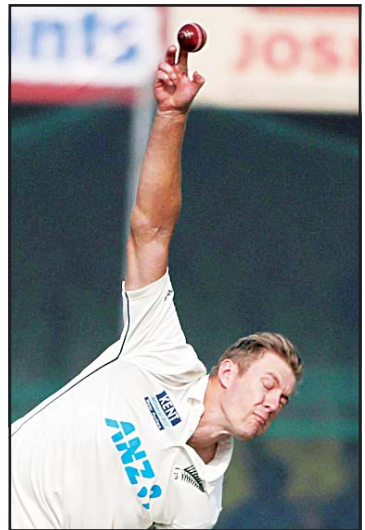
Play was called off owing to bad light with six overs remaining.

### CRICKET

India were well placed at 82-1 at lunch - Mayank Agarwal fell early for 13 to Kyle Jamieson - but lost the other opener Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara and captain Ajinkya Rahane.

Gill scored his fourth test half-century when Jamieson bowled him through the gate on 52 off 93 balls. Gill hit five fours and a six.

Eight overs later, Pujara was caught behind off Tim Southee in a



New Zealand's Kyle Jamieson bowls during the day one of their first Test cricket match with India in Kanpur, India. (AP)

repeat of the batsman's dismissals against Australia and England - edging outside off stump. Pujara scored 26 and India was 106-3.

Rahane added 39 runs for the fourth wicket with Iyer when Jamieson returned and castled Rahane on 35 for his third wicket.

New Zealand's gains in the middle session began to fade, however, as Iyer and Jadeja dug in.

Iyer picked his moments against the spinners as he struck seven fours and two sixes. He reached his maiden test half-century off 94 balls.

Jadeja was patient and solid at the other end as the duo took India past 200 runs. He scored his 17th test half-century off 99 balls, including six fours. Their 100-run partnership came off 192 deliveries.

Most of New Zealand's workload was shared in 45 wicketless overs by left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel, playing his 10th test, and offspinner William Somerville, playing his fifth. The debutant, batting allrounder Rachin Ravindra, bowled seven overs of left-arm spin.

New Zealand picked three spinners but the fast bowlers took the wickets, Jamieson 3-47 and Southee 1-43. "We found some swing early. It was up and down a little bit," Jamieson said. "Hopefully the new ball swings a little bit in the morning. India is a fraction ahead, I think. "We hung around pretty well and we need a good start in the morning."

India have rested key senior players such as Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Rishabh Pant and Jasprit Bumrah for this two-test series. This is also a first test assignment for new coach Rahul Dravid, who started his tenure in the preceding Twenty20 series with a 3-0 win over the New Zealanders. This is the first test between the teams since the final of the inaugural world test championship in June, won by New Zealand in Southampton.

India haven't lost a home test against New Zealand since 1988.

## European powers joined by Sporting in CL last 16



Dortmund's Thomas Meunier (left), Sporting's Nuno Santos compete for the ball during a Champions League Group C soccer match between Sporting CP and Borussia Dortmund at the Alvalade stadium in Lisbon, Portugal. (AP)

Leipzig in empty stadium

## Coronavirus bites back in Bundesliga

BERLIN, Nov 25, (AP) — German soccer fans thought they'd put the days of empty stadiums behind them, but the coronavirus pandemic isn't letting up.

Record case numbers in Germany mean one top club is back playing without a crowd and others will have thousands of fewer fans this weekend.

Leipzig are on the front line of the latest wave of the pandemic in Germany in the eastern state of Saxony, where infection rates are the highest and vaccination rates the lowest compared to other regions. With intensive care facilities under strain, state authorities have banned crowds from sports events.

That means Leipzig will host the Bundesliga's first game in an empty stadium for months when Bayer Leverkusen visit on Sunday. That also affects their Champions League game against Manchester City next month. Clubs in other states are increasingly under restrictions, too. Bayern Munich can fill their stadium to only 25% capacity against Arminia Bielefeld on Saturday.

Just a month ago, the picture was very different.

Germany's vaccination program was going well and entry rules for games - generally restricted to people who were fully vaccinated, recently recovered from the virus or with a negative test - were being broadly obeyed. Bayern celebrated having a full house of 75,000 for the first time since March 2020 on Oct. 23 when it played Hoffenheim.

Since then, case numbers have continued to hit record levels in German society, and soccer has not escaped.

Leipzig coach Jesse Marsch and goalkeeper Peter Gulasci won't be at their empty-stadium game against Leverkusen because the club said this week they



In this file photo Hoffenheim's Georginio Rutter reacts during a German Bundesliga soccer match between TSG 1899 Hoffenheim and RB Leipzig in Sinsheim, Germany. (AP)

tested positive. Of the four German clubs playing in the Champions League this week, all were missing at least one player with a positive test.

Leipzig shrugged off the disruption in a 5-0 demolition of Belgian club Brugge on Wednesday, but questions remain over the future of Marsch with the club seventh on the Bundesliga

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table and unable to qualify for the Champions League knockout rounds.

Bayern's reduced crowd will see the team attempt to bounce back from a shock 2-1 loss at Augsburg last week which reduced the title lead to just one point. A threadbare Bayern squad clung on to beat Dynamo Kyiv 2-1 on Tuesday but virus cases and injuries mean coach Julian Nagelsmann has few tactical op-

tions and can't rest key players. Against that backdrop, even relegation-threatened Bielefeld becomes a trickier opponent.

Bayern's woes deepened on Wednesday when midfielder Joshua Kimmich and backup striker Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting tested positive for the coronavirus. Kimmich became the face of Germany's debate over vaccine hesitancy last month, and a political talking point in parliament, when he said in a TV interview he wasn't vaccinated and had reservations about vaccines against the virus.

Other clubs are on a collision course with their own players.

Starting this month, German employers are no longer obliged to pay workers during their quarantine period if they're unvaccinated and identified as a close contact of someone who tested positive. Several clubs have said they'll follow this policy and Bayern has been widely reported to be considering this approach.

Elsewhere this weekend, Borussia Dortmund take on Wolfsburg in a game between teams having similar weeks. Both lost in the Champions League midweek - eliminating Dortmund and leaving Wolfsburg unlikely to qualify - and both are without key players who tested positive for the virus after returning from the Belgian national team. In Dortmund's case, it's forward Thorgan Hazard, who had been crucial during Erling Haaland's injury absence, while Wolfsburg is missing goalkeeper Koen Casteels.

Third-placed Freiburg surprised many by staying in the Champions League places after a strong start to the season but they are on the slide after losing two in a row. A visit to promoted Bochum offers a chance to turn things around.

Man City, Real through; Inter qualify after 10-year absence

LONDON, Nov 25, (AP) — The parade of European powers advancing to the Champions League knockout stage was disrupted by Sporting Lisbon completing a stunning turnaround to join them.

Manchester City and Real Madrid are back in the round of 16 after beating teams they lost to in September. Paris Saint-Germain also go through despite their 2-1 loss at City after leading when Kylian Mbappé scored early in the second half.

Madrid's 3-0 win at Sheriff - avenging a 2-1 home defeat to the champions of Moldova two months ago - included a goal for Karim Benzema on a day of legal trouble for the forward and ensured Inter Milan also advanced from Group D by beating Shakhtar Donetsk 2-0.

Three-time European champions Inter return to the round of 16 after a 10-year absence, though Sporting ended a 13-year wait by beating Borussia Dortmund 3-1. Pedro Gonçalves scored twice.

Sporting seemed overmatched in September when routed at home by Ajax then beaten in Dortmund, but three straight wins lifted the surprise Portuguese title-winner to advance with a game to spare.

"Teams grow," Sporting coach Rúben Amorim said. "It's great, good for the project, but we still have a lot to

do." Ajax and Liverpool extended their dominating group-stage campaigns with fifth straight wins.

Ajax's 2-1 win at Beşiktaş came thanks to two goals from record-setting forward Sébastien Haller, who came on as a substitute. Haller has now scored in his first five career Champions League games and is the fastest player to get to nine goals in the competition.

Liverpool cruised to a 2-0 win over Porto and moved an astonishing 10 points clear of the Portuguese team in second place in Group B that promises a tense final round on Dec. 7.

AC Milan are still in contention after finding an 87th-minute goal from a 30-year-old Champions League debutant to win 1-0 at Atlético Madrid. Junior Messias's goal left both teams on four points with Milan next hosting Liverpool and last-place Atlético going to Porto.

Leipzig were missing American coach Jesse Marsch, who tested positive for COVID-19, yet overwhelmed Club Brugge 5-0 in Belgium in their battle to finish third in Group A behind Man City and PSG.

Third-place teams in Champions League groups earn a ticket to the second-tier Europa League knockout playoffs in February. Dortmund and Sheriff will be among them. UEFA make knockout draws in all three European club competitions on Dec. 13.

Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé, Neymar. PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino was able to pick his superstar forward line to face Pep Guardiola's Man City without a typical center forward or Kevin De Bruyne because of a COVID-19 infection.

City still had enough despite failing to turn first-half dominance into goals and falling behind to Mbappé's goal in the 50th.

Raheem Sterling struck with a classic City tap-in goal in the 63rd and, after Neymar wasted a clear chance, Gabriel Jesus won it in the 77th with a scuffed shot that beat PSG goalkeeper Keylor Navas.

Pochettino eliminated City from the Champions League in the same stadium as Tottenham coach three seasons ago, and there is speculation he could be back in Manchester soon as United

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coach. Both Manchester teams have won their groups and will be seeded in the Round of 16 draw.

Inter Milan are heading to the Champions League knockout stage for the first time in 10 years.

AC Milan can still join their city rivals by extending their first Champions League campaign in eight years. Milan went to Atlético with only one point from four Group B games and would have been eliminated with a loss. The late goal from on-loan Brazilian journeyman Junior Messias was "the biggest success of my life," he said.

Inter had an easier time at San Siro against Shakhtar, with veteran forward Edin Džeko scoring twice in a six-minute spell midway through the second half.

The top scorers in the Champions League this season are three superstars, a newcomer and an uncapped striker. Sébastien Haller, in his first season in the elite competition at age 27, joined Robert Lewandowski on nine by scoring both Ajax goals at Beşiktaş.

The former Eintracht Frankfurt and West Ham forward is now the fastest ever to score nine goals at the start of his Champions League career. Haller has taken just five games, two fewer than Erling Haaland needed across two seasons for Salzburg and Borussia Dortmund.

Christopher Nkunku also scored twice Wednesday and now has seven this season for Leipzig, one more than Cristiano Ronaldo's tally for Manchester United and Mohamed Salah for Liverpool.



Jesus



Liverpool's Thiago (left), heads the ball past Porto's Joao Mario during the Champions League group B soccer match between Liverpool and FC Porto at Anfield stadium in Liverpool. (AP)