

## Ranji Trophy: Harmeet Singh turns it around, Mumbai still in the hunt

Mumbai's left-arm spinner Harmeet Singh bowled a negative line throughout the day, hoping that the footmarks would help him get the better of Ravikumar Samarth, who had made his maiden first-class century. Though there wasn't much turn on offer, the strategy was to restrain Karnataka who were closing down on Mumbai's first innings score.

Samarth, resuming from his overnight score of 85, had added 136 runs stand for fourth wicket with Shishir Bhavane.

The visitors then lost the wickets of Shreyas Gopal and CM Gautam in quick succession but Samarth continued, taking Karnataka to within 55 runs of Mumbai's first innings score with three wickets in hand.

The left-arm spinner finally got the ball to turn and bounce as Samarth edged to slip fielder Suryakumar Yadav. Samarth's vigil, lasting for 400 balls for his 180 runs ended and Mumbai had the door open.

Eventually, it didn't take much time for Mumbai to bundle out the visitors, though there were some nervous moments. At 411 for 8, 25 runs from Mumbai's score, **Shreyas Iyer dropped Udit Patel at gully.** **However, Harmeet soon got rid off of him by getting him trap in front of his stumps.**

**His six for 139 runs enabled the hosts to take a slender 21-run first innings lead. "Samarth was the main wicket because he is a stroke player. So we decided to block his runs and build pressure on him. It worked for us," Harmeet said.**

Though a day remains in the game, Mumbai seem assured of the three points. However, it will not guarantee them a berth in the knock-outs unless teams like Baroda, Madhya Pradesh oblige by not registering an outright win. **However, Harmeet's return to form must be good news for Mumbai. After his name had come up in the spot fixing issue, there was a lot of uncertainty but the worst seems to be over for the spinner.**

**As the day ended with Mumbai on 19/0, Harmeet rushed to the match referee to get hold of the match ball. After all his last five wicket haul had happened around four years ago.**

**Brief Scores:** Mumbai 436 & 19 for no loss vs Karnataka 415 (R Samarth 180, S Bhavane 62, **Harmeet Singh six for 128**).