

2019: KEY SPORTS EVENTS

Cricket

India vs Australia, Three ODIs

After a pulsating Test series and T20 series between India and Australia, the ODIs promise to be exciting and intense too as the two teams clash in a three-match rubber.

JAN 23 TO FEBRUARY 10

India vs New Zealand, 5 ODIs, Three T20Is New Zealand will be closest to England in terms of conditions, which will help Virat Kohli and co. to firm up their combinations for the World Cup.

FEB 24 TO MARCH 13

India vs Australia, 5 ODIs, Two T20Is Another chance for both teams to give their players ODI exposure for the WC.

IPL 2019: March-April (tentative)

The league will be played earlier than normal due to World Cup and elections.

MAY 30 TO JULY 14

Cricket World Cup: Hosts England and two-time champions India will start as hot favourites for the quadrennial extravaganza, which will be played sans any groups and in a round-robin format, just like the 1992 World Cup.

AUGUST 1 TO SEPTEMBER 16, 2019

The Ashes: Cricket's biggest rivalry will once again kick off in England and Wales just after the World Cup. Australia, who have not won an away Ashes series since 2001, will be looking to change the script.

FOOTBALL

The football calendar, which witnessed the all-important FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia last year, has some major outings for Sunil Chhetri and his India team with the AFC Cup taking place from the coming Saturday, January 5.

JAN 5 TO FEBRUARY 1, UAE

AFC Asian Cup: Will India, led by Sunil Chhetri make the knockouts? Australia and Iran start as favourites.

MAY 29

Europa League final: Olympic Stadium, Baku It's Azerbaijan's chance to host one of the biggest title clashes in Europe at Baku. Sevilla have been winning the title with monotonous regularity. Chelsea, under new coach Maurizio Sarri, can be worthy challengers.

JUNE 1

Champions League final: Wanda Metropolitano, Madrid Real Madrid have almost owned the trophy under Zinedine Zidane and have won Europe's elite prize for the last three years. After emerging from a turmoil post the Lopetegui saga, can new coach Solari script similar magic? Winning the final at the venue of their city rivals, Atletico, will give them a huge high and massive bragging rights.

TENNIS

Last year's story was all about the Big Three — Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic. Djokovic, in fact, collected the last two Slams and rose from No. 22 to end the year as the top-ranked player. With Sascha Zverev winning the World Tour Finals in London, the question to ask is, has the new generation finally arrived? And will 2019 see Federer calling it quits?

JAN 1 TO 5: Maharashtra Open, Pune

JAN 14 TO 27: Australian Open, Melbourne

MARCH 4 TO 11: Indian Wells Masters

MARCH 18 TO MARCH 25: Miami Open

APRIL 14 TO APRIL 21: Monte Carlo Masters

MAY 7 TO 13: Madrid Masters

MAY 14 TO 20: Italian Open, Rome

MAY 26 TO JUNE 9: French Open, Paris

JULY 1 TO JULY 14: Wimbledon, London

AUGUST 5 TO 11: Rogers Cup, Montreal

AUGUST 12 TO 18: Cincinnati Masters

AUGUST 26 TO SEPTEMBER 8: US Open, New York

SEPTEMBER 20 TO 22: Laver Cup, Geneva

OCTOBER 7 TO 13: Shanghai Masters

OCTOBER 28 TO NOVEMBER 3: Paris Masters

NOVEMBER 10 TO 17: World Tour Finals, London

FORMULA ONE

Fernando Alonso may have retired but there seems to be no easing up in the battle between Sebastian Vettel and champion Lewis Hamilton. 2019 promises to be exciting again.

MARCH 17: Australian Grand Prix, Melbourne

MARCH 31: Bahrain Grand Prix, Sakhir

APRIL 14: Chinese Grand Prix, Shanghai

APRIL 28: Azerbaijan Grand Prix, Baku

MAY 12: Spanish Grand Prix, Barcelona

MAY 26: Monaco Grand Prix, Monte Carlo

JUNE 9: Canadian Grand Prix, Montreal

JUNE 23: French Grand Prix, Le Castellet

JUNE 30: Austrian Grand Prix, Spielberg

JULY 14: British Grand Prix, Silverstone

JULY 28: German Grand Prix, Hockenheim

AUGUST 4: Hungarian Grand Prix, Mogyorod

SEPTEMBER 1: Belgian Grand Prix: Stavelot

SEPTEMBER 8: Italian Grand Prix: Monza

SEPTEMBER 22: Singapore Grand Prix

SEPTEMBER 29: Russian Grand Prix, Sochi

OCTOBER 13: Japanese Grand Prix, Suzuka

OCTOBER 27: Mexican Grand Prix, Mexico City

NOVEMBER 3: US Grand Prix, Texas

NOVEMBER 17: Brazilian Grand Prix, Sao Paulo

DECEMBER 1: Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

GOLF

Tiger Woods showed glimpses of his old form in 2018. Will 2019 be the year where he goes past 14 Majors? Will India's Shubhankar Sharma or Anirban Lahiri make a breakthrough in the big events?

MARCH: Indian Open: Dates to be confirmed

APRIL 11 TO 14: Augusta Masters, Georgia

MAY 16 TO 19: PGA Championship, Bethpage, New York

JUNE 13 TO 16: US Open, Pebble Beach

JULY 18 TO 21: British Open, Antrim, Northern Ireland

NBA

NBA Finals have been dominated by the Cleveland Cavaliers and Golden State Warriors over the last four seasons. Will LeBron-dominated Lakers spring a surprise?

FEBRUARY 15 TO 17: All Stars game, Charlotte May 14: Conference Finals May 31: NBA Final

BADMINTON

Badminton world's biggest professional league – Premier Badminton League – is on as the sports fraternity entered the 2019. The year ahead has a lot of excitement in store, with India's biggest event on the BWF calendar – India Open – scheduled in Delhi between March 26 and 31.

PREMIER BADMINTON LEAGUE: Jan 1 to Jan 13

MARCH 6 TO 10: All England Championships, Birmingham

MARCH 26 TO 31: India Open, New Delhi

APRIL 2 TO 7: Malaysian Open, Kuala Lumpur

JULY 16 TO 21: Indonesia Open, Jakarta

JULY 23 TO JULY 28: Japan Open, Tokyo

AUGUST 19 TO 25: World Championships, Basel

SEPTEMBER 17 TO 22: China Open, Changzhou

OCTOBER 15 TO 20: Denmark Open, Odense

OCTOBER 22 TO OCTOBER 27: French Open, Paris

NOVEMBER 26 TO DECEMBER 1: Syed Modi International, Lucknow

DECEMBER 11 TO 15: World Tour finals, Guangzhou

OTHER EVENTS

MUMBAI MARATHON: January 20

INDIAN DERBY: February 3

CYCLING: Tour de France: July 6 to 28

WORLD ATHLETICS, DOHA: September 28 to October 6