



Brad Hodge (R) has taken his first ODI wicket much to the delight of Australian captain Ricky Ponting (L) and other teammates after Hodge got the wicket of Scotland batsman Dougie Brown during Australia's Group A World Cup match at Warner Park in St. Kitts and Nevis on Wednesday night.

Ponting pummels Scots

AFP, St Kitts



Ricky Ponting hammered his 23rd one-day century and Glenn McGrath took three wickets to give Australia a thumping

World Cup 203-run win over Scotland here on Wednesday, the second biggest win in the tournament's history.

The Australian skipper notched a 93-ball, 113 to propel the defending champions to 334-6 before the Aussie pace attack proved too hot for the minnows who were bowled out for 131 in 40.1 overs.

"It was a good game and a good hit out today. We beat England last week, we've been playing some good cricket in recent weeks," said man-of-the-match Ponting.

Scotland skipper Craig Wright said he was proud of his team.

"We competed well for the first 45 overs of their innings, but the last five of theirs and the first 10 of ours killed us," said Wright after Australia had plundered 50 runs off the last 22 balls.

"But we stuck at it. It wasn't easy on a small ground against a top-class outfit."

Ponting, who shrugged off a 35-minute rain delay, was eventually out in the 46th over.

He reached his century in 85 balls hitting nine fours and five sixes – his fourth in the World Cup.

The Scots then lost half of their side within the first 16 overs, with McGrath taking three of the wickets.

The lanky 37-year-old paceman had Fraser Watts in his second over, then accounted for Ryan Watson in his third and Gavin Hamilton in his fourth to leave the Scots reeling at 42-5 by the 16th over.

Colin Smith (51) and Dougie Brown (19) shared 47 for the sixth wicket to give the Scots' total some respectability.

Australia recorded the biggest World Cup victory when they defeated Namibia by 256 runs at Potchefstroom in 2003.

McGrath, who started the tourna-

ment ten wickets short of equalling Pakistan's Wasim Akram's all-time World Cup record of 55 victims, finished with 3-14 off his six overs.

Earlier, Ponting, dropped on 23 by wicketkeeper Smith off paceman Brown, took full advantage of the lapse and added 54 runs for the third wicket with Michael Clarke (15) and another 63 for the fourth with Brad Hodge (29).

Ponting never lost his rhythm as he broke Indian Sourav Ganguly's previous World Cup record of 23 sixes and became the sixth man to reach 1,000 World Cup runs.

Ponting is playing in his fourth World Cup.

Opener Matthew Hayden hit a solid 60, while Brad Hogg hit a fiery unbeaten 15-ball 40 with three sixes and as many fours to deliver the final

blow after Craig Wright had won the toss and put Australia into bat on a brownish pitch.

Hayden set the foundation for the total by putting on 91 for the first wicket with Adam Gilchrist who made 46.

Hayden hit six boundaries and a six before he fell leg-before by Brown who bowled well before conceding 24 runs in his final over to Hogg.

South Africa and the Netherlands, the two other teams in the Group, meet on Friday. The top two teams advance to the next round Super Eights.

AUSTRALIA-SCOTLAND SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the Group A match of the World Cup between Australia and Scotland at Warner Park on Wednesday:

AUSTRALIA	R	B	4s	6s
Adam Gilchrist lbw b Dougie Brown	46	55	7	0
Matthew Hayden lbw b Majid Haq	60	73	6	1
Ricky Ponting b Wright	113	93	9	5
Michael Clarke b Majid Haq	15	20	1	0
Brad Hodge c Paul Hoffmann b Glenn Rogers	29	28	3	0
Mike Hussey c Colin Smith b Paul Hoffmann	4	6	0	0
Shane Watson not out	18	11	3	0
Brad Hogg not out	40	15	3	3
Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-5, nb-1)	9			
Total: (For 6 wickets in 50 overs)	334			
Fall of wickets: 1-91, 2-139, 3-193, 4-256, 5-274, 6-276				
Did not bat: Nathan Bracken, Shaun Tait, Glenn McGrath				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Paul Hoffmann	10	0	57	1
John Blair	4	0	29	0
Craig Wright	10	0	58	1
Dougie Brown	9	0	86	1
Glenn Rogers	10	0	52	1
Majid Haq	7	0	49	2
AUSTRALIA	R	B	4s	6s
Fraser Watts b Glenn McGrath	9	25	0	0

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that wicket against the spinners but the top order guys, if they are in, have to get through like the good players do."

Kenya's spinners all had days to remember, none more so than left-arm Hiren Varaiya (one for 19 off 10 overs) and Jimmy Kamande (two for 25 off 10).

"The left-arm spinner is a good spinner but I don't think there is a world-class spinner in that team," said Davison, who refused to blame a pitch that became increasingly slow and low for Canada's defeat.

"I don't think the wicket will pose too many problems for the big boys."

In his record-breaking display against the West Indies, Davison opened the innings.

But this time, batting at No 5, he could only manage eight before being clean bowled by Kamande.

Davison said he didn't expect to be opening come Canada's next match, against England, on Sunday.

"We talked about this early on and it's probably a little bit late too change it now. It's just a matter of me coming to terms against the spinners."

"It was pretty difficult starting on

Ricky 31 runs away

AFP, Bridgetown



the name of the team's sponsors, a brewery, on his shirt.

Haq, a Muslim, was given special dispensation to cover up the logo in deference to his anti-alcohol beliefs.

England were dismissed for 131 in 40.1 overs to go down to the second biggest defeat in World Cup history.

"It was a good game and a good hit out today. We've been playing some good cricket in recent weeks," said man-of-the-match Ponting.

Scotland skipper Craig Wright said he was proud of his team.

"We competed well for the first 45 overs of their innings, but the last five of theirs and the first 10 of ours killed us," said Wright after Australia had plundered 50 runs off the last 22 balls.

The Lancashire quick fractured the little finger on his right bowling hand during fielding practice, just two days away from the crucial Group C clash against New Zealand.

The Kiwis also have injury worries ahead of that game.

Batsman Craig McMillan was hit on the foot by a yorker from fast bowling teammate Shane Bond during practice.

Meanwhile, Pakistan skipper Inzamamul Haq blamed his experienced batsmen for the demoralising 54-run defeat to West Indies.

Inzamam feels his batsmen will need to come good in the remaining matches if Pakistan are to repeat

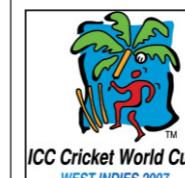
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Kenya captain glad at win

AFP, Gros Islet

'It just didn't click'

AFP, Gros Islet



Kenya captain Steve Tikolo admitted he was glad to have come through all his off-field battles after leading from the front during his side's convincing seven-wicket win in their World Cup opener against Canada.

Set 200 to win, after tight spin bowling had restricted the North Americans, Kenya -- the shock semi-finalists of four years ago -- finished on 203 for three with Tikolo showing all his old panache to finish on 72 not out.

Three years ago, such a performance seemed a long way-off.

Tikolo, now appearing in his fourth World Cup and long Kenya's best player (Wednesday's was his 19th one-day international fifty), had quit as captain after a poor Champions Trophy.

Frustrated by some 18 months of

rows with his own board, he resigned as captain and became a central figure in a players' strike that saw him pushing for better terms and conditions for his side.

Kenyan cricket came to its senses and, rather than risk losing Tikolo

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But after seeing opener Geoff Barnett get the innings off to a sound start with 41, Canada fell away.

"It's an opportunity missed for us," said Davison.

"It's going to be pretty hard to have two good days against England and New Zealand. If we'd won this game, we had a better chance of beating one of them."

The North Americans had some particularly inept moments, their last three wickets falling, in Davison's words, to "village and embarrassing" run-outs.

Afterwards, the former South Australia off-spinner admitted: "There weren't too many positives there for us. Geoff Barnett got use off to a pretty good start but once he was out I don't think we competed for the rest of the game. That pretty much sums it up."

In reply Kenya, whose spinners had strangled the life out of their fellow minnows' innings, finished on 203 for three with 40 balls to spare with captain Steve Tikolo unbeaten on 72.

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"It didn't click. It was really disappointing. We haven't bowled that many extras in a game for a long time. Maybe the pressure of the occasion got to us."

"It was pretty difficult starting on

Tikolo thrashes Canada

AFP, Gros Islet



Kenya captain Steve Tikolo led from the front as his side beat fellow minnows Canada by seven wickets in the opening Group C World Cup match here Wednesday.

With Test nations England and New Zealand lying in wait, this fixture appeared to represent both the Africans' and the North Americans' best chance of a victory.

In the end Kenya, the shock semi-finalists of four years ago, won decisively. Chasing 200 to win, they finished on 203 for three with 40 balls to spare.

Experienced skipper Tikolo was 72 not out after opener Maurice Ouma had made 58. Tamay Mishra was unbeaten on 35.

Tikolo had already had a good day in the field.

After winning the toss, he was one of three Kenyan spinners who between them took five wickets for 78 runs in 29 overs as Canada's innings slowed to a crawl after a dismal start.

"All in all it was a good game," Tikolo said.

"Up front we gave away too

many runs but the spinners pulled it back in the middle to restrict them. Then when we batted, Maurice Ouma batted brilliantly. Then myself and Mishra just finished off the game."

Canada captain John Davison, who said aspects of his side's play were "embarrassing" and labelled the running between the wickets that led to three late run-outs "village", was understandably upbeat.

"There weren't too many positives for us. Once Geoff Barnett (41) was out, I don't think we competed for the rest of the game. That pretty much sums it up. It didn't click."

Canada bowled 18 wides and two no-balls and Davison added: "I don't think we've bowled that many extras in a game for a long time. Maybe the pressure of the occasion got to us."

Ouma started positively, pulling first-class cricket during the 2006-07 season for New Zealand's Central Districts, had stroked five fours of the 14th over, bowled by first change Nehemiah Odhiambo, with the pick a straight drive down the ground.

Barnett was in sight of a fifty when he holed out.

Going for a big pick-up off paceman Peter Ongondo, Barnett was well caught on the long leg boundary by Mishra.

However, Tikolo, in his fourth World Cup, was untroubled as he

made a typically stylish fifty off 56 balls with one six and five fours -- his 19th one-day international half-century.

Tight slow bowling from Kenya -- featuring Tikolo's two for 34 off nine overs -- had earlier restricted Canada to 199 all out.

Off-spinner Jimmy Kamande was the pick of the attack, taking a superb two for 25 from his full 20 overs.

Left-arm Hiren Varaiya was also impressive with one for 19 from 10 on his World Cup debut.

Canada were looking good while opener Barnett was at the crease but their innings became bogged down when he was out.

However, Dhaniram added impetus late on with an unbeaten 34 off 35 balls, including a six and three fours, to give Canada's bowlers hope.

Left-hander Barnett, who played first-class cricket during the 2006-07 season for New Zealand's Central Districts, had stroked five fours of the 14th over, bowled by first change Nehemiah Odhiambo, with the pick a straight drive down the ground.

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Going for a big pick-up off paceman Peter Ongondo, Barnett was well caught on the long leg boundary by Mishra.

Barnett faced 50 balls with nine fours.



Kenya captain Steve Tikolo works the ball towards fine-leg during their Group C World Cup match against Canada at the Beausejour ground in Gros Islet on Wednesday night.