



Irish players celebrate their stunning victory over Pakistan in their Group D encounter of the World Cup at Sabina Park in Kingston on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Latest giantkillers

AFP, Gros Islet



This World Cup was widely derided in advance for having too many minnow nations.

But Ireland, in one of the all-time great World Cup upsets, sent 1992 champions Pakistan crashing out of the tournament with a three-wicket win at Jamaica's Sabina Park on Saturday.

And on the same day Bangladesh, whose elevation to Test status has been heavily criticised, beat India by five wickets, 24 hours after the death of their international colleague Manzarul Islam in a road accident.

On St. Patrick's Day, World Cup

debutants Ireland chased a revised target of 128 from 47 overs to win with 32 balls to spare, when captain Trent Johnson smashed Azhar Mahmood over long-on for six after Niall O'Brien had made 72.

However, three of the four heaviest defeats in the history of the World Cup came during the first three days of the 2007 tournament.

Sri Lanka beat Bermuda by 243 runs, South Africa romped to a 221-run win against the Netherlands, in a match reduced to 40 overs each because of rain, while Scotland lost by 202 runs to Australia.

Ironically, Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer, formerly the head of the International Cricket Council's high performance unit which exists to improve the standard of leading junior nations, had warned Ireland could cause an upset just hours before they embarrassed his side.

Ex-England batsman Woolmer, in his www.cricinfo.com column published earlier Saturday, said Ireland were "a serious banana skin fixture".

Ireland's victory handed Pakistan their second straight defeat in the competition, following their 54-run loss to hosts West Indies last Tuesday.

There was also joy for Bangladesh with left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal, who turns 18 on Tuesday, making 51 for his maiden half-century as his team successfully chased a 192-run target.

After a shock-free first World Cup in 1975, Sri Lanka posted the first real upset win four years later when they beat India by 47 runs at Old Trafford.

Sri Lanka made 238 for five thanks to fifties from Siddath Wettimuny, Duleep Mendis and Roy Dias.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

# Joyous Johnston goes to hospital

AFP, Kingston



Ireland captain Trent Johnston was seeking medical treatment for an injured shoulder, just hours after his side completed a

stunning victory over Pakistan in the World Cup at Sabina Park.

Johnston smashed Azhar Mahmood over long-on for six to seal a famous three-wicket victory to put the 1992 champions out of the competition, but he had injured his shoulder while fielding earlier in the day.

"I've got some sort of rotator cuff problem in the left shoulder, after I injured it diving for a ball," said Johnston. "It's an old injury. There's quite a bit of pain there -- I'm going to hospital to get an MRI scan.

"Hopefully, I can get it right in the next six days, so I've got to take it easy, and watch the rest of the boys party."

Ireland face hosts West Indies in the final group match on Friday, and he is anxious to be fit for that contest, after his side made St. Patrick's Day one to remember for the scores of Irish supporters in the stands.

"I didn't do too well in English at school, so I don't have a word for it," Johnston said.

"It's amazing. We had a huge advantage in winning the toss. We bowled the ball in very good areas, and we were lucky they snicked off, and we were our catches, and we had a total of 133 to chase which was unbelievable.

"It's magnificent. The support out

there also was amazing for us. That was another thing which carried us to the victory. It was those 1,500 Irish supporters up there in the stands."

Johnston felt his teammates deserved a night to indulge in themselves in a celebratory drink, after the way they played.

"I just think we kept plugging away, and I never thought Pakistan gave up," he said.

"With the quality of their bowling attack, and the experience they have in one-day international cricket, 130 on that pitch is like 270 on a flat pitch, and they always had the bowlers to bowl the balls in good areas and get us out.

"We are not used to that sort of pressure, but they are accustomed to it day in, day out, but our guys just stood up, and I can't say enough about the two O'Brien brothers, and how they batted -- it was outstanding. Their guts and courage got us over the line."

Niall O'Brien hit a one-day international career best 72 from 107 balls to be the backbone of the Irish chase.

He shared valuable partnerships of 47 with William Porterfield for the third wicket, and 38 with his brother Kevin for the fifth wicket to consolidate for Ireland.

"These two games in the World Cup have helped us to put our experiences at the World Cricket League in Kenya to bed because we lost four close games there," Johnston said.

"To come back against Zimbabwe (a tied match last week

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

# Ireland KO Pakistan

AFP, Kingston



Ireland gave their countrymen a St. Patrick's Day to remember, when they clinched a sensational three-wicket victory over Pakistan to send the former champions crashing out of the World Cup at Sabina Park on Saturday here.

Chasing a revised target of 128 from 47 overs in gloomy conditions, Ireland held their nerve to hit the jackpot with 32 balls to spare, when captain Trent Johnson smashed Azhar Mahmood over long-on for six.

The Irish victory handed Pakistan their second straight defeat in the competition, following their 54-run loss to hosts West Indies last Tuesday.

The win also provisionally puts Ireland in the lead of Group D with three points -- one more than West Indies and two ahead of Zimbabwe (both have a match in hand) -- leaving Pakistan at the bottom of the table with no points.

West Indies face Zimbabwe on Monday in a match which could make them the first side to reach the Super Eights.

Pakistan contest their final match on Wednesday against Zimbabwe, and the Irish and West Indies close the group stage on Friday.

Niall O'Brien hit a one-day international career best 72 from 107 balls to be the backbone of the Irish chase.

He shared valuable partnerships of 47 with William Porterfield for the third wicket, and 38 with his brother

Kevin for the fifth wicket to consolidate for Ireland.

Mohammad Sami was the pick of the Pakistan bowlers with three wickets for 29 runs from 10 overs, and Rao Iftikhar supported with two for 29 from 10 overs.

Ireland had bowled and fielded with purpose in helpful conditions to dismiss the Pakistanis for a modest 132 in 45.4 overs, but they wobbled at the start of their innings.

Jeremy Bray, a century-maker in Ireland's first match against Zimbabwe, was adjudged lbw for Sami for three in the fourth over, and Eoin Morgan was dismissed for two after suffering a similar fate in the sixth over to leave Ireland 15 for two.

Niall O'Brien came to the wicket and took control of the situation to keep Ireland ahead of the scoring rate with Porterfield simply prepared to bat defiantly at the other end.

Porterfield was dismissed in the 21st over however, when Mohammad Hafeez bowled him for 13, but Ireland were already safe, and the equation got easier when a 35-minute stoppage for bad light rain sent the players off the field in the 28th over.

On resumption, Pakistan showed the break had revitalised them, and snared three wickets -- including Niall O'Brien -- in the space of seven balls to raise hopes of a late fight-back.

Niall O'Brien was stumped off Shoaib Malik in the 34th over, and next over, Iftikhar struck twice to remove Andrew White and Kyle McCallan next ball.

That left Ireland rocking at 113 for seven from 35 overs.

Johnston joined Niall's brother Kevin at the crease and they kept their composure take their side over the line.

AFP, Kingston



Captain Inzamam ul Haq and coach Bob Woolmer have refused to speculate about their future, after

Pakistan crashed out of the World Cup following a stunning defeat to Ireland.

Pakistan conceded their second straight defeat in the competition, after they lost by 54 runs in the World Cup opener against hosts West Indies last Tuesday.

"I have not had time to think about my future," said Inzamam after his team's shock three-wicket defeat.

"I have other things on my mind right now. There are bound to be changes, but I do not know what they might be."

Pakistan's defeat has drawn fiery criticism at home, with reports suggesting that Pakistan Cricket Board chief Nasim Ashraf will soon be out of a job.

Inzamam, playing in his fifth World Cup and a member of the side that won the 1992 title, admitted his side is likely to receive a lukewarm welcome on their return home.

"As far as a reception at home is concerned, I don't think we will have a welcome reception," he said.

Inzamam also praised Ireland for playing so competitively and silencing the critics that felt ICC Associate sides had no place in the World Cup.

"You are always under a lot of pressure when playing these countries because they really have nothing to lose," he said.

"But I feel these countries should

be coming out and playing in order to spread cricket all over the world."

Woolmer indicated his side's performance ranked pretty highly as one of the worse days of his life

as a coach.

"I think the worse was at Edgbaston in 1999 (when he was

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq tries to come to terms after his side's shock defeat to Ireland in their Group D match of the World Cup at Sabina Park in Kingston on Saturday.