

## Lanka's last-ball win

AFP, St John's



Dilhara Fernando took a wicket with the last ball of the match to seal a dramatic two-run win for Sri Lanka against England in their World Cup Super Eights clash at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium here Wednesday.

England, set 236 to win, finished on 233 for eight when Fernando (three for 41) bowled Ravi Bopara, whose career-best 52 of 53 balls so nearly set up an improbable win in only his fifth one-day international.

But Sri Lanka, who'd lost a one-wicket nail-biter to South Africa, held on with the 1996 champions moving a step closer to the semifinals.

England must now try to revive their ailing bid for a last four spot against world champions Australia here Sunday.

Bopara and Paul Nixon took England to the brink of a sensational win, after they'd been down and out at 133 for six in the 34th over, with a stand of 87.

England needed 77 to win off the last 10 overs with four wickets standing, Bopara and Nixon still in when 49 were required off five.

But after wicketkeeper Nixon reversed swept Muttiah Muralidaran for a six and a four, the target was 19 off two overs.

However, when Nixon holed out off Lasith Malinga to Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene for 42 off 44 balls, England were 220 for seven -- still requiring 16 off seven balls for victory.

But Bopara square cut Malinga's final ball for four and England needed 12 off the last over.

His cheeky sweep for four off Fernando then made it seven off four balls.

By the time Bopara faced the last

ball three were still needed only for the Essex all-rounder to be clean bowled.

Sajid Mahmood, who'd earlier taken a career-best four for 50, was two not out.

England were on course for victory at 101 for two.

But the unfortunate run out of Ian Bell (47) started a slump that saw four wickets lost for 32 runs in 49 balls.

Together with Kevin Pietersen (58), Bell put on 90 for the third wicket.

Well though England bowled, there was always the suspicion that Sri Lanka, had enough runs to play

with.

It certainly seemed that way as England lost both openers cheaply to be 11 for two.

Before this match England skipper Michael Vaughan said it was time he scored a hundred, having failed to reach three figures in a limited overs international.

Instead the England captain, in his 82nd match at this level, fell for nought when, shaping to glance Chaminda Vaas, he was caught by wicket-keeper Kumar Sangakkara.

Pietersen, rated the world's best

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PHOTO: AFP

### ENGLAND V SRI LANKA SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the World Cup Super Eights match between England and Sri Lanka at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Wednesday:

Sri Lanka	R	B	4s	6s
Tharanga c Pietersen b Flintoff	62	103	2	0
Jayasuriya b Mahmood	25	26	4	1
Sangakkara c Collingwood b Mahmood	17	33	2	0
Jayawardene c Joyce b Collingwood	56	61	4	0
Silva b Flintoff	24	37	2	0
Dilshan run out	5	6	0	0
Arnold c Joyce b Mahmood	20	22	1	0
Malinga c Nixon b Mahmood	4	5	0	0
Muralidaran not out	2	7	0	0
Fernando run out	2	2	0	0
Extras: (b-3, lb-5, w-4, nb-4)	16			
Total: (All out in 50 overs)	235			
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	10	1	39	0
Mahmood	9	0	50	4
Flintoff	10	0	35	3
Collingwood	10	0	44	1
				1w

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AND IT SEALS THE DEAL: England batsman Ravi Bopara loses his castle to Sri Lanka bowler Dilhara Fernando (not in picture) in the last delivery of the match during the World Cup Super Eights encounter at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in St. John's on Wednesday.

Photo: AFP

Photo: AFP