



Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi (2nd from R) led his side from the front in defence of a modest total. Here he celebrates one of his five wickets against Canada during a World Cup Group A match at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



Afridi saves Pak blushes

SPORTS DESK

Pakistan's bowling, led by captain Shahid Afridi, compensated for their weak batting display to inflict a 46-run defeat on lowly Canada in yesterday's World Cup match at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo. The win kept Pakistan at the top of Group A with three wins from as many matches. After a sub-par batting performance saw them skittled out for 184, Pakistan's bowlers came out with a determined effort, and were ably supported in the field as Canada folded for 138. Shahid Afridi, who is in the middle of a purple patch with the ball that has seen him climb to the top of the wickets table with 14 wickets from three games, cut a swathe through Canada's middle and lower order to pick up five wickets for 23 runs. It was his second five-

wicket haul of the 2011 World Cup, having taken five in Pakistan's opening game against Kenya. Canada were in trouble from the start, slipping to 3 for 44 by the eighteenth over. Hopes were rekindled briefly as Zubin Surkari (27) and Jimmy Hansra (43) put on 60 runs for the fourth wicket, before the dismissal of Surkari precipitated a collapse engineered chiefly by the Pakistan captain. Canada's last seven wickets fell for 34 runs as Pakistan avoided an embarrassment at the hands of the Associate nation. Earlier, Canada's part-time bowlers restricted Pakistan to a modest total to set up the chance for an unlikely victory. Seamer Harvir Baidwan took three wickets, while Rizwan Cheema, Balaji Rao and Jimmy Hansra picked up two apiece after Pakistan chose to bat on a slow pitch under overcast skies. Candian bowlers exploited the

conditions well as Pakistan lost wickets at regular intervals, with only Umar Akmal (48) and Misbah-ul-Haq (37) putting up a degree of resistance during their 73-run partnership for the fifth wicket. Baidwan finished with 3-35, Hansra (2-23) and Rao (2-50) as Pakistan lost their last five wickets for only 19 runs in five overs. Openers Mohammad Hafeez (11) was trapped lbw by Henry Osinde in the fourth over before Baidwan dismissed Ahmed Shahzad (12) and Younis Khan (six) in the space of 13 runs. Cheema, who took 2-33, made it 67 for four when he had Kamran Akmal (16) caught in the covers in the 16th over, leaving the task of building the innings to Misbah and Umar Akmal. Rao broke the Misbah-Umar stand, when he trapped Umar lbw in the 35th

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SA crush Netherlands

AFP, Mohali

AB de Villiers and Hashim Amla smashed centuries against the hapless Netherlands bowlers on Thursday to set up a thumping 231-run win for South Africa.

De Villiers scored 134 for a second successive ton while opener Amla made 113 as the Proteas posted a mammoth 351-5 before dismissing the Dutch for a paltry 120 for their second consecutive win in Group B.

The Netherlands lost wickets at regular intervals against South Africa's disciplined pace-spin combination before being bowled out in the 35th over, slumping to their third consecutive defeat.

Seamer Jacques Kallis rattled the top order with two wickets before Pakistan-born leg-spinner Imran Tahir (3-19) and left-arm spinner Robin Peterson (2-22) did more damage.

Wesley Barresi, dropped on 21 by Morne Morkel at mid-on off Kallis, top-scored with 44 in a dismal Netherlands batting performance.

"It wasn't easy up front. There was a little bit of juice in the wicket," said South African skipper Graeme Smith, praising Amla and de Villiers.

"Once we set the platform it was about making it count and the two of them definitely did that."

Losing captain Peter Borren said such a thumping defeat was hard to take but his side were still learning by playing against the top sides.

"I think we learn more from playing against this type of opposition... than playing against each other as associ-

ates," he said.

In the South African innings de Villiers and Amla dominated the Dutch attack after South Africa were put in to bat in overcast conditions before a few thousand spectators in Mohali.

The Proteas lost Smith (20) and Kallis (two) to slip to 58-2 before de Villiers and Amla put on 221, South Africa's best for the third wicket in a World Cup.

De Villiers raced to his 11th one-day hundred off just 88 deliveries, while Amla completed his eighth ton off 121 balls.

Amla impressed with his shot selection, patiently waiting for loose deliveries to punish, but de Villiers was more aggressive, once reverse-sweeping spinner Tom Cooper for a boundary.

They set the stage for the final onslaught, which saw South Africa plunder 136 in the last 10 overs. JP Duminy hammered 40 off just 15 balls with four sixes and two fours.

De Villiers, who scored an unbeaten century in the previous match against the West Indies, smashed seamer Bernard Loots for three successive sixes before hitting Ryan ten Doeschate for three fours in a row.

Amla hit eight fours in his 130-ball knock before being caught at point off ten Doeschate and de Villiers was run out after striking four sixes and 13 fours in a 98-ball innings.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the World Cup Group B match between South Africa and the Netherlands in Mohali on Thursday:

SOUTH AFRICA

Amla c Cooper b Ten Doeschate 113
Smith b Loots 20

Kallis c Barresi b Ten Doeschate 2
De Villiers run out 134
Du Plessis not out 18
Duminy c Borren b Ten Doeschate 40
Van Wyk not out 0
Extras: (b-2, lb-5, nb-1, w-16) 24
Total: (For five wks in 50 overs) 351
Did not bat: Peterson, Morkel, Steyn, Tahir.

Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-58, 3-279, 4-283, 5-349.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Bukhari	10	0	44	0
Westdijk	9	0	76	0
Ten Doeschate	10	0	72	3
Loots	9	0	60	1
Seelaar	10	0	74	0
Cooper	2	0	18	0

NETHERLANDS

Kervezee c & b Kallis	10
Barresi st Van Wyk b Duminy	44
Cooper c Steyn b Kallis	9
Zuiderent lbw b Peterson	15
Ten Doeschate lbw b Steyn	11
De Grooth run out	12
Borren lbw b Peterson	3
Bukhari b Tahir	0
Seelaar not out	2
Loots lbw b Tahir	6
Westdijk lbw b Tahir	0
Extras: (w-8)	8
Total: (All out in 34.5 overs)	120

Fall of wickets: 1-26, 2-46, 3-81, 4-83, 5-100, 6-109, 7-109, 8-110, 9-120, 10-120.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Steyn	6	1	26	1
Morkel	5	0	18	0
Kallis	6	0	19	2
Tahir	6.5	0	19	3
Peterson	5	0	22	2
Duminy	6	0	16	1

Result: South Africa won by 231 runs.
Man-of-the-match: AB de Villiers.



BRIDGE TO THE TOP: South Africa batsmen AB de Villiers (L) and Hashim Amla congratulate each other while making twin tons during their victory against the Netherlands at Mohali yesterday, taking South Africa to the top of Group B.

PHOTO: AFP

SPORTS POLL

Who will be Bangladesh's highest run-scorer?

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ESPN
ICC Cricket World Cup
New Zealand v Zimbabwe
Live from 10:00am
BTV/STAR Sports/
STAR Cricket
ICC Cricket World Cup
Bangladesh v West Indies

DAY'S EVENT

ICC Cricket World Cup
Bangladesh v West Indies
Time: 2:30pm
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National

British press slam 'em

AFP, London

England's "shamed" cricketers came in for a slogging in the British press Thursday after they crashed to a humiliating defeat against minnows Ireland in their World Cup match in Bangalore.

"England shamed by O'Brien," the tabloid Sun said in its headline.

"England were left looking like a pub side as Kevin O'Brien smashed the fastest ever World Cup century," the paper claimed.

England looked to be cruising in Wednesday's Group B match after accumulating 327 in their innings and reducing Ireland to 111/5. At this point, odds of an Ireland win were as long as 400-1.

However, pink-haired all-rounder O'Brien, who had never reached fifty in his nine previous World Cup innings, blasted a scintillating century to turn the match on its head.

The Telegraph's editorial attempted to put the shock three-wicket defeat into context.

"Over the years, England's national sports teams have been on the wrong end of some infamous defeats," it said.

"Until yesterday, America's 1-0 victory in the football World Cup of 1950 was probably the most notorious. But the extraordinary triumph of Ireland's cricketers in their World Cup group match in Bangalore must rank alongside any sporting upset of yore."

Richard Hobson, writing in The Times, lauded the swashbuckling batsman's unusual style.

"With dyed pink hair, Kevin O'Brien

looked more like the frontman in a punk rock band than a cricketer yesterday and there was a strong element of punk about the innings that has left England clinging to their World Cup place," Hobson wrote.

"Bold and brash, raw and uninhibited, it was the equivalent of a snarling, two-fingered salute to the mainstream," he added.

The Telegraph's Simon Briggs highlighted O'Brien's unorthodox journey from club cricketer for the Papplewick and Railway Union teams to World Cup matchwinner.

"If it is a long way from Papplewick and Railway Union to the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore, the shift from club cricket to the World Cup must be bigger still.

"But on the evidence of this insouciant innings, no one has told Kevin O'Brien, England's demolition man," Briggs added.

BBC cricket correspondent Jonathan Agnew predicted England would find it hard to regroup after the breathtaking defeat.

"We've had a week of superlatives in Bangalore - the greatest matches, the greatest centuries in England's game against India, but clearly as a one-day innings Kevin O'Brien's magnificent 113 from 63 balls is up there with the best of them.

"England will be devastated by this result, (they) look like a team that will not go any further than the quarter-finals," Agnew said. The Guardian's Kevin Mitchell echoed Agnew's concerns.

"Nobody in the aftermath on Wednesday seemed able to put a name to the malaise," Mitchell said.



Netherlands fans, with the man wearing a Sikh's Turban to get into the local spirit, cheer on their team against South Africa yesterday at the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium in Mohali, but all to no avail as the Dutch suffered the fourth biggest defeat in World Cups, losing by 231 runs.

PHOTO: AFP

RAHIMAFROOZ

Who will be the top Bangladeshi run scorer in the match between Bangladesh & West Indies?
Type myips<space>name of the top Bangladeshi run scorer and send it to 2777.

Win your favorite red-green jersey* and a Rahimafrooz IPS* There is also a Rahimafrooz IPS as gift for the top Bangladeshi run scorer in each match. SMS entries will be open till 04th March 2011, 2:30 PM. Hurry!

* Winners will be selected from the correct entries by lottery.

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