



Australia batsman Michael Clarke plays behind square on the off side during his 93 against Kenya at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Aus sail to qtrs

REUTERS, Bangalore



ICC Cricket World Cup 2011
Holders Australia claimed their place in the last eight of the World Cup on Sunday but they were made to work surprisingly hard by Kenya who restored pride with a defiant performance despite losing by 60 runs.

Michael Clarke (93) and the returning Mike Hussey (54) bailed their team out of trouble to help set up a daunting 324-6 but Kenya defied the much-vaunted Australian fast bowling unit to score a respectable 264-6 in Group A.

Earlier, opener Brad Haddin had made 65 but Australia found themselves under unexpected pressure at one stage at 143-4.

After four straight losses, Kenya had clearly decided not to go down without a fight and Tanmay Mishra (72) along with Collins Obuya (98 not out) resisted with a stubborn stand of 115 for the fourth wicket.

The pace trio of Brett Lee, Shaun Tait and Mitchell

Johnson regularly generated speeds in excess of 140 kmph but the Kenyan batsmen gave as good as they got and notched up their highest score in the tournament so far.

Earlier, Clarke (93 off 80 balls) paced his innings to perfection to avoid a middle-order collapse after Australia lost three quick wickets in the space of 15 balls at the end of the 27th over.

Clarke and Hussey (54 in 43 balls), who celebrated his return to the World Cup squad with a typically industrious innings, came together with Australia in a spot of bother and with a 300 plus score looking a long way off.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the World Cup Group A match between Australia and Kenya at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore on Sunday:

AUSTRALIA

Watson c Ouma b Odhiambo	21
Haddin c Patel b Kamande	65
Ponting lwb b C Obuya	36
Clarke c Patel b Odhiambo	93
White b Kamande	2
Hussey c D Obuya b Odhiambo	54
Smith not out	17

KENYA

Ouma c Haddin b Lee	4
Obanda b Tait	14
C Obuya not out	98
D Obuya run out	12
Mishra run out	72
Odney b Tait	35
Patel run out	6
Kamande not out	0
Extras: (b-2, lb-6, w-12, nb-3)	23
Total: (For six wkts in 50 overs)	264
Fall of wickets: 1-12, 2-21, 3-46, 4-161, 5-247, 6-263.	
Did not bat: Odhiambo, Otiemo, Ngoche.	

Bowler O M R W

Lee	8	1	26	1
Tait	8	0	49	2
Johnson	8	1	40	0
Smith	6	0	36	0
Krejza	8	0	36	0
Clarke	5	0	21	0
Watson	7	0	48	0

Result: Australia won by 60 runs.
Man-of-the-match: Collins Obuya.

Boost MOMENT OF THE DAY

SPORTS POLL
WEEKLY QUESTION
Which has been the most exciting team in this World Cup so far?

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What to WATCH

BTV/ESPN
ICC Cricket World Cup
Bangladesh v Netherlands
Live from 9:30am

STAR Sports/STAR Cricket
ICC Cricket World Cup
Pakistan v Zimbabwe
Live from 3:00pm

TEN Action+ La Liga
Getafe v Bilbao

DAY'S EVENT

ICC Cricket World Cup
Bangladesh v Netherlands
Time: 9:30am
Venue: Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, Chittagong

Bangladesh League
Farashganj v Soccer Club, Feni
Time: 4:00pm
Venue: Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur

PAKISTAN V ZIMBABWE: PALLEKELE Akmals are in

AFP, Pallekele

ICC Cricket World Cup 2011
Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi is positive of wrapping up a World Cup quarterfinal spot on Monday despite another twist in the ongoing Akmal brothers soap opera.

Pakistan's build-up to the game against Zimbabwe has been dominated by Kamran and Umar Akmal.

Ever since Kamran put in a blundering performance behind the stumps in the 110-run defeat to New Zealand last Tuesday, it had been widely expected that younger brother Umar would take the gloves.

Umar was then accused of feigning a finger injury to save his brother's job.

On Sunday, the 21-year-old Umar managed to sprain his right ankle while playing football during practice although Afridi said the batsman was not seriously hurt.

"We want to put everything behind us, the defeat and any other thing which could hurt our preparation. We are in a positive frame of mind and will play for a win," said Afridi.

"Umar is OK. As far as Kamran is concerned he has realised his mistakes and we have given him full confidence and at this moment he is our best option," said Afridi, ruling out any make-shift changes.

Pakistan also still have a problem with their openers whose inability to put on a healthy partnership is straining the middle-order.

But despite the headaches, captain Afridi insists his team will not

repeat the first round exits of the 2003 and 2007 World Cups.

"I have a lot of confidence in my players. We will win against Zimbabwe to reach the quarter-finals," said Afridi, whose team face defending champions Australia in their last group match on March 19.

Pakistan, with six points after four matches, need a win to join co-hosts Sri Lanka into the last eight.

Pakistan are likely to rest express paceman Shoaib Akhtar, who went for 71 in his nine overs against New Zealand, and if Umar is ruled out, bring in paceman Wahab Riaz and batsman Asad Shafiq.

Zimbabwe still have a slim chance of making the last eight despite having so far collected just two points.

But they need to beat Pakistan and Kenya, dramatically improve their run-rate and still hope Australia beat Pakistan.

"We'll believe that if we can play our best cricket then we can proceed but we must not repeat the mistakes of our last two matches," said Zimbabwe captain Elton Chigumbura, who will celebrate his 25th birthday on match day.

Chigumbura said his side will be wary of leg-spinner Afridi, who is the highest wicket-taker in the

PAKISTAN V ZIMBABWE

Matches: 40
Pakistan win: 36
Zimbabwe win: 2
No result/Tied: 2
First meeting: Feb 27, 1992, Hobart -- Pakistan won by 53 runs
Last meeting: Feb 2, 2008, Sheikhpura --



Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi bowls during practice at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium yesterday. The leg-spinner is the highest wicket-taker of the World Cup and will be counting on his swerving missiles to vanquish Zimbabwe in their match today.

PHOTO: AFP

tournament with 15.

"With Afridi we have to make sure we look to play him straight. We have noticed that he's had plenty of dismissals either bowled or lbw so we must make sure we don't look to go

across the line too much," said Chigumbura.

Pakistan have beaten Zimbabwe in three of their previous four World Cup matches, with the 2003 match abandoned due to rain.

Butcher wants better batting

AFP, Pallekele



ICC Cricket World Cup 2011
Zimbabwe's English coach Alan Butcher demanded better batting in the match against Pakistan on Monday, saying small totals cannot win his team World Cup matches.

Zimbabwe were bowled out for 188 in their 139-run defeat against Sri Lanka last week, leaving the African nation facing a must-win game against Shahid Afridi's men to keep their flickering quarter-final hopes alive.

The African nation were also bowled out cheaply against New Zealand and Australia in their other two defeats, only finding form in their win over minnows Canada, when they scored 298.

Butcher said poor batting displays were hurting his team's chances.

"I think the concern is to put a positive total on the board and that's what's been our problem," said Butcher.

"I am happy with the way the team has performed in the field. Most of the time we have bowled well but haven't posted a good total."

Butcher said Zimbabwe had the bowlers to defend a total of 250-plus.

"The minimum realistic target is 250 and if we score that then we have a chance against most teams."

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