

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



Holders Australia claimed their place in ICC Cricket World Cup 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

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

daunting 324-6 but Kenya

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

The pace trio of Brett Lee, Shaun Tait and Mitchell

wicket.

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

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

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 Haddin c Patel b Kamande Ponting Ibw b C Obuya Clarke c Patel b Odhiambo White b Kamande Hussey c D Obuya b Odhiambo 54 Smith not out

Johnson not out Extras: (b-2, lb-5, w-16, nb-1) 24 Total: (For 6 wkts in 50 overs) 324 Did not bat: Lee, Krejza, Tait. Fall of wickets: 1-38, 2-127, 3-131 4-143, 5-257, 6-304.

Odhiambo 10 Kamande 10 C Obuya 4 KENYA Ouma c Haddin b Lee Obanda b Tait C Obuya not out D Obuya run out Mishra run out Odoyo b Tait Patel run out Kamande not out

161, 5-247, 6-263. Did not bat: Odhiambo, Otieno,

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-

Ngoche. Bowler Tait Krejza Result: Australia won by 60 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Collins Obuya

SPORTS POLL WEEKLY QUESTION Which has been the most exciting team in this World

Cup so far? Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote

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Pakistan v Zimbabwe Live from 3:00pm TEN Action+ La Liga Getafe v Bilbao



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

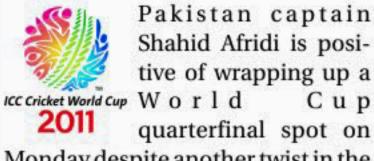
Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur

Venue:

PAKISTAN V ZIMBABWE: PALLEKELE

Akmals are in

AFP, Pallekele



opera. against Zimbabwe has been dominated by Kamran and Umar Akmal.

dering 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.

brother's job.

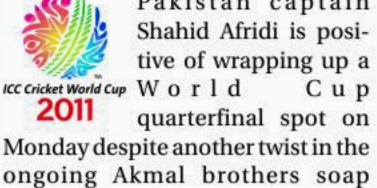
On Sunday, the 21-year-old Umar managed to sprain his right ankle while playing football during practice although Afridi said the batsman was not seriously hurt.

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 mistakes and we have given him full confidence and at this moment he is our best option," said Afridi, ruling out any makeshift changes.

straining the middle-order.

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



Pakistan's build-up to the game

Ever since Kamran put in a blun-

Umar was then accused of feigning a finger injury to save his

"We want to put everything

is concerned he has realised his

Pakistan also still have a problem with their openers whose inability to put on a healthy partnership is

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 quarterfinals," 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.

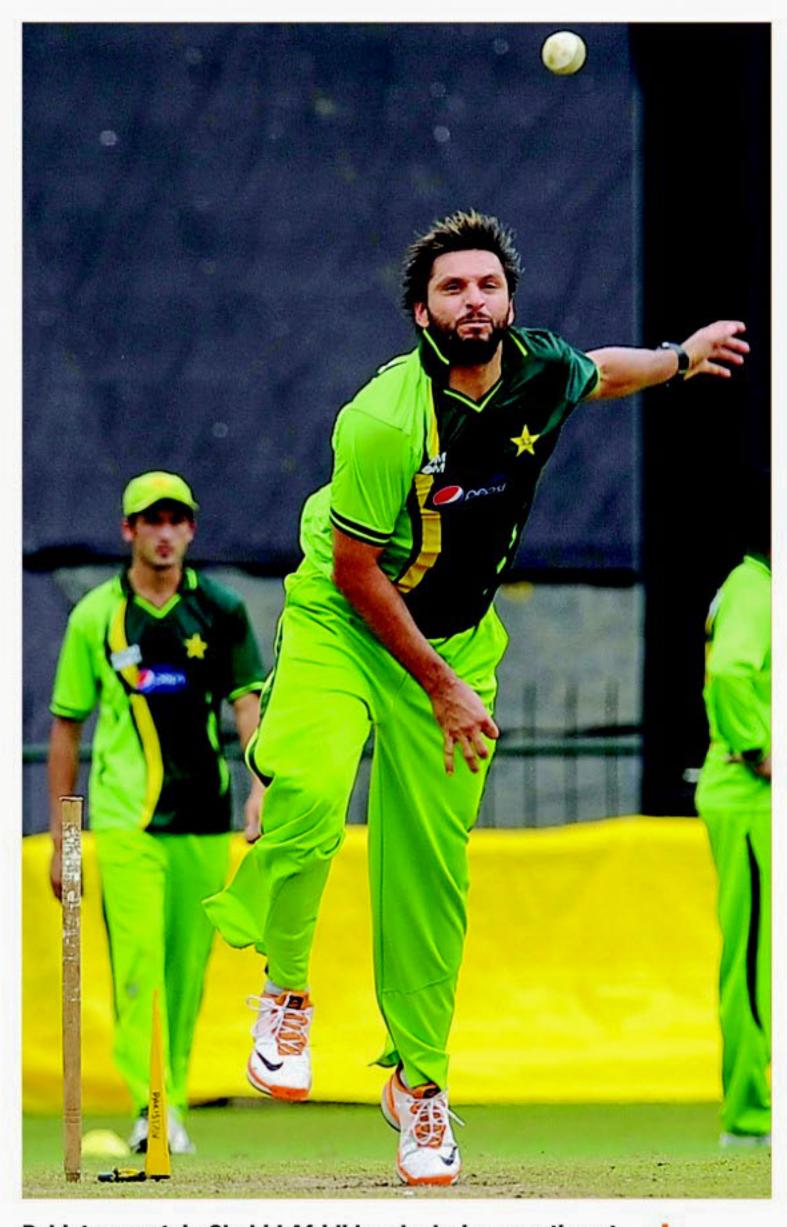
Chigumbura said his side will be wary of leg-spinner Afridi, who is the highest wicket-taker in the

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, Sheikhupura -



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.

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

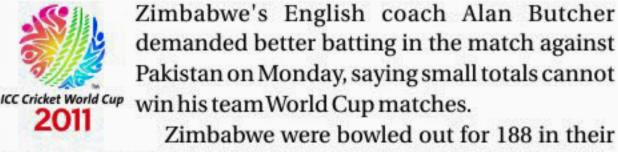
across the line too much," said

Chigumbura. Pakistan have beaten Zimbabwe in three of their previous four World

abandoned due to rain.

Butcher wants better batting

AFP, Pallekele



demanded better batting in the match against Pakistan on Monday, saying small totals cannot occ Cricket World Cup 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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