

## Prince William loses to a kid

There's nothing as quintessentially English as being terrible at penalties. During his tour of the Solomon Islands with the Duchess of Cambridge, Prince William upheld the principles of the Land of Hope and Glory by being really quite terrible at spot kicks. William stepped up to take three penalties as hundreds of locals looked on, warning: "This could go just about anywhere." Prince William tucked his first penalty into the bottom-right corner but then quipped "here we go again" as two shots were saved by Philemon Fatai, 13, who said afterwards: "He's good--"



# 'Batting issues mental'

BISHWAJIT ROY from Kandy

In Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim's view Pakistan and West Indies are the favourites in the ongoing ICC World Twenty20. The logic behind his position is that the two sides have more match-winners than other teams in the competition and this is a special strength which will help the teams to win matches in the shortest version of the game.

It is in this area that Bangladesh stand far behind the other top teams -- instead of brilliant displays of talent from a host of match-winners Bangladesh have to rely on their team's combined effort.

According to Mushfiqur the defeat against Ireland again exposed their weakness in the newest version of the game, a format they have only recently started coming to terms with. The Bangladesh captain believed that Ireland didn't win the match; rather it was gifted to their opponents mainly through the Tigers' poor middle-order batting. The vulnerable middle-order has become a headache for the team ahead of their challenges against New Zealand and Pakistan in the group stage. The team management have to rectify the issue if they want to pull off a few surprises in the tournament

because it is more or less a batsman's game.

"You see our top order is getting runs for the last six months and they are in good touch but the problem lies with our middle order. It has happened quite often over the last six months that we lost a few quick wickets in the middle. It was a very easy match against Ireland but we lost three quick wickets though there was no hurry with the asking run rate," said Mushfiqur, who looked confident despite his team's five-run defeat against Ireland in the last warm-up game in Colombo.

Then the question came up of where exactly the middle-order problems lay?

"Me, Riyad bhai (Mahmudullah Riyad) and Nasir (Hossain) became cautious rather than playing our natural game though the situation was a normal one for us. And few dot balls put pressure on us which forced us to play some bad shots. We could have finished the match with a few overs in hand if we played our natural game because we are basically stroke players. This was a new experience for us because we hardly get that kind of a comfortable situation when we go out to bat. We talked with our coach (Richard Pybus) and realised our problem which is that we have to

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(L-R) Australia captain George Bailey carries his training kits while India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni (R) and batsman Virat Kohli look on during their training sessions in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTOS: AFP

## Aus, India take field today

The biggies don't want a slip-up happen

AFP, Colombo

India and Australia hope to avoid adding to the list of great limited-overs upsets when they open their World Twenty20 campaigns against Afghanistan and Ireland on Wednesday.

In a potentially sensational double-header at Colombo's Premadasa Stadium, George Bailey's Australia take on Ireland in Group B, ahead of India's Group A clash with Afghanistan.

While many fans will assume victory is a formality, both Australia and India know better than to predict the outcome of a Twenty20 game.

"I will only rest easy when that game has passed," admitted Australian coach Mickey Arthur. "That's not through fear of failure. Ireland have been a giant-killer down the line."

"Any team in this competition can win if they have a good day."

The gritty Irish proved their worth when they stunned England at last year's 50-over World Cup in India, after knocking Pakistan out of the 2007 tournament in the Caribbean.

Australia were handed a huge shock at the first World Twenty20 in 2007, when they were beaten by minnows Zimbabwe. Bangladesh knocked the West Indies out

of the same tournament and the Netherlands beat hosts England at the 2009 edition.

Ireland will be boosted by insights from former Australian fast bowler Craig McDermott, who left his home side earlier this year to join the Irish as their bowling coach.

"Craig has fit in pretty well, working with the bowlers," said Ireland captain William Porterfield. "He has got a lot of confidence that we can go out there and beat anyone."

Porterfield added it was important to make a strong start in the competition. "In a group of three teams, you've got to win at least one game, if not two, to go through."

The 12 teams have been divided into four groups for the preliminary league, with the top two from each advancing to the Super Eights round.

Wednesday's second game may appear a mismatch, but Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni said facing free-swinging Afghanistan, now in their second World Twenty20, was no easy task.

"Wins don't come easy in international cricket and we are certainly not going to take any side lightly," said Dhoni,

who led India to the inaugural World Twenty20 title in South Africa in 2007.

"We have to play our best cricket to beat Afghanistan. They are a good team and have improved a lot over the years."

Afghanistan captain Nawroz Mangal said his side had come a long way since their World Twenty20 debut in the Caribbean in 2010, when they lost to India by seven wickets.

## Tigers enjoy day of respite

BISHWAJIT ROY from Kandy

The Tigers reached hill capital Kandy on Monday. It was just a three-and-a-half hours' journey from Colombo to reach the Mahaweli Reach Hotel: the signature resort of the city. It was not a long or tiresome journey for the Tigers but still everybody was tired mainly because they boarded the bus soon after the end of their second and last warm-up match against Ireland at the Moors Sports Club ground. The hectic schedule was why the Tigers were given the chance to keep away from cricket yesterday, as it was a rest day for them. Mushfiqur Rahim's men however enjoyed the day engaged in

different activities. Most of the players spent their time playing indoor games like chess, carrom, table tennis and billiard in the hotel in the morning session where there was no shortage of excitement when someone won a game.

There was no sign of tiredness. A few enjoyed themselves in the river cruise in the Mahaweli Reach River after the lunch while someone like opener Tamim Iqbal preferred to rest in his room. The players looked relaxed as pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza also said that they needed this break after the gruelling last few days.

"We needed this break and it will help us to recharge before the first group match against New Zealand. We are going to really

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Bangladesh's cricket stars Shakib Al Hasan (L) and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza trade time on the pitch for a game of chess in Kandy yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

### SL-ZIM SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the ICC World T20 opener between Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe at the Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium in Hambantota yesterday.

SRI LANKA				
Munaweera run out	17			
Dilshan c Taylor b Cremer	39			
M Jayawardene run out	13			
Sangakkara run out	44			
Mendis not out	43			
Perera not out	6			
Extras: (b-4, lb-6, w-7, nb-3)	20			
Total: (For 4 wkts in 20 overs)	182			
Did not bat: Mathews, Thirimanne, Kulasekara, Mendis, Malinga.				
Fall of wickets: 1-54, 2-75, 3-82, 4-176.				
Bowler				
O	M	R	W	
Jarvis	4	0	31	0
Vettori	3	0	27	0
Utseya	4	0	25	0
Mpofu	4	0	49	0
Cremer	4	0	27	1
Chigumbura	1	0	13	0
ZIMBABWE				
Masakadza b A Mendis	20			
Sibanda b A Mendis	11			

## 'Play like a family to win'

NAIMUL KARIM

Despite the loss against Ireland in the last warm-up game, most Bangladesh ex-cricketers are of the opinion that the current national team have the quality to get through to the Super-8s of the ICC World Twenty20.

Former slow-left-arm bowler Mohammad Rafique stated that the players need to play with a 'cool' head in order to win their games. Once the main weapon in Bangladesh's bowling attack, the veteran stressed upon the need for a good team performance.

"Pakistan and New Zealand are both difficult sides. I don't think an individual can take us over the line. We need to play like a family to win these matches," said Rafique.

He warned that the conditions in Sri Lanka are difficult to play in and that the Tigers should adjust as soon as possible.

Former wicketkeeper-batsman Khaled Mashud reckoned that the Tigers have a good chance of winning their first game against New Zealand. "The Black Caps aren't very comfortable against spin and I think our boys should take full advantage," he said.

Mashud also expects his former colleague Abdul Razzaq to play a vital role in the tournament. "All the teams are thinking about ways to tackle Shakib (Al Hasan). Razzaq is an able bowler and should make use of this situation to spring a few good performances."

Former captain Roquibul Hassan stated that Bangladesh should make it through to the second round. He, however, was of the opinion that the team's batting order lacked 'firepower'.

"We have a good bowling and fielding unit, we just need to strengthen our batting order a bit more," he said.

Termining Mahmudullah Riyad a 'Sleeping Lion' Roquibul believed that apart from Shakib and Tamim, the off-spinning

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