

## 5 facts

- England have won both previous completed one-day internationals between these teams, in 2010 and 2014 -- both games were played in Scotland.
- England's defeat against New Zealand was their joint-heaviest in terms of balls remaining -- New Zealand reached their target with 226 balls left.
- England have lost their last three World Cup matches; they have never lost four in a row.
- Scotland's Matt Machan has reached double figures in all 16 of his ODI innings. He averages 37.8, with a strike rate of 75.5.
- England seamer Steven Finn has conceded 17 boundaries in the 72 balls he has bowled in the tournament.



England all-rounder Ravi Bopara is about to take a catch during his team's training session yesterday, ahead of today's clash against Scotland. England can ill afford another slip after two heavy defeats. PHOTO: AFP



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# Dhawan's 'home' delight

AFP, Melbourne

India opener Shikhar Dhawan was understandably elated after his superb century laid the platform for a crushing 130-run World Cup win over title contenders South Africa in Melbourne on Sunday.

It was a 'home' game in more ways for one for Dhawan, who lives in Melbourne with his wife and children and was roared on Sunday by a huge crowd of nearly 87,000, mainly India-supporting, spectators at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The left-hander's superb 137 was the cornerstone of India's 307 for seven and it proved too much for the Proteas, who crumbled to 177 all out in reply.

"It was very important to score a century, it's a great feeling," Dhawan, all of whose seven one-day international hundreds have come in a winning cause, said at the presentation ceremony.

"We lost an early wicket but we just wanted to stay there and respect the good balls and cash in on the bad deliveries. I knew I could pick up the run-rate, I was relaxed," he added.

Victory gave India their second commanding victory of the tournament after they beat arch-rivals Pakistan by 76 runs in

their opener and left them on course for the quarter-finals at the top of Pool B.

"I think it's more than just the result that pleases me," said India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

"It was a back-to-back good performance from both the bowling and batting unit, which is why we can enjoy it.

"South Africa are such a good side, so I think that makes it an even more satisfying win."

India may not be as renowned as South Africa for their prowess in the field but two sharp run-outs to dismiss South Africa dangermen AB de Villiers and David Miller put the match beyond the Proteas' reach and proved just how much the champions mean to defend their title.

"The run-outs cost us dearly, coming just when we got started with the bat in hand," said skipper De Villiers. "That's where we lost the game."

South Africa, who now have one win from two pool matches after beating Zimbabwe, were hampered in the field, with paceman Vernon Philander only bowling four overs before succumbing to a hamstring injury.

"The bowlers fought back well because we were staring at 350," said de Villiers. "It was a 270-280 par wicket although to restrict India to 307 was a good effort."

## ENGLAND V SCOTLAND

# Scots waiting to pounce on Eng

AFP, Christchurch

Under-fire England have fuelled Scotland's self-belief going into their World Cup Pool B showdown at Hagley Oval in Christchurch on Monday.

At any other time the outcome would be a foregone conclusion with England expected to cruise to victory without pressure.

But for England these are not ordinary times. They have come into the World Cup with a battle plan that is not working and key players struggling for form.

After a 111-run thrashing by Australia in their Cup opener, they were even more out of their depth on Friday when New Zealand whipped them by eight wickets.

Two games, two losses and a humiliated England -- now under pressure to avoid falling to a low-ranked side such as Scotland -- are searching for answers while the Scots are talking up their chances of an historic win.

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Scotland fared considerably better against New Zealand when they scored 142 and it took the tournament co-hosts 25 overs and the loss of seven wickets to secure victory.

By comparison, England's 123 was mown down in 12.2 overs for the loss of only two wickets.

"England don't look as if they'll get out of the group at this stage," was the blunt assessment of former England captain Paul Collingwood who has switched loyalties to Scotland since joining

their coaching staff.

There have only been two completed games between England and Scotland, in 2010 and 2014, and England won both with ease.

But times have changed and Collingwood, who led England to the World Twenty20 crown five years ago, said Scotland held a "real confidence and belief" they can win now.

"That's going to be an amazing feeling if we can get that first-ever World Cup win under our belt, there's no better time than against England."

Although Scotland rarely get to measure themselves against Test-playing nations nine of their squad -- all of them professionals -- have county cricket experience.

And if Scotland do stun England then an Englishman could well be central to their success.

Tenacious batsman Matt Machan, Sussex-born of Scottish parents, has a handy 37.75 ODI average and scored 56 against New Zealand.



Indian fans got full value for the money they spent as Mahendra Singh Dhoni's juggernauts thrashed their World Cup nemesis South Africa by a massive 130 runs at the MCG yesterday. PHOTO: AFP



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The hard-hitting all-rounder seems to have a knack for spoiling South Asian parties outside Sri Lanka. In 2014, he rescued Sri Lanka from a dire 67 for 8 in Mirpur with a smashing 80 off 57. Yesterday, his swashbuckling 47 off 26 ensured that Sri Lanka reach home despite having lost Mahela Jayawardene and Angelo Mathews in crucial moments. When he arrived at the crease Sri Lanka were in a precarious 178 for 6 in 42 overs. The required run-rate was above six. Instead of playing a cautious knock during the stage, Perera smacked six fours and six to spoil Afghanistan's dreams.



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## WORLD CUP COCKTAIL

Pakistan great Wasim Akram told his compatriots on Sunday they had to win the next game in their World Cup campaign or get ready for an early flight home.

Pakistan have had a miserable start to the tournament, being well beaten in their opening two group matches. Their 76-run defeat by arch-rivals and defending champions India was followed by an even heavier 150-run loss to the West Indies in Christchurch on Saturday.

Pakistan next face Zimbabwe in a must-win Pool B game on 1 March, which Wasim warned will be a "make or break" for them.

"I am very optimistic that they can win but if they don't they have to go back home early," Wasim told AFP.

**Double golden duck for Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka became just the second team in one-day international history to have both openers fall for golden ducks as Afghanistan came agonisingly close to the biggest upset in Cricket World Cup history.

Set a target of 233 for victory, Sri Lanka was in immediate trouble at Dunedin's University Oval when Lahiru Thirimanne was trapped leg before wicket by the first ball of the innings for Dawlat Zadran.

In the second over, Tillakaratne Dilshan was caught behind off the first ball he faced from Shapoor Zadran.

The collapse did not end there, with Kumar Sangakkara bowled for seven and Dimuth Karunaratne out for 23, both falling to Hamid Hassan as former champions Sri Lanka slumped to 4-51 for four against World Cup debutants Afghanistan.

In the end Sri Lanka got home with four wickets and 10 balls to spare, thanks to a century by Mahela Jayawardene.

The one previous occasion when both openers fell for golden ducks in an ODI was in 2006 when West Indies quick Fidel Edwards removed the Zimbabwe pair of Piet Rinke and Terry Duffin in the first four balls of the innings at Georgetown, Guyana.

West Indies won that match by 82 runs.

**Dunedin cricket fan in \$1m prize pool**

A cricket fan in Dunedin has today entered the running to win a share of a prize pool which could reach \$1 million by catching a six with one hand.

Jamie Gough, a 35-year-old physiotherapist from Dunedin, was watching Afghanistan play Sri Lanka at the University Oval in Dunedin when he nailed the catch to the rapturous cheers of those around him.

The catch is the third to qualify for Tui's Catch-A-Million campaign, which links the total prize pool to the Black Cap's success in the Cricket World Cup.

The prize pool is currently at \$250,000 and rises to \$350,000 if the team makes it to the quarter-finals, \$500,000 if they make it to the semi-finals, \$750,000 if they make the finals and \$1 million if the Black Caps win.

The prize pool is then shared among those who have executed a qualifying catch during the tournament.

The six was hit by Afghan batsman Asghar Stanikzai.

Tui spokesman Simon Smith said Mr Gough, a married father of two, was numb following the catch.

"He said he hasn't played cricket for a while and didn't know if he could catch one."

"He [thought] he'd be able to catch one because he was so high up in the stand."

Mr Gough is the third person to nail a qualifying catch. --COMPILED

