

# Mash wins the fight!

SPORTS REPORTER from Melbourne

It was reportedly a battle between pace and spin, and the former came out winner. When a replacement was called for to-be-sent-home paceman Al-Amin Hossain, coach Chandika Hathurusingha once again showed his interest in leg-spinner Jubair Hossain. While the coach pressed for the young slow bowler, captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza was in favour of a pacer and the selectors finally sided with the skipper's desire as they picked Shafiul Islam.

The ICC World Cup event's technical committee has yesterday approved Shafiul as Al-Amin's replacement.

This debate was first made public when Bangladesh Cricket Board president Nazmul Hassan Papon revealed in an official press conference that the coach wanted Jubair. Chandika then explained his stance by saying that leg-spinners in Australia are very, very effective.

On the other hand Mashrafe and the selectors found no reason to take such a young bowler only to give him a chance for four or five overs and the team also cannot have this kind of a luxury when they have to play with one bowler short.



England opener Moeen Ali hit a sublime century against Scotland during their World Cup Pool A match in Christchurch yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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# Ali brings about first Eng victory

AFP, Christchurch

Moeen Ali's century set up England's opening win in the World Cup in Christchurch on Monday when they downed Scotland by 119 run in their Pool A clash.

Ali contributed a masterful 128 runs towards England's total of 303 and Scotland were all out for 184 with more than seven overs remaining.

Although Scotland were outclassed, the win was not as convincing as three-times World Cup runners-up England would have wanted.

After hidings by Australia and New Zealand they were desperate for a confidence-boosting win and the opportunity presented itself against the lowly-ranked Scotland.

But their jubilation at putting points on the board was tempered by the lack of fight at the back of the innings when they lost six wickets for 102 runs in the final 15 overs.

England had set themselves up for a

big total when Ali, supported by 54 from Ian Bell, took them to 201-2 with their 172-run stand for the first wicket the highest opening partnership so far in the tournament.

Ali, dropped in the second over when Freddie Coleman failed to grasp a sharp chance, was untroubled by the

while the more sedate Bell only reached the boundary twice in his half century.

Bell had an early life when Alasdair Evans' lbw shout was turned down. Scotland decided not to appeal, although replays showed the ball would have clipped the leg stump.

He was finally undone driving at Richie Berrington to be caught by Kyle Coetzer and Ali followed soon after, undone by the gentle off-spin of Majid Haq.

Facing 304 to win was a huge mountain for Scotland to climb although opener Kyle Coetzer and skipper Preston Mommsen bravely took up the challenge.

A Mommsen boundary took them past the 100 mark in the 22nd over, five overs slower than England but with a healthy seven wickets in hand.

However, the game began to slip from Scotland soon after when Root ended the 60-run partnership for the fourth wicket when he removed Mommsen for 26.

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occasion as he posted his second career ODI century.

Having been sent in under overcast skies and with swing-friendly conditions at the Hagley Oval, he took a fearless approach to the bowling with a liking for the aerial route to beat the inner field.

His 128 included 12 fours and five sixes

# Hit them at their weakest

ATIQUE ANAM

England have finally got their World Cup campaign off the mark. After two heavy defeats, the English managed to thwart the Scottish challenge with a 119-run victory.

No matter how emphatic the scorecard may read for the English, it was hardly a convincing performance from them. Apart from Moeen Ali, none of the batters looked in command, including the great Ian Bell. The veteran's painstaking 85-ball 54, which featured only two boundaries, failed to complement Ali's fluent batting, even though the partnership yielded a record 172 runs. As soon as Ali departed, a mini collapse followed, reducing the Three Lions from 201 for one to 203 for 4. That only showed how vulnerable the English batting has been in this tournament. Eventually England managed only 303 runs from their 50 overs, adding just 100 in the last 15.

On the bowling front, England's two key weapons -- James Anderson and Stuart Broad -- have been off-colour so far. Anderson's two wickets in three matches have come at an economy rate of 6.33 while Broad has given away 7.2 runs per over for his two wickets in three matches.

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And that is all good news for Bangladesh, who England will be facing at the Adelaide Oval on March 9. Many feel that this low-on-confidence England side could be the ideal prey for the Tigers. The Tigers' approach should be -- whether they get to bowl first or bat -- an attacking one, and that will set the cat amongst the pigeons for these relatively inexperienced England players.

The immediate next opponents for the Tigers, though, are Sri Lanka at the MCG on Thursday. The islanders were completely outplayed by New Zealand in their opening match before managing a nervous four-wicket victory against Afghanistan on Sunday, having made heavy weather of a 233-run chase.

The Lankans have depth in their batting and variation in their bowling. But it doesn't look like all the players are in the best of form. The wrecker-in-chief, Lasith Malinga, was taken apart by the Kiwi batsmen in the opening match for staggering figures of none for 84. The veteran did redeem himself slightly by taking three wickets against the Afghans, but those wickets came in his third and fourth spells when the batsmen were looking to go bonkers in a bid to up the tempo. Their second-most experienced pacer Nuwan Kulasekara was not even considered for the match after the heavy battering by the Kiwis. Their best spinner, Rangana Herath, has accounted for only two wickets in two matches at an economy rate of 4.1.

So there are visible chinks in the Lankan armoury and the Tigers need to notice them and hit those vulnerable points. For their own game, the Tigers will need to be more aggressive and more keen on rotating the strike and converting singles into twos and twos into threes -- there will be a lot of those on offer at the mammoth ground that is MCG -- rather

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SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND V SCOTLAND

ENGLAND	R/B	4/6		
Moeen c Coleman b Haq	128/107	12/5		
Bell c Coetzer b Berrington	54/85	2/0		
Ballance b Evans	10/18	0/0		
Root c Cross b Davey	1/3	0/0		
Morgan c Mommsen b Davey	46/42	4/2		
Taylor st Cross b Davey	17/26	0/0		
Buttler c Davey b Wardlaw	24/14	4/0		
Woakes c Mommsen b Davey	1/2	0/0		
Broad not out	0/3	0/0		
Finn not out	1/1	0/0		
Extras: (b-1, lb-4, w-15, nb-1)	21			
Total: (For 8 wks in 50 overs)	303			
Did not bat: Anderson				
Fall of wickets: 1-172, 2-201, 3-203, 4-203, 5-252, 6-297, 7-300, 8-300.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Wardlaw	10	1	60	1
Davey	10	0	68	4
Evans	10	1	46	1
Haq	10	0	51	1
Berrington	5	0	43	1
Machan	2	0	11	0
Coetzer	3	0	19	0
SCOTLAND	R/B	4/6		
Coetzer c Woakes b Moeen	71/84	11/0		
MacLeod c Buttler b Anderson	4/6	1/0		
Coleman c Morgan b Woakes	7/16	0/0		
Machan c Buttler b Finn	5/7	1/0		
Mommsen c Broad b Root	26/42	3/0		
Berrington c Morgan b Moeen	8/13	0/0		
Cross c Root b Finn	23/32	1/0		
Davey c Buttler b Finn	9/15	0/0		
Haq c Ballance b Woakes	15/24	3/0		
Evans c Buttler b Anderson	9/15	2/0		
Wardlaw not out	0/0	0/0		
Extras: (lb-5, w-2)	7			
Total: (All out in 42.2 overs)	184			
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-47, 3-54, 4-114, 5-122, 6-128, 7-150, 8-160, 9-184.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	6	0	30	2
Broad	7	0	24	0
Woakes	5.2	0	25	2
Finn	9	3	26	3
Moeen	10	0	47	2
Root	5	0	27	1
Result: England won by 119 runs.				
Player-of-the-match: Moeen Ali.				
Toss: Scotland				

CLEAR MEN

TODAY'S MATCH

West Indies v Zimbabwe

Time: 9:30am

Venue: Canberra

WEDNESDAY'S MATCH

Ireland v UAE

Time: 9:30am

Venue: Brisbane

Man of Steel

MOEEN ALI

After two thumping defeats, England needed this win. And more importantly some of their players just had to get into their groove. Opener Moeen Ali, who had gotten a start in the previous game against New Zealand, led the way. Ali's career-best 128 off 107 shrugged off the early jitters and ensured that England didn't lose any wickets in the first powerplay. He smacked 12 fours and five sixes in an innings which saw him balance his aggression with a hint of caution. Together with Ian Bell the pair shared a 172-run stand for the first wicket and provided England with a much needed boost.

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# Moeen elated after scripting victory

AFP, Christchurch

Moeen Ali expressed the relief of the entire England team after his century against Scotland provided the platform for their first win of this World Cup on Monday.

"We just said thank God for winning the game," said Ali, a practising Muslim, after Monday's victory by 119 runs at Christchurch's Hagley Oval finally got England's World Cup campaign up and running.

"Hopefully now we can go on a run and win the next three," he added.

Ali made 128 and shared a first-wicket stand of 172 with Ian Bell before England, who had been on course for a huge total, suffered a decline that saw them finish on 303 for eight.

But that proved more than enough to see off non-Test nation Scotland, who were

dismissed for just 184, with off-spinner Ali taking two wickets to add to his hundred.

It was a desperately needed win for England following thumping Pool A defeats by tournament co-hosts Australia (111 runs) and New Zealand (eight wickets).

Nevertheless, it still left England outside the top four-placing they will need if they are to emerge out of the seven-strong group and into the quarterfinals.

"It's nice to get a bit of form going into the next game," said Ali ahead of England's clash with 1996 champions Sri Lanka in Wellington on Sunday. "It's nice to get a winning hundred."

England captain Eoin Morgan said "to-day was all about a win" as he accepted the innings had fallen away after Ali and Bell shared the highest opening stand of the tournament to date.

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