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Ireland's Gary Wilson scored 80 to help his side seal an intense two-wicket win against UAE at the Gabba yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Ireland prevail in close contest

AFP, Brisbane

Ireland held their nerve to beat the United Arab Emirates by two wickets with just four balls to spare at Brisbane's Gabba ground on Wednesday as they moved a step closer to the quarterfinals of the World Cup.

Set 279 for victory after Shaiman Anwar scored the UAE's first World Cup hundred, Ireland were faltering at 97 for four and 171 for five in this Pool B clash.

But Gary Wilson (80) and the big-hitting Kevin O'Brien, who made 50 off 24 balls, got them back on track with a sixth-wicket partnership of 72.

However, both batsmen fell within sight of victory and it was left to George Dockrell (seven not out) and Brisbane-born Alex Cusack (five not out) to see Ireland to victory as the two non-Test nations produced the most exciting game of the World Cup so far.

Defeat was tough on the amateurs from the Middle East, who were in dire straits at 131 for six.

But Anwar (106) and Amjad Javed (42) hit back with a record-breaking stand of 107 which took the UAE to 278 for nine.

Their partnership surpassed the previous

World Cup best for the seventh wicket of 98 shared by the West Indies' Ramnaresh Sarwan and Ridley Jacobs against New Zealand at Port Elizabeth in 2003.

Javed had a fine all-round match, also taking three for 60 with his deceptive medium pace and holding a brilliant catch at short third man that dismissed Wilson to give the UAE a late chance of victory.

Both Anwar, who made his previous one-day international best of 67 in the UAE's



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tournament-opening loss to Zimbabwe, and Javed seized on a succession of short balls from Kevin O'Brien.

Anwar's three down to third man off O'Brien saw him to a hundred in 79 balls with 10 fours and a six.

He was eventually out for 106, skying Max Sorensen to wicketkeeper Wilson, after scoring only the UAE's second one-day international century following Khurram Khan's 132 against Afghanistan last year.

## Younis not retiring

AFP, Brisbane

Out of form senior Pakistan batsman Younis Khan denied on Wednesday tweeting a plan to retire from one-day internationals after the ongoing World Cup, saying he was working hard to come good for his team.

A tweet from a supposedly official Younis account on Tuesday said he was going to retire from white-ball cricket after the World Cup and continue to play Tests.

However, Younis insisted he did not have a Twitter account of his own.

"I have no Twitter account and it's [the story about his retirement] fake," Younis told AFP on Wednesday.

"I am working hard to come good in batting and have not decided anything like that."

Younis has been a subject of severe criticism from former Pakistan players after scores of six and nought in Pakistan's defeats in their first two matches of the World Cup.

He was asked to open the innings in Pakistan's first match against archrivals India in Adelaide, a promotion which backfired.

Since arriving on the New Zealand tour last month, the 37-year-old has managed just 78 runs in eight matches, including four warm-up games and two one-day internationals prior to the World Cup.

Pakistan next play Zimbabwe in a Pool B fixture in Brisbane on March 1, a game they must win to harbour realistic hopes of qualifying for the quarterfinals.

# Sixer Shaiman hits into record books

AFP, Brisbane

By day, he works in shipping in Dubai's flourishing cargo industry. At nights and weekends in the Gulf, and now at the famed Gabba in Brisbane, he's racking up the boundaries in record style.

Shaiman Anwar became the first United Arab Emirates player to hit a World Cup century on Wednesday as his team recovered from a perilous 131 for six against Ireland to make 278 for nine.

Anwar, a 35-year-old Pakistani native, bludgeoned 10 fours and a six in his ton which came off 79 balls before he was out for 106, having faced 83 deliveries.

He had already announced his arrival at the World Cup with a battling 67 in his team's four-wicket loss to Zimbabwe in Nelson last week.

And on Wednesday, the man known as

"Sixer Shaiman" in the Gulf leagues, in honour of his liking for big hits, went to his century in style.

He sparred with Kevin O'Brien, who made the fastest World Cup century four years ago in India, and with the Irish bowler on the ropes, hit the runs that took him to his landmark.

"I think it was my best innings -- I wanted to put a maximum on the board, to put pressure on Ireland," said Anwar.

"I was always comfortable, and trusted myself when I was in. It is a big game for me."

Anwar was born in Sialkot in 1979 and played club cricket for his native city and then Servis Industries.

But unable to carve out a full-time career in the game in Pakistan, Anwar followed thousands of his compatriots to the tax-free haven of Dubai in 2007, finding work in the shipping business before qualifying to play for the UAE in 2009.

# Tons keep coming

SPORTS REPORTER



The second day of the fourth round of the National Cricket League witnessed four centuries as batsmen kept piling on the runs.

Former national opener Nafees Iqbal stitched a cautious 108 for Chittagong at the BKSP and helped his side avoid follow-on against Barisal. Facing an uphill task after Barisal posted 597 in their first innings, Chittagong were bowled out for 339. Nafees was the top-scorer. Off-spinner Shohag Gazi was the key wicket-taker for Barisal as he ended up with figures of 5 for 133.

Meanwhile at Fatullah, Khulna took a first innings lead against league leaders Dhaka as both Tushar Imran and Mithun Ali hammered centuries. Tushar had scored a double-century in the last game followed that emphatic performance with a resolute 158. He was ably supported by Mithun's 126. Together the players helped their side post 437 in response to Dhaka's 366. Khulna still have four wickets in hand and will be looking to build a comprehensive lead before declaring.

It was a run-fest at ground number three of

BKSP as Rangpur's Naeem Islam followed Liton Kumar's 173 with an unbeaten 138. Naeem played a traditional slow and resolute innings and faced 275 balls. Rangpur declared after posting 527 runs for 6 wickets.

The match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium at Mirpur is the only one that hasn't witnessed a high scoring affair. A century from Shamsur Rahman helped Dhaka Metro finish the day on 264 for 8. While Shamsur scored a 103, the rest of the players failed to support him. With just a little bit more than innings to in this match against Sylhet, a result is likely within the next two days.

SCORES IN BRIEF	
<b>BARISAL:</b> 597 for 9 declared and 53 for 2 (Abdullah 29 not out; Nasum 1-14, Shohag 1-32) v <b>CHITTAGONG:</b> 339 all out in 121 overs (Nafees 108, Irfan 52; Shohag 5-133)	
<b>DHAKA:</b> 366 v <b>KHULNA:</b> 437 for 6 (Tushar 158, Mithun 126; Shahadat 2-62, Sharif 2-142)	
<b>RAJSHAHI:</b> 263 and 85 for 1 (Mizanur 32 not out; Sohrawardi 1-13) v <b>RANGPUR:</b> 527 for 6 declared (Liton 173, Naeem 138 not out; Muktar 2-78)	
<b>DHAKA METRO:</b> 264 and 264 for 8 (Shamsur 103; Nabil 6-59) v <b>SYLHET:</b> 171 all out in 61.2 overs (Nazmul 39; Elias 4-38, Sharifullah 3-49)	

# Hailing Gary, Kevin

AFP, Brisbane

Ireland captain William Porterfield hailed big-hitting Kevin O'Brien and rock-steady Gary Wilson for carving out a nervy two-wicket World Cup win over the United Arab Emirates in Brisbane on Wednesday.

Chasing 279 to win at the Gabba, Wilson top-scored with 80 off 69 balls although it was O'Brien who gave the innings vital impetus with a swashbuckling 24-ball half-century as victory was secured with just four balls remaining.

Ireland now have two wins in two while the UAE have lost both their opening pool matches.

"Wickets in hand are always a big thing, especially when you've got lads like Kev and Wilson coming in," said Porterfield, whose team had started their campaign with a win over the West Indies.

"One key factor was the way we played in the last 20 overs of our innings."

He added: "It was a bit closer than we would have wanted but we'd take that any day of the week."

"Confidence is high in the squad, and the fixtures start coming thicker and faster now."

Ireland are third in Pool B and well-placed for a quarterfinal spot, although they still have to face South

Africa, Zimbabwe, defending champions India and Pakistan.

The UAE have now lost both their opening games, having previously gone down to Zimbabwe by four wickets.

Skipper Mohammad Tauqir admitted the game got away from his side in the last 15 overs especially when Kevin O'Brien, who hit the fastest World Cup century at the 2011 event, came to the crease.

"That's cricket. The spinners were playing well, but Kevin O'Brien took the game from us," said Tauqir.

"It was difficult because there was a lot of dew as the game went on and the ball was slippery."

Tauqir praised the innings of Anwar.



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INFO ZONE			
BANGLADESH	SRILANKA	AFGHANISTAN	SCOTLAND
HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUPS			
M W L 2 0 2	M W L 2 2 0	M W L Never played before	M W L Never played before
IN ALL ODIS			
M W L 37 4 32	M W L 37 32 4	M W L 8 5 3	M W L 8 3 5
Last Meeting : 6 th March 2014 at Mirpur. Sri Lanka won by 3 wickets.			
Last Meeting : 14 th Jan 2015 at Abu Dhabi. Scotland won by 150 runs.			
KEY PLAYERS			
 <b>MASHRAFE MORTAZA</b>	 <b>MAHELA JAYAWARDENE</b>	 <b>SAMIULLAH SHENWARI</b>	 <b>KYLE COETZER</b>
Bowl avg 30.13	Bat Avg 33.57	Bat Avg 36.60	Bat Avg 39.50
Innings 145	Inns 415	Inns 36	Inns 21
Strike rate 38.8	Strike Rate 79.02	Strike Rate 70.02	Strike Rate 79.23
Eco Rate 4.65	Runs 12625	Runs 1098	Runs 790
Wickets 186	HS 144	HS 82*	HS 133
Best Figures 6/26	50s 77	50s 8	50s 6
Sw 1	100s 19	100s 0	100s 1
Last Inns 3/20	Last Inns 100	Last Inns 38	Last Inns 71

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Irish fans celebrate with one of their own while UAE fans are let down once again. Bangladesh fans will be looking forward to another day of great cricket.



James Hubert: Kudos to these Associate nations for bringing so much passion and exuberance to the game. Exactly what the cricket lovers want. Nasir Jamshed: Ireland win. But this is not the first time they beat team full of Pakistanis in a World Cup.