

10 facts

This will be the fourth time New Zealand and West Indies have met at Wellington, with New Zealand winning all three previous meetings comfortably (8 wickets, 81 runs, 7 wickets)

Since the start of 2006 the Black Caps have won 10 of 12 completed ODIs at this Wellington venue

Daniel Vettori currently has 34 World Cup wickets, three more will see him overtake Jacob Oram (36) as New Zealand's leading wicket-taker in the tournament history

Muttiah Muralidaran (68) is the only spinner to take more World Cup wickets than Vettori (Brad Hogg also has 34)

Vettori's economy rate (3.18) is the best of any bowler in this tournament

Kyle Mills, who is yet to play at this World Cup, has dismissed Chris Gayle six times in ODIs; only two players (Brett Lee and Ajit Agarkar -- both 7 times) have taken his wicket more often

Trent Boult has bowled 11 maidens so far in this tournament, more than any other bowler. The 19 recorded by Bob Willis in 1983 is the most recorded in a World Cup tournament

Seven of the last eight completed ODIs between these sides have been won by the side batting first (four by West Indies, three by New Zealand)

New Zealand have won their last eight ODIs, they have not won nine on the bounce since 2007, a run which was ended in the Super Eights of that year's World Cup by Sri Lanka

Gayle is one of just three players to score 9,000 ODI runs and take 160 wickets; Jacques Kallis and Sanath Jayasuriya are the other two



Chris Gayle (R), the big boy with his big bat, will be hopeful of knocking a few balls out of the park at Wellington today, but he will be heavily tested by New Zealand's pace spearhead Trent Boult, who already has 15 wickets in the competition.



PHOTOS: AFP

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Brendon vows aggression

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum believes he's backing a winning horse with his all-out attack approach to Saturday's World Cup quarterfinal against the West Indies despite the high stakes involved.

A confident McCullum fronted the media saying he had no fears his bold game plan could backfire in the knockout phase of the tournament.

"We need to go out and play that attacking brand of cricket we have exhibited throughout," he said.

"It doesn't guarantee success, and I have said that all the way along, but it definitely gives the team the best opportunity of being successful."

West Indies all-rounder Darren Sammy has likened his side's underdog status to that of boxer Buster Douglas who in 1990, as a 42-1 outsider, knocked out then undefeated heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson.

It was a metaphor that amused McCullum, who fired back with one of his own.

"In horse racing parlance, I'm a big horse racing fan, if we miss the start, it doesn't mean that we're out of the race."

"I think the horse has never been better and we've got every chance in this game to be able to go out there and win, even if things aren't 100 percent."

Holder coy over Gayle fitness

AFP, Wellington

West Indies captain Jason Holder remained coy on whether injured star batsman Chris Gayle will play in Saturday's World Cup quarterfinal against undefeated New Zealand.

Gayle trained for the first time this week on Friday morning, batting in the nets two days after receiving an injection in his lower back.

The injury forced him out of the West Indies' six-wicket win over the United Arab Emirates on Sunday, when they squeezed into the final eight despite their erratic form in pool games.

Holder said Gayle would face a late fitness test for Saturday's final eight clash in Wellington, the winner of which will face a rampant South Africa in the semifinals.

"He's had an injection and a scan. The scan didn't show anything major, so we'll just see how he pulls up today and make a decision tomorrow morning," the skipper said.

Gayle, 35, scored the only double century in World Cup history with 215 against Zimbabwe in Canberra and is seen as crucial to the West Indies' chances of progressing into the last four.

But Holder insisted his team could win even without Gayle, pointing to the impressive 55 scored by Johnson Charles when he stepped in against the UAE.

"Obviously, (Gayle) has been a very good player for us over the years but we've shown we've got people to fit the bill," he said.

"Johnson came in the last game and got a half-century and looked the part. So we've got people to fill his boots but obviously having Chris there is a plus for us."

Gayle smashed a small section of the fence at the Basin Reserve, where the West Indies trained Friday, with a typically powerful blow and afterwards told a New Zealand television crew: "I'm hitting it sweet, man."

NEW ZEALAND V WEST INDIES
WI to test Kiwi juggernaut

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand, by their own admission, face their first true test of the World Cup in their quarterfinal against the West Indies on Saturday after emerging from pool play unbeaten.

Never mind that their nail-biting victory over Australia was settled with an ice-cool Kane Williamson six when New Zealand were down to their last wicket.

They had the safety net then of knowing a loss would not knock them out of the tournament.

Now, for the first time, they face must-win pressure, with added home-town expectation weighing heavily on them to be the first New Zealand side to lift the trophy, or to at least make the final.

Spinner Dan Vettori, a veteran of five World Cup campaigns, described the quarterfinals as "where it really starts". Form favours New Zealand.

Under Brendon McCullum's aggressive leadership, the swing of new-ball bowlers Tim Southee and Trent Boult and the guile of Vettori have snared the best of batsmen.

Energetic fielding has trimmed run rates and with the bat, McCullum and Williamson at the top of the order are seldom out of the runs.

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Victories over Australia, Scotland and Bangladesh were close as New Zealand banked on their all-or-nothing approach getting them through and refused to slow the pace and play for safety.

The unpredictable West Indies, meanwhile, completed pool play with a three-win, three-loss record and only scraped into the playoffs courtesy of a superior run rate over Ireland.

Their high points were scattered, with the enigmatic Chris Gayle turning on the power to smack 215 against Zimbabwe while his other four innings produced 64 runs in total.

Young skipper Jason Holder took 4-27 against United Arab Emirates but went for more than 10 an over when they were thumped by South Africa who scored 408-5 and rolled the West Indies for 151.

But Vettori dismissed the relevance of pool form when it came to the play-offs.

"All the teams that eventually make it have got match winners. So you can't sit back and say a team's not in form or haven't played well because you go into it thinking that a team is going to play their best."

The West Indies have already tasted must-win tension and survived when anything less than a comprehensive win over UAE in their final pool match could have put the former two-times champions on an early flight home.

The West Indies believe Gayle will be fit to play after missing their last outing with a flareup of a back injury but there were question marks over the rest of their line up.

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WAHAB RIAZ

The figures from the scorecard might not look too flattering for Wahab Riaz, but those who watched yesterday's third quarterfinal between Pakistan and Australia would vouch that it was one of the best bowling performances of the tournament. The fiery left-arter had Australia virtually one the ropes having dismissed David Warner and Michael Clarke in his first two overs. Then when Australia were three for 83 and Shane Watson on just four, Wahab induced Watson for a miscued pull shot to offer Rahat Ali with the simplest of catches at fine leg, but Rahat couldn't hold onto the catch.

Overs later, Wahab made Maxwell offer a catch at third-man, but this time Sohail Khan failed to get on the end of it, making heavy weather of a simplistic chance and virtually ending Pakistan's hopes.

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WORLD CUP COCKTAIL

Streakers, pitch invaders and object-tossers will be punished severely if they try to disrupt remaining World Cup cricket matches, police warned today.

Superintendent Sandra Manderson said spectators have overwhelmingly been well-behaved but police would not let misbehaviour embarrass New Zealand at upcoming matches in Wellington and Auckland.

Pitch invasions were common and tolerated in the 1990s. Exuberant New Zealand fans famously ran onto Auckland's Eden Park outfield when Black Caps captain Martin Crowe scored a century against arch-rivals Australia in the 1992 cup.

But in 2007, the Major Events Management Act was introduced to quash pitch invasions, ticket scalping and other activities authorities deemed undesirable at big sporting occasions.

This year, one person had already been fined \$1500 fine for entering the field of play at Christchurch's Hagley Oval during the tournament's opening match.

Four spectators have been arrested and charged for breaching the Act by entering, or trying to enter, the field of play during matches.

The maximum penalty for breaching the Major Events Management Act was a \$5000 fine and up to three months in jail.

Versatile Maxwell

Maxwell, 26, proved the banana peel when it mattered in Pakistan's disappointing innings (213) in the cut-throat quarterfinal against Australia at Adelaide Oval.

Maxwell (2-46) contributed the key scalps of Misbah-ul-Haq (34) and Umar Akmal (20) that triggered a collapse of 7-98. Maxwell's awesome, inventive strokeplay is coveted by selectors to demoralise rival attacks. Yet the Big Show's off-spin could be just as important.

There has been pressure for Maxwell to deliver in a frontline spin role with selectors reluctant to field Xavier Doherty this tournament. Left-arm tweaker Doherty conceded 0-60 against Sri Lanka in his only start at the SCG.

ICC's wiki edited by upset fans

The ICC has been going through a bit of a scandal after the controversial decisions in the Bangladesh-India match, with the president of the ICC, Mustafa Kamal, himself saying that the decisions were unacceptable.

The Bangladeshi fans took to the streets and protested on social media, backed by fans from many other nations, but now someone has gone a step further and edited the ICC's Wikipedia page.

"The Indian Chor (Cheat) Council (ICC) is the governing body of cricket. It was founded as the Indian Cheating Conference in 2014, before adopting the current name," begins the edited entry, before laying into it's 'Income' sub-section.

"The ICC's major earnings are from money taken from the Board of Control of



Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for match-fixing and to sway umpires decisions in their team's favour."

The final edits were made to the 'Rules and Regulations' section and read, "The Indian Cheating Council overlooks bowling reviews and unfavourable decisions against India, while also giving dubious no ball calls to favour the BCCI."

The edited entries were shortly deleted after being posted on the site.