



New Zealand were made to work for every single run in the final against Australia, as the hosts bowled the perfect deliveries over and over, even leaving Kane Williamson looking like a fish out of water.

PHOTO: AFP

PM prefers final over funeral

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key believes he has made the right decision to be in Melbourne for the Cricket World Cup final on Sunday rather than attend the state funeral for Singapore's founding father Lee Kuan Yew. Instead, Governor-General Jerry Mateparae will represent New Zealand in Singapore.

"It was a difficult decision because obviously I want to go to both," Key told reporters.

He described Lee as "a close and long-time friend of New Zealand" and said that Mateparae, as New Zealand's head of state, was more senior than the prime minister.

Key said he had decided before New Zealand's semi-final, when they beat South Africa with only one ball to spare, that if his nation made the final he would attend.

PCB axes chief selector Moin

ANI, Karachi

Pakistan's under-fire chief selector Moin Khan has reportedly been axed from his position after a meeting of top officials of the Pakistan Cricket Board on Saturday.

Moin, whose contract is yet to expire, was severely censured for visiting a casino in New Zealand during the World Cup, and has been offered another position in the PCB, the Dawn reported.

Additionally, the meeting discussed possible candidates for the role of ODI captain after Misbahul Haq decided to retire from the limited-over game at the end of Pakistan's World Cup campaign.

According to reports, Azhar Ali is set to be named as the successor of Misbah, while Sarfraz Ahmed would be his deputy.

CELEBRATE YOUR FAVORITE TEAM'S VICTORY!
UP TO 37% DISCOUNT ON EXCLUSIVE SHOPPING OUTLETS

Kiwis lost it with McCullum

AGENCIES, Melbourne

This was not how the script was supposed to run for Brendon McCullum, the personification of the aggressive cricket that had taken New Zealand to their first World Cup final.

With 328 runs, an extraordinary strike rate of more than 191, 44 fours and 17 sixes, the Black Caps captain had led by fearless example as the co-hosts took the tournament by storm.

His day's work at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Sunday started well enough when he won what many thought would be a crucial toss and elected to go in with Martin Guptill

and take on Australia's pace bowlers.

With the anthems done and dusted, the crowd settled down in anticipation of another of the opening bombardments with which McCullum had taken apart new-ball attack after new-ball attack.

Australia's Mitchell Starc, who had taken a wicket every 16.7 balls coming into the match, had other ideas and the duel was nasty, brutish, and short.

Brought onto strike by a single from Guptill from the second ball of the opening over of the innings, McCullum swung and missed the first two deliveries he faced from the lanky left-arm paceman.

Another fullish inswinging from

Starc elicited a slightly more tentative stroke, again the bat was bypassed and the ball clattered into McCullum's off stump.

He was Starc's 21st victim of the World Cup but in cricket, all wickets are not equal and both the bowler's celebration and the roar generated by the crowd of more than 93,000 indicated this one was very special.

The batsman of the tournament was trudging back to the dressing room with his first duck in nine matches, the first captain to be dismissed without scoring a run in a title decider.

McCullum said he had no regrets after "one hell of a ride" at the World Cup came to an end with

the seven-wicket reverse.

"We played some outstanding cricket, but we ran into an outstanding Australian team tonight who continue to set the way in world cricket. Michael Clarke deserves to bow out as world champion."

Turning to the ball that dismissed him, McCullum added: "It was quick one. It all unfolded not as we planned."

"I thought we got ourselves back in the game at 150 for three but Australia as they do put us back under pressure. We were the second-best team."

"We've got no regrets -- as a cricketer this is the greatest stage you can ask for."



New Zealand skipper Brendon McCullum was expected to blast the Kiwis to victory in the World Cup final against Australia yesterday, but he could face only 3 balls, scoring no runs.

PHOTO: AFP

RSSM
STEEL FOR THE NATION
Ratanpur Steel Re-Rolling Mills
www.rssmbd.com

MR. EFFICIENT



JAMES FAULKNER

After the fall of the third wicket the Black Caps took a breather and decided to stitch a patient partnership. Grant Elliot and Ross Taylor did the honours with a brilliant 111-run stand for the fourth wicket and looked dangerous. That's when Michael Clarke brought in James Faulkner and boom! And that's when the game changed. In his fifth over Faulkner unleashed a brilliant slower delivery to get Taylor's edge. A ball later he bowled a brilliant yorker which beat the dangerous Corey Anderson and hit the stumps; a crucial moment; that's where New Zealand lost the game. He didn't just stop there. Two overs later he bowled yet another slower delivery to get rid of the danger-man Elliott and ensured that there would no further hiccups. Everybody expected the likes of Mitchell Marsh and Mitchell Johnson to fire in the final; instead, it was the change bowler who did the trick.

Microsoft

Capture more in your selfies

Lumia 535 with a great wide angle 5MP front-facing camera and large 5" screen for larger and sharper selfies.

MRP ₹11,499 only.

WORLD CUP COCKTAIL

One fan is making a 34,000km round trip from London in less than four days. Gerard Walsh, chairman of the London New Zealand Cricket Club, left London on Friday morning and landed in Melbourne last night.

He will watch the game before returning to his desk in the UK on Tuesday morning. "I am insanely excited about this game," Walsh said.

Porterfield takes dig at N Srinivasan

William Porterfield has taken a dig at the ICC's proposal of truncating the next edition of the World Cup to a 10-team affair yet again. This time he specifically targeted ICC boss N Srinivasan who defended the 10-team World Cup idea during the ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 final between Australia and New Zealand.

The 10-team World Cup proposal has incurred a great deal of flak from the associate members and the cricketing world at large. Former players like Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar and Mahela Jayawardene have come out in support of the associates too and Porterfield made it a point to mention them.

"So business man N Srinivasan thinks it should be a 10 team WC. Think I will stick with the view of Tendulkar, Dravid, Jayawardene etc", tweeted Porterfield.

Wish comes true for cricket crazy couple

Black Caps fanatic Paddy Singe has truly bowled a maiden over.

The 53-year-old Aucklander and his wife, Anne, will be among the 100,000-strong crowd at the MCG for today's Cricket World Cup final.

The trip was Paddy's last-minute present to Anne, a former cricket player, for the couple's 34th wedding anniversary, which fell yesterday.

"The game is in my blood and going to the final is a dream come true," Anne told the Herald on Sunday.

"If there is one trip at the top of my bucket list, it would be this one."

The Singes had planned a romantic break in Fiji, but that was canned when the Black Caps made the final.

Paddy said Anne decided towards the end of Tuesday's nail-biting semifinal against South Africa that if the Black Caps won they would get to the final, no matter what. "On Wednesday morning I looked into it but getting flights and match tickets looked impossible," he said.



Then a friend forwarded a link to an auction for a romantic weekend package to the final, worth \$10,000 and Paddy won with a \$7000 bid.

As well as two first-class return seats to Melbourne, premium tickets to the final and five-star accommodation, the deal included a diamond ring. "It seemed like the perfect way to celebrate our anniversary and getting the ring took care of my present," Anne said.

Pitch invader on field before the anthems

One punter at the Cricket World Cup final will miss the entire game after running on to the field at the Melbourne Cricket Ground before the match began today.

The pitch invader took to the field just before the national anthems were played at the game and made it out halfway across the area before being tackled to the ground by security.

The effort was greeted with baffled derision on Twitter, at the thought of missing the game for seconds of glory.

-COMPILED