



West Indies wicketkeeper-batsman Nicholas Pooran walks off while a dejected Pakistan team, led by Sarfaraz Ahmed (L), look on after the West Indian's timely 19-ball 34 helped register a seven-wicket win in their ICC Cricket World Cup encounter in Nottingham yesterday. After the match, countryman and cricketing great Viv Richards congratulated West Indies captain Jason Holder on the victory. PHOTO: REUTERS/AFP

'It was just a bad day'

STAR SPORT DESK

Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed said his side would want to forget the poor performance against West Indies as a "bad day" and make a strong comeback in matches to come.

West Indies had defeated Pakistan by seven wickets at Trent Bridge in Nottingham after Pakistan were bowled out for mere 105 runs.

Speaking at the post match press conference after Pakistan's defeat, Sarfaraz said that there are eight more matches to go and Pakistan team will surely make a comeback.

"We lost some quick wickets in first ten overs and we couldn't recover well from the early setback," he said.

"It wasn't our day, it was just a bad day, we will try to move on from here and recover before next games. I am confident that the team will bounce back in next games," the wicket-keeper batsman hoped.

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'The Oval should be good for us'

SAKEB SUBHAN from London

The two games in the World Cup so far have already thwarted forecasts of matches basically coming down to a battle pitting bat against bat. Yesterday, West Indies shot Pakistan out for a paltry 105 in Nottingham and the day before, in a blockbuster opener at The Oval, England dismissed South Africa for 207 in just 39.1 overs to win by 105 runs. The two matches are an early indication that regardless of how batting-friendly the pitches in the United Kingdom may be this summer, when bowlers put their hands up -- like Jofra Archer did on the opening day and Shane Thomas did yesterday -- they will have an impact.

For Bangladesh, who play their World Cup opener against South Africa at The Oval tomorrow, the opening match will have offered some encouragement, especially as the pitch will be the same as the one on which South Africa faltered.

"I think we will be playing on the wicket that was played on yesterday [Thursday], which should be very good for us," Bangladesh bowling coach Courtney Walsh said in a press conference during the team's practice session at the venue yesterday. "At The Oval, you normally

get good cricket wickets, good scores. I am anticipating a very good game. The wicket should play well, I expect it may help both departments in terms of a bit of spin, a bit of pace. We saw how it played yesterday, so we have a good idea how it might play on Sunday."

One of the encouraging signs for Bangladesh is that the wicket for the opener took some spin. While Bangladesh do not have specialist wrist-spinners like Imran Tahir of South Africa and England's Adil Rashid, both of whom looked most incisive among the slower bowlers, the Tigers do have highly skilled orthodox spinners in left-amer Shakib Al Hasan and right-arm off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz. The Tigers' specialist spin duo are both adept at bowling arm balls, which do not deviate off the surface, and would have taken note of England off-spinner Moeen Ali troubling the South Africans with a mixture of turners and arm balls.

"It's a couple of days away, it will be a used wicket, so we have to take that into consideration. It's going to be like a four-day old wicket though, so it's not going to be like it was on the first day, so we will have to reassess that. It's still looking a very good wicket," Walsh added.

England skipper Eoin Morgan said after the match on Thursday that it was a slow wicket, and if that persists till Sunday, it will only aid Bangladesh, who are used to playing on slow wickets back home. It will help not just the spinners, but also the well-disguised cutters bowled by left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman, who gave indications of being back to his best in the warm-up game against India on Tuesday.

It is of course not all rosy for Bangladesh. The talk leading up to the warm-up game against India on May 28 was of the positivity surrounding the team after their victorious campaign in the Ireland tri-series had revealed



The Bangladesh team have a team talk, probably to discuss tactics and the like, during practice yesterday ahead of their World Cup campaign opener against South Africa at The Oval tomorrow. PHOTO: BCB

a squad full of potential performers, but the 95-run loss to India left them with injury worries surrounding Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Mohammad Saifuddin, Mustafizur Rahman and an unexpected one yesterday when all-important opener Tamim Iqbal walked off net practice after sustaining a blow to his left wrist.

"The guys have practised pretty well in the last couple

of games. They played pretty well in the last tournament so the confidence level is pretty high. We just have to go out and enjoy the cricket. I know we lost the last warm-up game, but I am just happy the guys are in a good place, you can see the body language out there, enjoying the practice and the cricket. I am excited for Sunday and hoping that we can get a very good start."

Langer asks fans not to boo Warner, Smith

AFP, London

Australia head coach Justin Langer has called on fans to show Steve Smith and David Warner respect in the World Cup and not jeer them.

The pair, who both recently completed bans for ball-tampering, were given a hostile reception by the crowd at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton during Australia's World Cup warm-up victory over England.

There were audible boos, jeers, and chants of "cheat", but Langer has urged supporters not to repeat that behaviour during the tournament itself.

"You (the media) talk about earning respect, and I think it's really important that people show respect as well," Langer said ahead of five-time winners Australia's World Cup opener against Afghanistan in Bristol on Saturday.

"They made a mistake and paid a big price for it. After the experience of Hampshire, we have a pretty good idea what to expect. We've talked about it a lot and we can put strategies in place.

"That said, when it happens it doesn't make it any easier. They are human beings, that's the truth -- and that's what I find the hardest."

He added: "I'd be disappointed by any player being booed at any cricket ground, regardless of what country they play for. It's never a good look when that happens."

Langer confirmed that Warner would open the batting against Afghanistan if he passes a fitness test.

But the 32-year-old has been troubled by a sore muscle, which has restricted his movement in the field during practice sessions.

"He was a bit sore on Wednesday," said Langer. "He's just a bit sore in his right leg. He is desperate to play, he'd love to play like all 15 players would."

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TODAY'S MATCHES

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP

NEW ZEALAND v SRI LANKA

LIVE FROM 3:30PM

AFGHANISTAN v AUSTRALIA

LIVE FROM 6:30PM

(BANGLADESH STANDARD TIME)



RAHIM STEEL

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Three overs, one maiden, four runs and two wickets -- the figures speak volumes about how much of an impact Andre Russell had in West Indies' seven-wicket rout of Pakistan at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday. Russell started off his brief spell by removing Fakhar Zaman in his first over with a brilliant bouncer that hit the grille of the opener's helmet before rolling back onto the stumps. However, it was a pity that the all-rounder did not get the chance to portray his batting abilities in their World Cup opener yesterday.

PAK-WI SCOREBOARD

PAKISTAN:	R/B	4s/6s		
Imam c Hope b Cottrell	2/11	0/0		
Fakhar b Russell	22/16	2/1		
Babar c Hope b Thomas	22/33	2/0		
Haris c Hope b Russell	8/11	1/0		
Sarfaraz c Hope b Holder	8/12	1/0		
Hafeez c Cottrell b Thomas	16/24	2/0		
Imad c Gayle b Holder	1/3	0/0		
Shadab lbw b Thomas	0/1	0/0		
Hasan c Cottrell b Holder	1/4	0/0		
Wahab b Thomas	18/11	1/2		
Amir not out	3/6	0/0		
Extras: (nb-2, w-2)		4		
Total: (all out in 21.4 overs)		105		
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-35, 3-45, 4-62, 5-75, 6-77, 7-78, 8-81, 9-83, 10-105.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Cottrell	4	0	18	1
Holder	5	0	42	3
Russell	3	1	4	2
Brathwaite	4	0	14	0
Thomas	5.4	0	27	4
WEST INDIES:	R/B	4s/6s		
Gayle c Shadab b Amir	50/34	6/3		
Hope c Hafeez b Amir	11/17	1/0		
Bravo c Babar b Amir	0/4	0/0		
Pooran not out	34/19	4/2		
Hetmyer not out	7/8	0/0		
Extras: (lb-3, w-3)		6		
Total: (For 3 wks in 13.4 overs)		108		
Fall of wickets: 1-36, 2-46, 3-77.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Amir	6	0	26	3
Hasan	4	0	39	0
Wahab	3.4	1	40	0

Result: West Indies won by 7 wks.

Player-of-the-match: Oshane Thomas

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PHOTO: REUTERS