0597 MOST 6s : HIT BY A PLAYER O **FINCH AUSTRALIA** 009 MOST 4s: HIT BY A PLAYER O SHAKIB BANGLADESH



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given Australia a flying start in their World Cup encounter in Taunton yesterday. However, Amir's heroics went in vain as Australia eventually won the match by 41 runs.

### Amir roars to top of bowling charts

AFP, Taunton

Pace spearhead Mohammad Amir soaked up the adulation from Pakistan fans as he roared to the top of the World Cup bowling charts with career-best figures against Australia on Wednesday.

Amir was back in Taunton where he made his return to first-class cricket three years ago following a ban for spot-fixing.

Now he is back with a bang, taking five for 30 in his 10 overs on Wednesday to improve on his previous best figures of 4-28 against Sri Lanka a decade ago.

With the crowd chanting "Amir, Amir, Shabash" (come on) from the stands in Taunton, he delivered two maiden overs in his first spell as Australia openers Aaron Finch and David Warner played and missed.

Amir conceded just 11 runs off his opening four overs and then returned to snare Australia captain Aaron Finch before taking the wickets of Usman Khawaja, Shaun Marsh, Alex Carey and Mitchell Starc.

His efforts helped peg Australia back to 307 but that ultimately proved too much for Pakistan.

Australia century-maker Warner hailed Amir, describing his second spell as "fantastic".

"It's really amazing, I mean the crowd support," Amir said. "We have so many Pakistani fans at all England grounds and when they shout my name it pumps me up."



### **WORLD CUP DIARY**

# In search of a city centre

SAKEB SUBHAN from Taunton

The taxi rank at the Taunton rail station was an early sign, as was the view on either side of the Cross Country service that chugged into Taunton, stopped for two minutes and continued on its southward journey that we had joined from Bristol. On the Bangladesh team's trek through the United Kingdom so far, Leicester had been the quietest stop thus far. Even in Leicester, where the team held a four-day optional training camp before the World Cup began, there were taxis lining the streets eagerly



The view from the Days Inn Hotel which, although a fair distance away from the County Ground in Taunton, may as well be the city centre of the sleepy town. PHOTO: SAKEB SUBHAN

waiting for passengers getting out of the train or bus stations. In Taunton, there was just the sign that read 'Taxi Rank'.

As the taxi we called made its way to the station, we saw the floodlights flicker to life at the nearby County Ground -- visible because of the lack of highrises -- where Aaron Finch and David Warner were taking strike against Pakistan's pacers. The gloom that washed away Bangladesh's match against Sri Lanka on Tuesday was also present in Taunton, minus the rain, thankfully.

When we asked the taxi driver which way the city centre was, he pointed in three different directions -all to our rear -- as we drove through a roundabout. Our hotel, Days Inn, was quite a way away, or so we thought then, till we called a fellow travelling journalist upon reaching the Days Inn.

When he asked how far away we were, the reply was "Let's just say if the station is Kamalapur, we are in Gazipur.

"Well, I am in Tongi, and our friend is in Joydebpur," came the deadpan reply.

The Days Inn itself was reached through a motorway, with green hills stretching out on both sides, much as they did on the train ride from Bristol. In fact, wherever you are in Taunton, it will always seem that you are beside the highway -- a marked departure from the city centric experiences of Bangladesh's tour in the UK so far.

When we reached the hotel in the middle of nowhere at 10:45 am, we found the counter closed and had to wait while an elderly woman came and performed the formalities at a pace that was entirely in keeping with the location.

We then set off for the team hotel, braving the distance and the taxi fare -- Taunton is not big enough for Uber -- and kept an eye out in vain for the mythical city centre that had been our post-work

refuge till now. Come evening and finding the town pretty much devoid of life, it was back to the hotel, which was flanked by a McDonald's and a 24-hour petrol station. We had not seen a McDonald's anywhere else, so come to think of it, maybe the Days Inn is the Taunton city centre.

# Tigers at rest before WI test

ENGLAND & WALES 2019

SPORTS REPORTER from Taunton

Bangladesh's World Cup campaign is now precariously poised. After losing their second and third matches against England and New Zealand, they had pinned their hopes on the match against Sri Lanka in Bristol on Tuesday to get their World Cup campaign back on track. But incessant rain washed out that match and Bangladesh are now left needing to win at least four out of their last five games. While the next game is also against a lower-ranked opposition in West Indies in Taunton on June 17, the conditions may be against Bangladesh's favour.

As the team made their way to the sleepy southern English town yesterday, Australia were on their way to piling up a total in excess of 350, but the Pakistan pacers -- with Mohammad Amir picking up a five-for -- got them all out for 307.

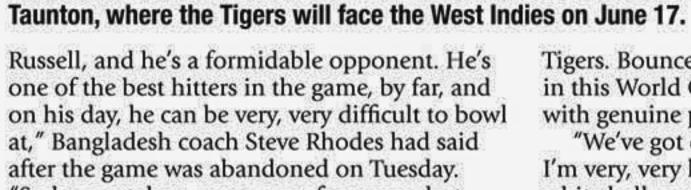
None of those aspects -- Australia's big hitting and Pakistan's pace success -- would help Bangladesh against West Indies. The Cooper Associates County Ground is one of the smaller international venues. With the West Indies boasting the likes of Chris Gayle, Evin Lewis and Andre Russell to take advantage of the small boundaries, Bangladesh's bowlers

would have to be at their best to contain them. "One of their most explosive players is Andre





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they have others, like all these international teams.

"But we're very pleased with the way we play the white ball, and we know we've got some good players ourselves, so we won't be worrying too much about who we're playing against, and we'll be hopeful that they are going to worry about some of our players."

The coach was less worried about the other aspect with which the West Indies may choose to attack the

Tigers. Bouncers have become a common ploy in this World Cup, especially when bowlers with genuine pace are operating.

"We've got certain ways of dealing with that. I'm very, very happy with the way we play the white ball, particularly when it's short. I think you've seen [that] against South Africa, that didn't worry us. We've played against the West Indies bowlers, recently, as well, out in Ireland. Certainly Oshane Thomas, as well, when we played against him in Bangladesh just before Christmas. So we are well aware of what they have got and we know what's coming and we've got some plans to try and deal with that."

With the match five days away and the weather set to clear, and also the two days of rest for Bangladesh's players, there will be ample time for the team to reset for the challenge.



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#### PAK-AUS **SCOREBOARD**

R/B 4s/6s

5/8 0/0

45/39 2/3

0/2 0/0

1/6 0/0

58

AUSTRALIA

429,880

Finch c Hafeez b Amir 82/84 6/4 Warner c Imamul b Afridi 107/111 11/1 10/13 1/0 Smith c Asif b Hafeez Maxwell b Afridi 20/10 2/1 23/26 2/0 Marsh c Malik b Amir Khawaja c Riaz b Amir 18/16 3/0 20/21 2/0 Carey Ibw b Amir 2/3 0/0 Coulter-Nile c Sarfaraz b Riaz 2/6 0/0 Cummins c Sarfaraz b Hasan 3/6 0/0 Starc c Malik b Amir 1/1 0/0 Richardson not out Extras: (lb-10, nb-3, w-6) Total: (All out in 49 overs) Fall of wickets: 1-146, 2-189, 3-223, 4-242, 5-277, 6-288, 7-299, 8-302, 9-304, 10-307 Bowler 30 Riaz Hafeez 60 26 Malik PAKISTAN R/B 4s/6s Imamul c Carey b Cummins 53/75 7/0 Fakhar c Richardson b Cummins 0/3 0/0 Babar c Richardson b Coulter-Nile 30/28 7/0 Hafeez c Starc b Finch 46/49 3/1 40/48 1/0 Sarfaraz run out (Maxwell) Malik c Carey b Cummins 0/2 0/0

Asif c Carey b Richardson

Wahab c Carey b Starc

Extras: (lb-4, nb-1, w-9)

Total: (All out in 45.4 overs)

Amir b Starc

Afridi not out

Bowler

Cummins

Richardson

Coulter-Nile

Maxwell

Finch

Starc

Hasan c Khawaja b Richardson 32/15 3/3

Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-56, 3-136, 4-146,

Result: Australia won by 41 runs.

Player-of-the-match: David Warner.

5-147, 6-160, 7-200, 8-264, 9-265, 10-266.

Australian skipper Aaron Finch has been instrumental with both bat and ball and helped his side to take the command against Pakistan. First, he scored a vital 84-ball 82 run knock which featured six fours and four sixes and removed the dangerous Mohammad Hafeez with the ball. Interestingly Finch who has picked up just three wickets in 112 ODIs came to the attack with his left arm spin and

## 'Four are better than two'

ICC

**West Indies** 

speedsters

**Oshane Thomas** 

(R) and Kemar

Roach looked

to be in a

jovial mood

at the nets in

Southampton

ahead of their

encounter with

hosts England

рното: REUTERS

tomorrow.

yesterday

Few things in sport are as exciting as watching a 90mph bowler and Corey Collymore insists his four West Indian speedsters can overwhelm England's two on Friday.

The Caribbean side have long been renowned for producing destructive quicks - think Michael Holding, Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh - but the well began to noticeably dry following the turn of the century.

However, in Oshane Thomas, Shannon Gabriel, Sheldon Cottrell and the recalled Andre Russell, they have four paceman all capable of topping the magical 90mph

barrier. England boast two of their own in Jofra Archer and Mark Wood, making Friday's contest in Southampton one of the most eagerly-anticipated games of the tournament.

"We have quick bowlers too so it should be a lively game," said bowling coach Collymore - who also used to bowl around the 90mph mark in his early career.

"We have shown what we can do with our fast bowlers, we are good enough to take wickets with the new ball and then go from there.

"I don't think many people like the short stuff, whether it is England or the West Indies. If you find a batsman that has a weakness to it, then you go after that.

"The West Indies have always produced fast bowlers." The two nations that has always had talented fast bowlers for me are the West Indies and Pakistan.

"From years gone by, that was something we prided ourselves on and now you see we have some more coming through."

RAHIM STEEL



managed to pick up his fourth international wicket.