

Roach may be in for Russell

AGENCIES, Taunton

West Indies had a great start at the World Cup as a win over Pakistan prompted many to wonder if the side were dark horses for the title. But things have changed for since then.

Windies suffered a defeat at the hands of Australia by 15 runs in their second game before sharing points with South Africa in a rained-out match.

In their last game, they suffered an 8-wicket defeat to hosts England.

Things do not look better for their match against Bangladesh today as there are questions over Andre Russell's fitness.

Kemar Roach may be brought into the side in his place. Roach can offer more speed and bounce, and also has the ability to hit a few big shots lower down the order.



India batsman Virat Kohli will now be hoping that he did not throw back Hardik Pandya's bat. The India skipper was dismissed in bizarre fashion, walking off himself after he thought he had edged behind. However, the Snickometer showed no contact between ball and bat and Kohli was furious in the dressing room, passing his willow around to teammates for them to inspect what had gone wrong. PHOTO: AFP

Kohli fastest to 11k runs

AFP, Manchester

India captain Virat Kohli broke a world record in the ICC World Cup 2019 match against Pakistan at Old Trafford, Manchester on Sunday.

Kohli became the fastest to reach 11000 ODI runs. Kohli got to the mark with a boundary off Hassan Ali's ball in the 45th over. Kohli achieved the milestone in just 222 innings.

Kohli broke Sachin Tendulkar's record, who had got to 11000-run mark in 276 innings. Ricky Ponting did so in 286 innings while Sourav Ganguly achieved it in 288 innings. Kohli also became only the third Indian and ninth cricketer in the world to get to 11000 ODI runs after Tendulkar and Ganguly.

Kohli could've achieved the feat in their third World Cup group stage match against New Zealand in Nottingham, but it was called off due to rain.

Kohli hammered a match-winning ton for India the last time the two teams met at the World Cup. His innings of 107 runs in 126 balls saw India posting a mammoth total of 300 runs and winning the match by 76 runs.

Kohli has played 12 ODIs against Pakistan in which he has scored 459 runs at an average of 45.90. His highest ODI score of 183 also came against the same opposition. He has scored 2 hundreds and a fifty against the arch-rivals, while maintaining a solid strike rate of 93.29.

Starc keen to pitch up at every game

REUTERS, London

Preserving the fitness of Mitchell Starc has been a national obsession since he bowled Australia to the World Cup title in 2015, but the left-arm paceman has no intention of putting his feet up in England.

Having not played a one-day match since November, Starc has returned from injury to the same devastating form that earned him the Player of the Tournament award in 2015 and now sees him leading the wickets in England with 13 scalps.

With Australia top of the standings after their 87-run victory over Sri Lanka on Saturday, selectors may be inclined to ease Starc's workload and play it safe with a bowler who has a long record of stress injuries. But the pacer said it would be wrong to break winning combination.

"If I'm fit, I'd like to play every game," said the 29-year-old. "It's not up to me, but it's a World Cup. I think you've got to play your best XI, depending on conditions and the team we play. But I definitely won't be putting up my hand to rest."

After bagging four for 55 against Sri Lanka, Starc drew level with Brett Lee's 35 World Cup victims to be joint second on the list of Australia's most prolific bowlers at the global showpiece. Glenn McGrath holds the record with 71 wickets.

But Starc's astonishing average of 13.51 is a record for bowlers who have sent down at least 500 deliveries at the tournament.

Starc, whose swinging yorker is virtually unplayable when on song, said he was keeping his white ball bowling simple.

"I don't try to have all these different variations, I'm pretty focused on what I want to do," he said.

"What I've added is being able to play different roles. In different conditions ... I might come back to try and take wickets and I might go for more runs, but I'm there to try and make a breakthrough.

"Test cricket is still the pinnacle for me but the fact I've kept it pretty simple in terms of my game-plan for white-ball cricket has held me in good stead through World Cups."

Windies have the firepower to go all the way, says Lloyd

PTI, London

They may have won just one match so far but Clive Lloyd feels the West Indies have got the firepower in both their batting and bowling to go all the way in the ongoing World Cup.

West Indies have won one match out of four till now, having lost two while the other one was a wash-out. "Eleven points will probably be enough to get a team into the top four, and considering they still have the likes of New Zealand and India to play, it is now or never," Lloyd wrote in a column for the ICC website.

Lloyd, who captained West Indies to World Cup victories in 1975 and 1979, however admitted that it is high time that the Caribbeans come out fighting and show what they are made of.

"Defeats and bad days are always going to happen in a tournament like this, and now we just have to hope that the West Indies have got all of theirs out of the way.

"They need to win nearly every group game from here on if they are to have a chance of making the semi-finals," wrote Lloyd. The 74-year-old felt the defeat against

England was huge. "They picked a bad time to have their worst batting display of the tournament so far. "Once you have got past the best of the England bowling attack, you really shouldn't be giving your wickets away to a part-timer like Joe Root. He is someone you should be looking to milk all day long," he said. Lloyd said youngsters Shimron Hetmyer and Nicholas Pooran have managed to impress him.

"Pooran in particular has really impressed me so far this tournament, but we shouldn't be asking two young guys to do it all. The rest of the batsmen left them high and dry, and there was ample opportunity there on a Southampton pitch that didn't have too much devil in it." In spite of the West Indies batting line-up having a "lot of power", they might be missing someone who can stick around, according to Lloyd. "In my day we had Larry Gomes who could play that role," said the former West Indies captain.

"Maybe they missed a trick by not choosing someone in the squad with the all-round skills who can play the role like Moeen Ali plays for England and filling that extra batting place which West Indies sorely needs. "Royston Chase

would fill that role for West Indies because he can also offer a bit of spin as well and can anchor an innings with the bat." He also said the West Indian bowlers need to have a bit of a re-thinking to do. "They can't go into every game thinking they are just going to blast teams out like they did Pakistan. They need to be able to read the conditions, adapt to their opponents and the pitches put in front of them.

"It's all very well bowling short all the time, but the key to short bowling is the line as well as the length -- you need to be asking questions of the batsmen and yesterday they weren't able to do that.

"Bangladesh are up next on Monday and they are no pushovers -- they beat the West Indies twice in a tri-series very recently, have beaten South Africa in this tournament already and made a very good fist of chasing down a huge total against England." Against Bangladesh, Lloyd said the Windies must stand up and be counted. "It's a must-win clash for both sides -- Bangladesh will be feeling very good about their game and it's up to the West Indies to stand up and be counted," signed off Lloyd.

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'Sledging Warner and Smith can backfire'

REUTERS, London

Sledging and booing Australia's Steve Smith and David Warner during the English summer will only push the duo to improve their performance levels, England pace bowler James Anderson said.

Smith and Warner were suspended for 12 months after a ball-tampering incident in South Africa last year and returned to international cricket at the World Cup.

The pair will face England in their World Cup match at Lord's on June 25 and are also likely to endure hostile reception during the Ashes, which begins at Edgbaston on Aug. 1

"Having played against them so many times before and knowing how they respond to that kind of thing, whether it's sledging on the field or booing from the crowd, they are going to up their performance," Anderson told Talksport Radio.

"I understand people won't like what they have done but it's in the past.

"I would rather it's not talked about, although I've got a feeling it's going to be talked about."

Anderson also believes international players have shared better on-field relationships in recent years, partly due to the increasing amount of global Twenty20 action.



There may have been innumerable fans in and around Old Trafford to watch Pakistan's encounter against India in the World Cup, but archrivals' game transcends almost every other duty and it was much the same around the world yesterday. Here, fans flock to a restaurant in Karachi to watch the teams battle it out. PHOTO: AFP

Weight off our shoulders, says Faf

ICC

Faf du Plessis felt a weight lift off his shoulders as South Africa earned their first win of the World Cup with a nine-wicket victory over Afghanistan in Cardiff on Saturday.

The match was South Africa's fifth and the result means they remain in contention for the knockout stages.

Du Plessis was particularly pleased with his attack and praised Andile Phehlukwayo and Chris Morris as being really good while singling out Imran Tahir as the standout.

He said: "I feel a little bit lighter. Our cricket today was much better and more competitive. We spoke about having more energy in the field and you could really see a big difference in

the team. Imran as always is special, especially on a wicket like that which is not suited to spin.

Tahir was a key figure in sparking the collapse South Africa instigated after the second rain delay that saw Afghanistan tumble from 69/2 to 77/7 - a loss of five wickets in 29 balls.

The interruption allowed the bowlers to regroup after a middling start and they returned after 65 minutes off the field in the mood for wickets.

"Maybe the break came at a nice time," du Plessis said. "It was just a case of reminding the guys not to get frustrated with doing the things we need to do and not to feel we need to change our plans or panic." Similarly, South Africa were

measured in their chase and lost only one wicket in pursuit of 127.

"Initially, it was just making sure we get a good foundation."

South Africa are approaching their remaining matches as must-win games, as they continue to target a spot in the semi-finals and Du Plessis hopes this result will mark the turning point for their campaign.

"If we play like we did today, we will be a better team. The first three games, we didn't play like we did today. Hopefully this is a real confidence boost for everyone in the team. We know what lies ahead - we need to win every game. Today a really good step in the right direction," he said.

BEST QUOTE

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ইমরুল হক টেস্ট-এ লড়ল সফসাজল মিশ্রি স্বাদে ভরবেই মন!

ফেক ডায়ালি

We are really focusing on the Bangladesh strengths, that skilled hitting, trying to hit some space and go with what we have in terms of a talented bunch of skilled hitters. We have tried to improve their handling of the short-pitched bouncy ball, for example, and just given the guys options.

Neil McKenzie, Bangladesh batting consultant