



Sri Lanka captain Dimuth Karunaratne's 97 provided his side with a flying start against Australia in their previous World Cup match and he will be hoping for a similar effort with a different end result against England today. However, he will have to contend with the hosts spearhead, Jofra Archer, who has been going full tilt in the mega-event. PHOTO: AFP/REUTERS

FACTS

England's Joe Root has scored 971 runs – the highest by any player on either sides' current World Cup squad -- in the 24 matches he played against Sri Lanka.

Jason Roy's 162, which came back in 2016 at the Oval in London against Sri Lanka, remains the highest individual score by any batsmen of the two sides.

Lasith Malinga has scalped 44 wickets -- the most by any player among the two sides -- in the 29 matches he played against England.

Chris Woakes has scalped 23 wickets in the 17 matches he played against Sri Lanka. This is the highest by any current English bowler. Woakes' six for 47, which came back in 2014 in Kandy, is also the best bowling figures by any current player in the two teams.

For Sri Lanka, it is the allrounder Angelo Mathews who has scored the most runs against England. The 32-year old has amassed 782 runs in the 26 matches he played against England.

England seek to continue upward march against SL

ICC

Sri Lanka are hanging in around the middle of the table as of now, but won't be there for long unless they rack up some wins, starting with the match against England on Friday.

This is the ultimate David v Goliath face-off at this ICC World Cup. England are the world's top-ranked ODI side. They are the strongest contenders to lift the trophy and have already taken firm steps towards making the final four.

Sri Lanka are a struggling one-day side. They have a lone win from five matches. But two of those produced no result, giving them a point from each, as a result of which they are still hanging in there, around the mid-table.

England will again be without Jason Roy for this clash as he continues to recover from the hamstring tear he suffered against West Indies. But England have such depth in resources, and have so much going right for them that they can look past the Roy injury and still come out and dominate. Doing so could give them yet another win, and a win should take them one step closer to the semifinals.

As for Sri Lanka, they face an uphill battle, but have enough games left to try and make something out of this campaign. Dimuth Karunaratne, their captain, has excelled with the bat so far, but can he inspire the rest of the team with those performances? Whatever may be needed to make that happen, though, needs to come soon.

Leeds should wake up to a sunny day with some clouds hanging overhead, but chances of rain are extremely minimal. There should also be a moderate breeze. This will be Headingley's CWC19 debut, but in the fifth and final ODI of the England-Pakistan series that preceded this tournament, the ground had a 350-plus total that England defended successfully to win by 54 runs.

WE HAVE TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX, SAYS KARUNARATNE

Dimuth Karunaratne has labelled England the best players of spin at this World Cup and

the spinners in the world," admitted the Sri Lankan skipper. "If you take the Asian countries, I think England are playing even better than them. We must think about it, check the ground and what combinations will we use against England.

"Will we go with two spinners, or an extra batsman and fast bowler? That is what we are discussing at the moment.

"We know that we need to restrict them to less than 300, we have a couple of plans against the batsmen and we will try to use them in the middle.

"Everyone in their batting line-up is dangerous, they are explosive and can change the game.

"We are taking every one of them seriously. And have a plan for each and everyone and hopefully it will work in this game.

"We will have to think out of the box and that is what we have been doing over the last few weeks.

"We had a home series against them before with them, so we have a couple of ideas and we need to work them out in the middle."

Sri Lanka lost that home ODI series against England before Christmas, but won the final clash in Colombo which will give them hope on Friday.

With the bat, the top order has fired as Karunaratne and Kusal Perera have combined for four half centuries already this World Cup.

admits Sri Lanka will have to think outside the box if they are to halt the hosts' charge.

England took Rashid Khan and Afghanistan apart earlier this week at Old Trafford, Eoin Morgan the tormentor in chief as Khan was dispatched for 110 runs from only nine overs.

England crashed 25 maximums off the Afghans' spin-heavy attack and are now at Headingley preparing for Friday's clash against Sri Lanka.

"England is the best batting line-up against



MR EFFICIENT

Glenn Maxwell fuelled an already fired up Australia innings when the right-hander walked onto the pitch with Australia on 313 for two in the 45th over. He smashed three sixes and two fours to reach 32 off just 10 balls before being somewhat unlucky to be run out by Rubel Hossain in the 47th over. Maybe without Maxwell's late flurry, the Aussies would be a bit short of the mammoth 381 for five they posted.

Why it all went wrong for the Proteas

AGENCIES, London

South Africa's hopes of reaching the semifinals in England and Wales are all but over after a four-wicket defeat by New Zealand on Wednesday.

South Africa are still alive at the World Cup but with just one win from six matches it would take an extraordinary combination of results to see them into the semifinals from a 10-team round-robin group phase.

Here, we take a look at some of the reasons behind their dismal performances.

WHERE IS SA'S KANE WILLIAMSON?

South Africa's woes at ICC global events will continue until its most experienced players perform in the crunch moments. It is an over-riding theme that has plagued so many events in the past, and it reared its ugly head again here in the United Kingdom.

Performing splendidly in bilateral series is nice, and racking up records along the way is swell, but it is here when the spotlights are at its brightest that legends are separated from the good players. South Africa came to this World Cup not wanting to perform "superhero" feats, but they were in dire need of a superhero to step up when they needed it most.

THE WALKING WOUNDED

Every team has injuries, and withdrawals, but no physio has earned his money like the Proteas' Craig Govender over the past three weeks. South Africa have rarely had a

fully fit squad to pick from throughout this tournament, and it was the bowlers that have suffered the most.

Considering South Africa's proposed "X-factor"



heading into the World Cup was its bowling unit, the team's chances diminished greatly when Dale Steyn was forced to return home. Equally, Lungi Ngidi's absence for crucial matches in the heart of the campaign forced a major rethink.

FRAZZLED MINDS

"The challenge is to stay cool enough to handle the pressure in the moment that you can succeed in future" – Liverpool's Uefa Champions League winning coach Jurgen Klopp. This statement could not be more appropriate for the Proteas. It does not only refer to playing affairs, but selection and tactical planning too.

Everything unravelled at a rapid rate here with South Africa opting to bowl when they should have batted (Bangladesh at The Oval) and batted when they should have bowled (India in Southampton). Equally, the selection of the playing XI was often out of tune with the conditions.

Tabraiz Shamsi should have played in the opener against England on a dry Oval surface. It was also strange that Aiden Markram missed out against India at a venue

he had played at all summer for Hampshire in the English County Championship.

BLAME THE SUITS

South Africa's preparation for this World Cup was a hike up Table Mountain and a three-day camp at Tukkies' in Pretoria. That is nowhere near enough for a high-intensity tournament like the World Cup. While Cricket South Africa's financial woes are well-documented, it is no time to start penny-pinching before a major tournament.

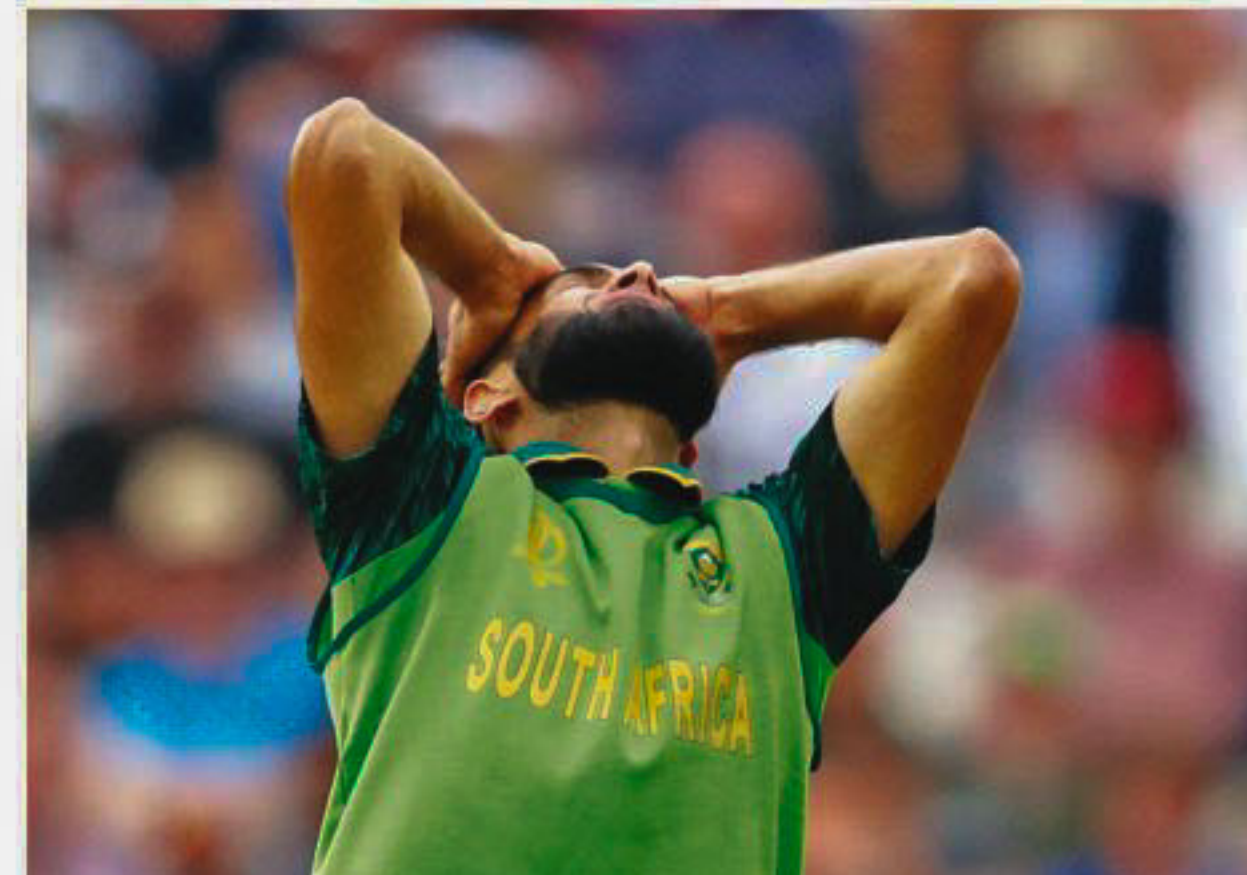
Previous Proteas teams have spent time in the Swiss Alps with High-Performance analysts from outside the cricket world before successful trips to England. Equally, CSA's inability to stand up to the BCCI and get key players released early from the IPL basically pulled the rug out of the Proteas' World Cup campaign.

Kagiso Rabada looked a weary version of his best self at this World Cup due to his exertions in the IPL for Delhi.

DAD'S ARMY

South Africa entered this World Cup with five players over 34 years old. And Faf du Plessis admitted to ageing another five years during the epic clash against the Kiwis. It showed in the field where Du Plessis – one of the finest fielders in his day – simply doesn't have a "gun" arm any longer after numerous shoulder injuries.

Hashim Amla, who even in his prime was never the most athletic fielder, struggled to cope with the intensity and Steyn, of course, never even got on the park.



INFO ZONE

HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUP		
ENGLAND		SRI LANKA
6	WIN	4
4	LOSS	6
0	TIE	0
0	NR	0

HEAD TO HEAD IN ODIS		
ENGLAND		SRI LANKA
36	WIN	35
35	LOSS	36
1	TIE	1
2	NR	2

LAST MEETING
October 23 2018 at R.Premadasa Stadium in Colombo
Sri Lanka won by 219 runs (D/L method).

KEY PLAYERS

ENGLAND		SRI LANKA
EINO MORGAN	DIMUTH KARUNARATNE	
40.14	Bat Ave	29.73
91.45	Bat Strike Rate	74.20
46	50s	4
13	100s	0
148	HS	97
7226	Runs	446
148	Last Match	97