

## This is our World Cup, says defiant Stokes

ICC

All-Rounder Ben Stokes promised England fans his teammates would not take a backward step as they soak up the disappointment of losing to their great rivals Australia at Lord's.

Stokes played a noble hand but his 89 was not enough to stop the world champions winning this key match by 64 runs. And that puts the hosts in a precarious position following their third defeat with just two group matches left, matches against India and New Zealand.

Yet Stokes, who produced a superb 115-ball knock featuring two sixes and eight fours, offered a rallying cry when asked if he had a message for worried fans.

"This is our World Cup," he said. "We've had great support over the last four years and we know how much the World Cup means to fans and we know that as players.

"It's one of the biggest times and greatest times to be a cricketer, which is to represent your country at a World Cup. But we are not going to take a backwards step and, as I've said, this is our World Cup and we are going to go about it how we want to."

The all-rounder was adamant that there was 'nothing to worry about' regarding his fitness after hobbling through much of his innings and he was insistent that he would be ready for the match against India at Edgbaston on Sunday, which now has a 'must-win' look about it.

Stokes, who has been on the losing side twice in succession despite innings of 82 not out against Sri Lanka and now his 89, conceded: "I think it's just disappointing, losing. Everyone tries to go out there and play knocks to get over the line for the team. "But normally we have two or three guys in the order who can do that. We have to really dig deep in these last couple of games here, not go back on how we know we play well.

"Look, everybody's obviously disappointed in the last two games but, you know, this is our World Cup and we are going to go about it the way we know how we play best.

"I think that's our mindset, that's what's made us so successful in the last four years. Back-to-back losses can sometimes make you as a team think differently, but we are not going to go away from our method of playing."



With their game against India nearby, Manchester United fan Carlos Brathwaite took some of his teammates and coaching staff to Old Trafford to enjoy a guided tour around the famous stadium.

### MANCHESTER UNITED

# 'It's just unbelievable from Shakib'

THE EXPERT OPINION

| FROM ABDUR RAZZAK |

It's amazing what Shakib Al Hasan is doing, it's just unbelievable batting.

Shakib has improved a lot because he was dropped in the Indian Premier League and had to practise really hard.

Importantly, he knew what needed to improve - and he did it.

As well as being a fantastic allrounder, Shakib also has the potential to be one of the best batsmen in the

When he started, he was a batting allrounder, but after that he steadily started to improve his bowling as well.

His partnership with Mushfiqur Rahim has been particularly strong in this ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

A good understanding is really important when building partnerships, and they've been playing for such a long time together that they now know each other inside-out.

Both are fighters, mentally strong and also smart cricketers too. It's a partnership that works well.

India's batting line-up is so strong that Bangladesh will have to be at their very best with the ball if they want to stand a chance of winning. That said, I believe they can do it.

It was obviously a wonderful performance by the team against Afghanistan, but especially Shakib.

The boys want to play in the semifinals and to do that there is no other option than to win games like this.

Watching the game, and indeed other matches in the competition, it's clear to see



some similarities between this Afghanistan team and Bangladesh when they were starting out.

Like us, their strong point is spin, while the level of performance is also similar to Bangladesh from the past.

Everyone was saying before the game that Afghanistan had superior bowlers to us, but I didn't particularly agree.

In truth, I was expecting a performance like this from the Bangladeshi spinners. Everyone knows that if the pitch is turning, Shakib and Mehidy are dangerous, and so it proved.

Bangladesh play Asian rivals India and Pakistan next, but I have to say no cricketer thinks about facing their neighbours in any different way to normal; they're just another opponent.

India have been a very good in the World Cup so far and came into the competition as one of the favourites.

Everyone is talking about them, but that creates an opportunity for our players. I'm sure they'll be up for the challenge. Bangladesh can definitely take some lessons

from Afghanistan's performance against India where they ran them close, but everyone has different ways of playing. On that day, Afghanistan's bowling and

fielding was amazing, but if we bat well and focus on our strengths, we can do well too. It depends on the wicket and the situation

on the day but you have to play what is in front India's batting line-up is so strong that

Bangladesh will have to be at their very best with the ball if they want to stand a chance of winning. That said, I believe they can do it.

The team is playing really well at this moment. I still think that it will be very difficult to qualify for the semi-finals, but they've created a great chance for themselves.

This story originally appeared on ICC.

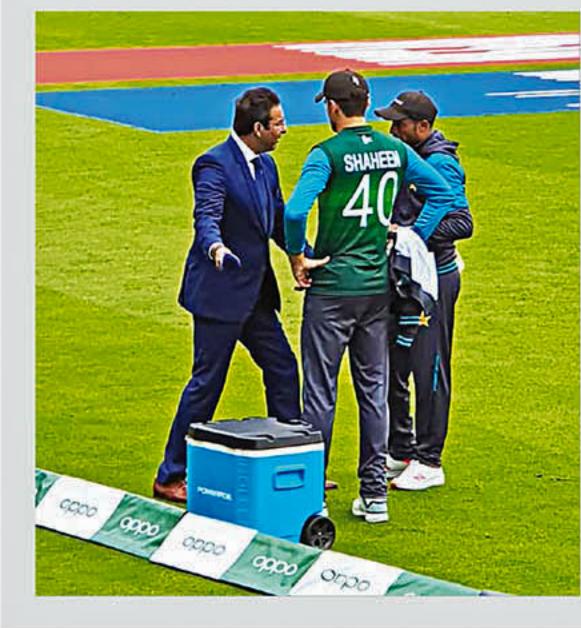
## Akram's advice, Shaheen's glory

AGENCIES, Birmingham

Shaheen Afridi had figures of three for 11 from his first seven overs -- a spell legendary Pakistan leftarm pacer Wasim Akram would have been proud of. Incidentally, Akram was spotted giving tips to the youngster and pacer Mohammed Amir before the start of play at Edgbaston.

When asked what he was saying to Shaheen and Amir before play Akram said: "I told them to focus on the length they're bowling & field-set for Williamson told Shaheen to bowl fuller than he has been bowling. At this level, small adjustments make all the difference."

"I asked him [Shaheen] to change his length. He had been bowling too short. I told him to pitch the ball up and attack the batsman. It seems he did listen to my advice," Akram added on commentary.



#### **BEST QUOTE**





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disappointed in the last two games but, you know, this is our World Cup and we are going to go about it the way we know how we play best. I think that's our mindset, that's what's made us so successful in the last four years. Back-to-back losses can make you as a team think differently, but we are not going to

> **Ben Stokes** England player

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## Roy 'making good progress'

England are hopeful that opener Jason Roy will return from a hamstring injury in time to play in Sunday's vital World Cup clash against India at Edgbaston.

Roy has missed the hosts' past three matches after suffering a hamstring tear in the field against the West Indies and his presence has been badly missed as England slumped to defeat against Sri Lanka and Australia.

The top-ranked side in the world almost certainly need to win at least one and possibly both of their remaining games, with unbeaten New Zealand also to come on July

3, to progress to the semifinals. "Jason Roy is making good progress from his hamstring injury. He is being assessed every day. Yesterday he batted in the nets and was also running shuttles on the outfield," the ECB said in a statement. "A decision on whether he'll be fit to resume against India will be made when we train on Friday and Saturday at Edgbaston."

Roy has passed 50 in five of his past six ODI and recorded the second-highest score of the World Cup to date with his 153 against Bangladesh. His replacement, James Vince, has scored 26, 14 and 0 in his three innings.

### **HAPPY MOMENT**



Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed deserved as much credit as Shaheen Shah Afridi for bagging the wicket of Ross Taylor. Sarfaraz, jumping to his right, took a one handed blinder to dismiss Taylor on 3 off to put early pressure on an already crumbling New Zealand side. It was indeed a moment to cherish for a drowning Pakistan, who suddenly had sight of shoreline, and also for Sarfaraz who had a bleak tournament so far.

AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE, OI OI OI: After their dominant win against archrivals England on Tuesday, the Australian cricketers joined up with Ashleigh Barty -- the recently-minted World No. 1 in women's tennis. PHOTO: COLLECTED