

# Not thinking of 1992: Riaz

ICC

Wahab Riaz revealed the Pakistan camp are focussing on the here and now as eerie parallels with their 1992 triumph continue to resonate at the 2019 World Cup. Imran Khan led Pakistan to their only World Cup victory

27 years ago and the exact pattern of wins, losses and washouts is being followed in this summer's showpiece. But Wahab says the relentless mentality of his team is behind their remarkable resurgence.

"We don't really talk about 1992 that much," he said. "The first thing is in this team, everybody has the same purpose. That's where we started off and where we remain.

"The turnaround is due to the motivation and the ambition of the team to win this World Cup. Everybody wants that. Obviously, this will be the last World Cup for Shoaib Malik and this is the time we are needed the most.

"We need to give everything. Everybody is giving their 100 per cent and that's the reason for the turnaround in our results and performances."

Pakistan looked down and out after defeat to India but can now reflect on three successive victories over New Zealand, South Africa and Afghanistan. Wahab, Mohammad Amir and Shaheen Shah Afridi are the most prolific pace trio at the World Cup so far, taking seven wickets against Afghanistan to add to their enviable haul. Wahab was left out of Pakistan's preliminary squad but

is relishing forming part of that fearsome pace unit. "It's very pleasing the way we are bowling as a team, particularly the way Shaheen has improved," he said.

"Shaheen was under pressure after his first game against Australia but he has come back and taken some important wickets for us. Amir we already know is one of the best bowlers in the world who swings the ball both ways. That puts pressure on the batsmen to play him.

"It's a good combination right now, we are trying to take wickets and that is putting the team in a great position."



### **BEST QUOTE**



It is unfortunate we didn't get to the final four, but I'm happy from what I have seen. We have a lot of young guys that we can mould and build a strong unit.

> Floyd Reifer Windies coach

# Close to complete performance, says Bairstow

REUTERS, Birmingham

England opener Jonny Bairstow said Sunday's 31run victory over previously-unbeaten India was the closest the hosts have come to a complete performance in the Cricket World Cup. Bairstow was named man of the match after

scoring 111 in England's 337, also fielding brilliantly as India managed 306-5 in reply.

"It came together today," Bairstow said. "The closest to a complete performance we have had To win the toss and bat first it was important to set the platform. "We were reacting to each ball. Having been

in the IPL it has helped me play spin and how to build an innings in all conditions. The ball did bits at first, I had some inside edges and you ride your luck when you can."

England were boosted considerably by the return of Jason Roy, who hit an aggressive 66 in a brilliant 160-run opening stand.

"It was great to be back out there and putting together another big partnership," said Roy, who missed the last three games with a hamstring injury. "It was horrible to be out of the team but

I needed to stay positive and I knew if I worked hard I would be back out on the pitch.

"I was raring to go at Lord's but it was the smart decision not to let me play against Australia. It worked out for the best. It was great for Jonny Bairstow to go on and get a big score, he looked very good. "I felt great, I have been putting in a lot of work. India are a very strong side, they deserved to be number one in the world, but now it's time for us to win three games and win the trophy."

England might still have to win their final group game against New Zealand game to make the semi-finals following defeats by Sri Lanka and Australia, when Bairstow was a frustrated figure, claiming that many people wanted to see England fail.

The smile was back on Sunday, however, after the sort of performance that England had been routinely knocking out during the year coming into the tournament.

"It's been frustrating for the guys, we know how well we can play and today we were pretty good with bat, ball and in the field," he said.

"But there are more things we can still improve on and we have three must-win games still to come. New Zealand have been terrific so far."

had been "magnificent to watch. "The continuation of partnerships

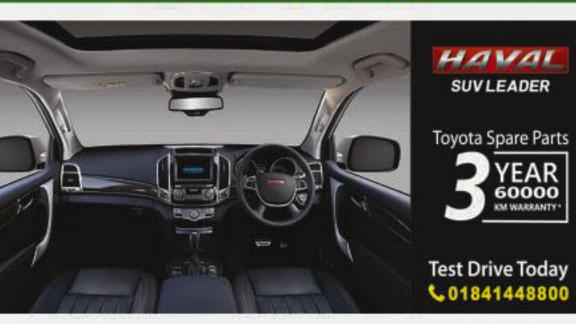
Captain Eoin Margan said the two openers

throughout took us to a formidable total," he said. "From 10-20 overs we got 90-odd runs and that was the winning or losing of the game. We took on the spinners and that's the way we want to play our cricket, hopefully this kick starts it for us. It got more difficult to bat on throughout our innings so I wasn't that worried when they were batting."

Morgan, who failed with the bat again, caught hooking his ninth ball and out for one, also praised the England attack.

"Our bowlers bowled well - Liam Plunkett has been outstanding for us for four years, absolutely outstanding, particularly in that middle period of the innings," he said.

"No game in this tournament is easy. Every game has been extremely tough and it will continue to be."



Mohammad Shami has been in terrific form in the ongoing ICC World Cup for India as the right arm seamer who registered the maiden hattrick of the ongoing flagship event also clinched his maiden five wicket haul in fifty over format against England yesterday. Shami who picked up four wickets from his nine overs picked up the wicket of Chris Woakes with a short ball which the batsman only managed to give a simple catch at deep square leg. A jubilant Shami eventually ended up with the figures of five for 69 from his ten overs as the pacer bagged 13 wickets in his last three games in the ongoing World Cup.

## Hassan ends career with big regret

AFP, London

Afghanistan's Hamid Hassan felt he could have stopped Pakistan from getting over the line in a thrilling World Cup match if his one-day career hadn't come to an end with a painful injury.

Paceman Hassan, 32, could only bowl two overs before injuring his hamstring as Pakistan overcame a tense chase to beat the minnows on Saturday.

"Of course I was looking forward to winning the game for the team. I was playing my last ODI and in a very good mood," he said.

"I bowled very well in the first over and wanted to keep going but. I feel like it's something broken inside of my hamstring. I was very excited and pumped up."

"I felt very emotional because the team missed me a lot and the ball was also reversing. The situation would have changed," said Hassan, who also played in the 2015 World Cup.

Right-arm seamer Hassan, who has claimed 59 wickets in 38 ODI matches since making his debut in 2009 for the wartorn nation, said he will continue to play Twenty20 cricket for another two years.



Former England batsman Kevin Peitersen shared some words with India skipper Virat Kohli ahead of India's match against England yesterday. The Barmy Army however, will be hoping that Pietersen was not quite as candid about their team now as he was when he released his now infamous book. PHOTO: TWITTER

## Boult bemoans timing of hattrick

REUTERS, London

Trent Boult's hattrick and a screamer of a catch from Martin Guptill would have graced any cricket match but there is no doubt that New Zealand's World Cup hopes took a battering in Saturday's loss to Australia.

The 86-run defeat was a second in a row for the Black Caps and although they can still qualify for the semifinals, the loss will raise questions about their ability to beat top opposition.

They had their chance after reducing Australia to 92 for five but the defending champions rallied to make 243-9 and New Zealand's response fizzled out at 157 all out with more than six overs still available to them.

Boult's hattrick was only the 11th in a World Cup match, and a first for a New Zealander, but the paceman was left ruing the fact that it came in Australia's final over rather than when they were on the ropes.

"Any bowler dreams of getting three wickets in a row, but to do it out there in front of a big crowd at the home of cricket was pretty special," Boult told reporters.

"It felt pretty good at the time, I would have liked it to be in the first over that's for sure.

"I always want the ball, there's no doubt about it. 90-5 and then them getting through to 240 odd, in my opinion, around that 200 mark would have been a very good score."

# Gulbadin defends decision to bowl

AFP, Leeds

Afghanistan skipper Gulbadin Naib defended his disastrous decision to bring himself on to bowl towards the end of a gripping match against Pakistan on Saturday -- a move that cost 18 runs in a single over.

Pakistan edged home by three wickets with two balls to spare at Headingley but the contest turned in the 46th over, bowled by Naib.

Pakistan, with four wickets in hand, needed 46 runs from 30 balls to win the match at the end of the 45th over but the complexion of the game was completely changed after man-of-the-match Imad Wasim smashed three fours and scrambled

some more runs. Naib also bowled a wide. Suddenly Pakistan needed 28 runs from

24 balls and held their nerve to edge home. Seamer Naib said a hamstring injury to paceman Hamid Hassan after he had bowled just two overs was the turning point in the match.

targeting every bowler," said Naib. "Every team has their plans and I thought the crucial point is for the 46th over that I bowled and 18 runs, it's not really good." "If Hamid was there maybe I didn't

"We had the feeling they weren't

bowl more than three or four overs because I do not have enough speed for this kind of surface," he added. But Naib gave credit to Pakistan.

"I think the pressure was on the Pakistan side. But credit goes to them, how they played and how they finished the game," he said.

