



Practice makes perfect for Bumrah

AFP, Birmingham

Paceman Jasprit Bumrah said constantly practising his yorker was helping him perfect the art after he finished off Bangladesh to earn India a World Cup semi-final spot.

Bumrah, the world's top-ranked bowler in one-day internationals, returned figures of 4-55 in his 10 overs at Edgbaston on Tuesday as Bangladesh were bowled out for 286 in response to India's 314-9, to lose by 28 runs.

Number eight batsman Mohammad Saifuddin gave India a scare with a quickfire unbeaten 51 but Bumrah returned in his final spell to polish off the tail with two wickets in successive deliveries.

"Everything is preparation. I do it again and again in the nets. The more you do it the better you get," said Bumrah.

"You can't master it but I'm still trying to get better. It's all about repetition. Do it again and again and try and replicate in the game." Opener Rohit Sharma set up the victory with his fourth century in the tournament and India took regular wickets to stay on top, despite a valiant 66 from star batsman Shikhar Dhawan.

Bumrah, with an unorthodox sling-arm action, has claimed 14 wickets in seven matches at his first World Cup and credits his work ethic for the success.

"Whenever I practise in the nets, I practise each and every situation. Be it with the new ball, be it with the old ball, bowling at the death," said Bumrah.

"So if I have ticked all the boxes in the

nets it's all about execution in the match and keeping it simple. If the work ethic is good, the execution is much easier." Bumrah, who made his ODI debut in 2016, is just one away from a century of wickets and is not thinking of resting for his team's final league game against Sri Lanka on Saturday.

The 25-year-old was part of a successful Indian Premier League Twenty20 campaign with title-winners Mumbai Indians, a team led by Sharma.

He believes handling crunch situations in the tournament came in handy ahead of the 50-over World Cup.

"We played some tough matches in the IPL," said Bumrah. "We played until the end. So good match practice was given to us, very happy with that."



Although their World Cup fate hangs in the balance, pending the results of yesterday's match between New Zealand and England and their own game against Bangladesh, the Pakistan players took the time out to celebrate Hasan Ali's birthday on Tuesday.

PHOTO: PCB

Police probe crowd trouble

AFP, London

Police have launched an investigation after "unprecedented" crowd trouble at the World Cup match between Pakistan and Afghanistan at Headingley, during which a number of arrests were made.

West Yorkshire Police said they received reports of people climbing over a wall, assaulting staff on a gate and a fan going on to the pitch at Saturday's game in Leeds.

Videos shared on social media show a fight between fans outside the ground, with a metal barrier being brandished and kicks, punches and shouting.

Police said mobile phone footage showed people being assaulted, and appealed for anyone who was a victim or witness of an attack, or who has original footage of the incidents, to contact them.

Superintendent Chris Bowen said police in Leeds recognised the need for

a "full and comprehensive criminal investigation".

"While these were isolated incidents, involving a relative minority of people attending the event, the scenes that were witnessed were completely unprecedented at a cricket match," he said.

"While we did not receive any direct reports of people being injured, the footage that is out there clearly shows people being assaulted during these incidents," he added.

Bowen said crowd trouble at cricket was "relatively unheard of" and the match had been assessed as low risk, with no need for a police presence.

He said policing arrangements had now been reviewed and there would be an enhanced police presence and stewarding for matches at Headingley this week.

The International Cricket Council said it would not tolerate anti-social behaviour.

The real Hawk Eye

Rufus winging his way from Wimbledon to Lord's

AFP, London

Hawk-Eye technology has long been a feature in cricket and tennis but now a genuine hawk, Rufus, is ruling the roost over both Wimbledon and Lord's.

Rufus the Hawk has been making pigeons' lives hell for more than a decade at the Wimbledon tennis championships.

But once his morning shift is done at the All England Club, Rufus heads across London to Lord's -- having been called in to do a special hit-job on pigeons during the Cricket World Cup.

"It is new territory for him," his handler Imogen Davis told reporters at Wimbledon on Wednesday. "It's new stimulation, a new area to go pigeon hunting."

"It's a smaller area in Lord's. Here we've got



so much ground, whereas there, there's lots of streets," she said of the home of cricket, wedged in a plush residential area of north London.

"There's quite a few pigeons in the trees and that's his favourite way to find them. You see

him dive into a tree. He can see 10 times more clearly, and further than we can.

"I see him go straight into a tree, full force, and they scatter out." Rufus, who weighs one pound, six ounces (625 grammes), has a bit more work to do yet at Lord's.

The 28,500-capacity ground hosts the group stage match between Bangladesh and Pakistan on Friday and then the final on July 14.

"It's like a new playground for him to find new hiding places that the pigeons will be in," said Davis. "It makes him a little bit more playful, mischievous and keen to work out what's going on."

A Harris hawk with a one-metre wingspan, Rufus is now on his 11th Wimbledon championships and has met top players Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray.

Rayudu retires

REUTERS, New Delhi

India batsman Ambati Rayudu has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket, the Indian cricket board (BCCI) said on Wednesday.

Rayudu, who last played an ODI in March, was not picked in India's 15-man squad for the World Cup.

The 33-year-old was not considered as a replacement when India lost opener Shikhar Dhawan and Vijay Shankar to injuries, with Rishabh Pant and Mayank Agarwal called up instead.

"I have come to the decision to step away from the sport and retire from all forms and levels of the game," Rayudu said.

"It has been a wonderful journey of playing the sport and learning from every up and down it brought upon for the last 25 years at various different levels."

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New Zealand opener Henry Nicholls made a comeback to the Kiwi side against England yesterday after not playing since their first match against Australia. New Zealand came to chase the challenging 306-run target with pacer Chris Woakes opening the innings with the ball. Off the fifth ball of the innings, and first for Nicholls, the left-hander was trapped plumb leg-before. It was truly a disappointing comeback for Nicholls but for England and Woakes, it was indeed a perfect start and a happy moment.

BEST QUOTE

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You would be a fool to be tempted to bat like Rohit because he is in a different class. He is on a different planet altogether when he gets going. He made it look really easy [against Bangladesh] when really it wasn't anything of the kind. The pitch was two-paced, up and down, not coming on to the bat, but from the way he played you would not have known. We expect it from him and he is delivering every time. To bat with him is really easy because he takes the pressure off you.

KL Rahul
India player

'Enough verbal diarrhoea'

Jadeja blasts Manjrekar

AGENCIES, New Delhi

India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja took to Twitter to express his anger over the criticism he received from former India batsman Sanjay Manjrekar.

Ahead of India's league fixture against Bangladesh, India batting coach Sanjay Bangar had hinted that the team might field Jadeja against Bangladesh. However, Manjrekar said that he was not a big fan of 'bits and pieces players' like Jadeja.

"I am not a big fan of bits and pieces players which Jadeja is at this point of his career in 50-over cricket. In Test matches,

he is a pure bowler. But in 50-over cricket, I would rather have a batsman and a spinner," Manjrekar said on Monday.

Jadeja did not take the criticism well and fired a scathing response on Twitter.

"Still I have played twice the number of matches you have played and I'm still playing. Learn to respect people who have achieved. I have heard enough of your verbal diarrhoea. @sanjaymanjrekar," Jadeja wrote.

Ravindra Jadeja has not featured in the playing XI so far in the ongoing World Cup 2019 for India.

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