



After a couple of days to rest and recover, the Australians were hard at work at Old Trafford yesterday. They will be hoping to defeat Faf du Plessis's (R) South Africa and claim top spot in the group stages today.

Faf to contemplate Proteas future after World Cup

AGENCIES, Manchester

South Africa's dismal effort at the 2019 World Cup has left an unmissable stain on Faf du Plessis' legacy as Proteas captain.

He is as aware of that as anyone. Now 34, Du Plessis has been his country's skipper in all three formats of the game since he was appointed ODI captain back in September 2017 when AB de Villiers stood down following the Proteas' failed ICC Champions Trophy campaign.

For the most part, Du Plessis has been successful and as a result he has been considered as one of South Africa's most natural leaders during his time in charge. Up until the World Cup, few could argue with what he had achieved as captain.

Now, as South African cricket seeks answers for a World Cup performance that is arguably the Proteas' worst ever, Du Plessis accepts that he must also look at himself and what the future holds in store for him.

"My plan for myself was to commit fully to the World Cup and not even think of anything else," said Du Plessis at Old Trafford on Friday ahead of Saturday's World Cup clash against Australia.

"I didn't want my mind to start drifting into the future. I wanted to be

completely present.

"Right now, is possibly not the best decision to be making decisions because you are disappointed. You don't want to be in this mode when you're making career decisions.

"It's a case of taking some time off and reflecting on what the future is like for me and what my purpose is going forward."

The next assignment for the Proteas after the World Cup is a tour to India where three Tests will serve as South Africa's first participation in the Test Championship.

"Is it still playing all three formats for South Africa?" Du Plessis said of the decisions that await him.

"I feel in terms of my own game, the last year is the best that I've ever played. Performance-wise, there are no question marks there

"It's just making sure there is a lot of purpose to what I'm doing in my cricket.

"I've had huge belief the last year and it's been very easy for me to not even consider anything else, because my purpose in captaining this team has been so strong. I didn't even think about anything else.

"I'll spend two or three weeks to look at what the future holds for me for the next year or two."



Dimuth blames domestic structure for woes

REUTERS, Leeds

Sri Lanka captain Dimuth Karunaratne blamed poor domestic structure for the team's decline and said the players should be allowed to play in leagues abroad to gain valuable experience.

The 1996 world champions, who reached the final in 2007 and 2011, remain in a seemingly endless transition period since stalwarts Mahela Jayawardene and Kumar Sangakkara quit international cricket in 2015.

Karunaratne's men are out of the semi-finals race after managing only three wins in their eight group matches and finish another disappointing campaign against neighbours India on Saturday.

"If you take other countries, they play a lot of cricket," Karunaratne told reporters at Headingley on Friday.

"In India, they play IPL and their domestic structure is really, really good.

"In Sri Lanka we have one domestic season. The players have only one chance to showcase their talent and we have to identify players only from that. That's the reason," he said.

Karunaratne was put in charge of the team in April after Lasith Malinga, Angelo Mathews, Dinesh Chandimal and Thisara Perera all had spells as captain.

The desperation also drove the selectors to frequently chop and change the squad.

Karunaratne blamed it on the young players' struggle to adjust to the demands of international cricket.

"When they come to the international level, there's a huge gap. We have to

close that gap," he said, adding that the way forward was to allow players to gain experience in leagues in India, Australia and England.

"We have to play a lot of cricket and give chance to the players to play in IPL, Big Bash or county cricket. We have to give them permission to play in overseas tournament to gain experience and come back," he said.

"Those are the things I'm expecting from the cricket board after this World Cup. I hope they will take a good decision and put up a strong domestic structure to help produce some good players for the future."



INFO ZONE

HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUP

INDIA	WON	SRI LANKA
3	4	
4	3	
0	0	
1	1	

HEAD TO HEAD IN ODIS

INDIA	WON	SRI LANKA
90	56	
56	90	
1	1	
11	11	

LAST MEETING

December 17 2017 at Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam
India won by 8 wickets (with 107 balls remaining).

KEY PLAYERS



INDIA	BAT/BOWL AVE	SRI LANKA
VIRAT KOHLI	59.52/166.25	LASITH MALINGA
93.07/160.02	67.5/28.86	
54	BAT/BOWL STRIKE RATE	74.30/32.3
41	50S	1
183	100S	0
6.22	HS	56
1/15	ECON	5.34
11251/4	BBM	6/38
26	RUNS/WICKETS	561/334
	LAST MATCH	3/55

MR EFFICIENT



Mustafizur Rahman continued his brilliant run in the World Cup as the left-arm seamer bagged a second consecutive fifer against Pakistan. He ended with figures of five for 75 from his ten overs and Pakistan, who were eyeing a total over 340, ended up scoring 315 for 9 in 50 overs.

INFO ZONE

HEAD TO HEAD IN WORLD CUP

AUSTRALIA	WON	SOUTH AFRICA
3	1	
1	3	
1	1	
0	NR	0

HEAD TO HEAD IN ODIS

AUSTRALIA	WON	SOUTH AFRICA
48	47	
47	48	
3	3	
1	NR	1

LAST MEETING

November 11 2018 at Bellerive Oval in Hobart
South Africa won by 40 runs.

KEY PLAYERS



AUSTRALIA	BAT AVE	SOUTH AFRICA
AARON FINCH	41.04	QUINTON DE KOCK
89.54	89.54	44.95
24	BAT STRIKE RATE	95.14
15	50S	23
153*	100S	14
4556	HS	178
8, 0/7	RUNS	4855
	LAST MATCH	0C/0S, 15

Brathwaite wants WI to emulate England

REUTERS, Leeds

West Indies should follow England's example to return stronger in the next World Cup, all-rounder Carlos Brathwaite said after the two-time champions exited the tournament with only two victories from nine matches.

Despite their early exit, the emergence of batsmen Shai Hope, Nicholas Pooran and Shimron Hetmyer have made Caribbean fans optimistic about the team's future.

Brathwaite wants them to imitate England who transformed themselves after crashing out of the 2015 World Cup, acquiring an array of stroke-makers who routinely help the team to 300-plus totals.

"As a team, we need to regroup," Brathwaite, who nearly pulled off a trilling victory against New Zealand with a spectacular century, told reporters.

"We have some time off, some aching bodies will get time to recuperate and then it's about finding ways and combinations to compete and win series.

"Hopefully we can take that winning mentality into the next World Cup. If you look at 2015 and what England did after

the World Cup, they have built straight up to the 2019 World Cup and it's paying dividends." England, who entered the tournament as the top ranked ODI team but have since slipped to the second place, have joined Australia and India in the semi-finals with New Zealand set to complete the last four line-up.

"I don't know off the field what the plans are for the 2023 World Cup but I think it's something we need to look at and build towards that," Brathwaite said.

Overall, the all-rounder said, it was an experience that must be capitalised on.

"There is disappointment in the changing rooms at not making the final four but we're thankful for the good performances," he said.

"(Quick) Sheldon Cottrell had a fantastic tournament and at times like these it's easy to let those things go missing.

"But as a team we came together, we highlighted the guys that we thought had good performances and the guys that didn't will take the lessons and come back from it so we can start to win bilateral series leading up to the next World Cup."