e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net DHAKA FRIDAY NOVEMBER 12, 2021, *KARTIK 27, 1428 BS*

SINGER **LED TVs**

Buy SINGER TVs and Get Free TVs Every Day

6 Months Replacement Guarantee

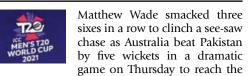
SCORES IN BRIEF

Pakistan: 176 for 4 in 20 overs (Rizwan 67, Fakhar 55 not out, Babar 39; Starc 2-38, Zampa 1-22, Cummins 1-30)

Australia: 177 for 5 in 19 overs (Warner 49, Marsh 28, Stoinis 40 not out, Wade 41 not out, Shaheen 1-35, Shadab 4-26) Result: Australia won by five

> wickets. Player-of-the-match: Mathew Wade.

'It was a great game of cricket' AGENCIES



Twenty20 World Cup final. Chasing 177 for victory, Australia needed 22 runs from the last two overs and Wade got a reprieve when Hasan Ali dropped him off

Shaheen Afridi in the penultimate one. Wade sent the next three balls from Afridi soaring over the ropes and Australia reached their

target with one over to spare. "It was a great game of cricket," Australia captain Aaron Finch said after his team booked a place in Sunday's final against New Zealand and stayed on course to win the only major global

trophy that has eluded them.

The way Matthew Wade held his nerve was outstanding, that partnership with Marcus Stoinis was crucial." Wade's 41 not out from 17 balls included four sixes and Stoinis finished unbeaten

on 40. "I just got my feet in a tangle first up. It happens, in T20 cricket you get some good ones every now and then. I thought we were pretty sloppy today, we dropped a couple, though they were tough ones. But what we showed today was that you need all your players, everyone in your 15 to contribute," said Finch.

[On chasing teams winning so many games] It's really strange. There's no dew, but the lights take effect and the wicket speeds up a bit. I was hoping to lose the toss and put a total on the board and defend it, but it was good to chase that target down in the end," he added.

Australia suffered an early blow when Shaheen trapped Finch lbw for nought as the Pakistandominated crowd erupted.

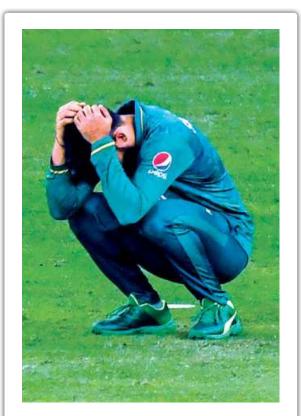
The in-form Warner kept up the attack from one end with support from Mitchell Marsh. But Shadab Khan turned up the heat in the seventh over to get Marsh out for 28.

The leg-spinner struck in each of his four overs to claim the big wickets of Steve Smith, for five, Warner, and Glenn Maxwell, for seven as Australia lost half their side for 96.

Warner walked when he was caught behind after hitting three fours and three sixes in his 30ball stay but replays later showed there was no contact off the batsman's bat. Stoinis and Wade steered the team to their second T20 World Cup semi-final and dream of a maiden title. Earlier, Rizwan's opening stand of 71 with skipper Babar Azam, who made 39, unsettled the Australian bowling in the first six overs of powerplay.

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa broke the opening stand after sending back Babar, who has amassed 303 runs to lead the tournament's batting chart, caught at long-on following his 34-ball knock laced with five fours. Rizwan kept up the attack and smashed Zampa for a six to become the first player to aggregate 1,000 runs in T20 internationals in a calendar year.

He survived a hit on the helmet grill by a quick bouncer from Pat Cummins as the physio came in to conduct a concussion test with the batsman smiling. Rizwan finally fell to Mitchell Starc while trying to force the pace and was caught at mid-off. Zaman finished off the innings with two sixes in the final over from Starc who took two wickets.



That catch might have made the difference'

Matthew Wade's late blitz ensured Australia sailed through, comfortably at the end, for a T20 World Cup final clash against New Zealand and ended Pakistan's unbeaten run in the event.

Praised throughout for their fielding and overall enthusiasm, a dropped catch in the penultimate over followed by three successive sixes took the game from Pakistan.

Babar Azam-led side set a competitive total that set up the semi-final nicely but a sensational finish saw Australia maintain their dominance over Pakistan in ICC knockout games, which stretched their unbeaten run to five games.

"The way we started in the first half, we got the total we targeted," said Pakistan skipper

"But we gave them too much of a chance at the end of the chase. If we had taken that catch, it might have made the difference."

"But the way we played this tournament, the way we gelled, I'm very satisfied as a captain. I hope we try and learn from our mistakes after this. We'll continue to try and play this way. The roles we'd defined for the players, they all executed very well," he added.



"Talking to Marcus Stoinis at the other end, we discussed what the bowlers were looking to do. [Shaheen] probably bowled more pace-on than I expected. When I got out there with Marcus, he was really confident we'd get them, even though I was a little unsure. He found the boundaries early on, and I was happy to chip in at the end. It got down to two a ball, and from there it was if you got one in your arc, just try to hit it. Probably hasn't sunk in, I've just finished batting. I'm just happy to contribute. I was out of the team for a while, just happy I got an opportunity again."

MATTHEW WADE



AGENCIES

World Cup glory.

Wednesday.

Jimmy Neesham nearly quit the

game after being dropped from

New Zealand's one-day squad in

2017 but four years later he now

stands on the cusp of Twenty20

History beckons for New

Zealand and Neesham after he

became an unlikely match-winner

in his team's remarkable win over

England in the first semi-final on

Neesham smashed an 11-ball

27 in New Zealand's tense chase

of 167 and then sat calmly in the

dugout amid the celebrations after

Daryl Mitchell hit the winning



THE MARK OF **ARISTOCRACY**



Long live the sporting spirit

New Zealand's outstanding five-wicket victory over hot favourites England in the first semifinal of the T20 World Cup is destined to go down as one of the classics, given how the game unfolded.

But amid the overall drama and the quality of cricket on offer, one particular little event stood out in all its glory, although it will probably not be classified as a turning point if one watches the highlights or scorecard. It all happened against the backdrop of enormous pressure, that too when all eyes were watching, when Kiwi opener Daryl Mitchell ended up prioritising sporting spirit above all else.

Chasing 167 and needing 34 off 18, at a time when every run or every dot ball

act of sportsmanship will arguably be the cherry on top and should place him as the frontrunner to receive this year's ICC Spirit of Cricket Award, which was introduced in 2011, and join his compatriots Daniel Vettori, Brendon McCullum and Kane Williamson, who won the awards in 2012, 2015 and 2018, respectively.

"If anything sums up New Zealand cricket, it was that," former England captain Nasser Hussain said while commentating on Mitchell's sporting gesture.

Another former England captain, Michael Atherton, heaved praise on the Kane Williamson-led side while talking to Sky Sports, which reminded the fans of the hallmark of a truly great side in all its

"Across formats, you would have to say



final which England won.

pass off their

heartbreaking

loss and wrote

take up sport.

Take up baking

or something.

Die at 60 really fat and

He has shown real

"Kids,

happy.'

Twitter,

don't

Neesham also took three wickets and was involved in the final ball run out to level the scores on 241 before the super over also

boundary in his unbeaten 72. The photos of the moment went ended in a tie. viral on social media and Indian Hosts England won website ESPNcricinfo captioned it on boundary count. "Jimmy Neesham didn't move" to Neesham took which the allrounder replied: "Job to humour to

finished? I don't think so". New Zealand will play either Pakistan or Australia in their first ever T20 World Cup final on Sunday in Dubai but the spotlight remains on 31-year-old Neesham who came close to delivering the Kiwis the 50 over World Cup trophy in 2019.

The allrounder, a left-hand batsman who bowls mediumpace, scored 13 runs off five balls in a super over during the dramatic strength of character

since a poor 2017 Champions Trophy -- he scored one halfcentury in 11 ODI matches and took four wickets -- led to him being dropped.

He later admitted to being frustrated by the turn of events and took help from an Aucklandbased psychologist

Paula Dennan. He

revealed that Heath Mills, the head of the New Zealand Cricket

him to "take one game at a time". The suggestion not only helped him get back to the game he loves

but also gave the Black Caps a winner they needed. "I had observed him and suspected that he was struggling

mentally. I got in touch with him and we started talking," Mills told The Indian Express, hours after Neesham's thrilling knock in the T20 world cup semifinal. "I told him why don't you just step away from the game for a

while. A short break. This isn't the time to take any drastic decisions,' said Mills. And then Neesham agreed and

went to see a psychologist Paula Dennan in Auckland. "I think I got to the point where I needed to have a full overhaul of the way I was approaching the game and she facilitated that," Neesham said in the past. Now praise has flowed for the

Auckland-born cricketer with both captains--Kane Williamson and Eoin Morgan, saying Neesham's knock was the "deciding factor". "Jimmy Neesham, was thinking

of quitting the game in 2017 and today playing a match defining innings to help New Zealand qualify for the final," India's Players Association, batting great VVS Laxman wrote talked him out of on Twitter. "Never give up is the retirement and advised lesson, Sport is a great teacher."



mattered with the game heading down to the wire, Mitchell had turned down a single when he could have easily opted for one after having inadvertently collided with England spinner Adil Rashid at the nonstriker's end.

In hindsight, that single might not have mattered as Jimmy Neesham's blistering 11-ball 27 cameo in tandem with Mitchell's unbeaten 72 off 47 enabled the Kiwis to reach the shores of victory with an over to spare. However, it can be safe to say that Mitchell's sporting gesture has perhaps immortalised this particular encounter for the ages and encapsulated the beauty of cricket and sport in general.

Mitchell demonstrated a masterclass on how to mix caution with aggression, showed the art of knowing when to raise the tempo and how to play in a partnership. But his they are the strongest team at the moment so congratulations to them, a fantastic achievement with limited resources," said Atherton.

To the ardent cricket romantics, the latest sporting act is a refreshing continuation of great gestures from former legends in this so-called gentleman's game. Of course, there have been several instances of such moments throughout history, but the impact is amplified, and rightly so, when the stage is as grand as a World Cup semifinal and also considering it came from a top quality side, in an era defined by commercialisation and ultra-

competitive result-oriented mentality. Thanks to Mitchell's 'statement', surely, New Zealand have swayed more than a few neutrals to their ranks to cheer for them in times to come.

