

SPORT

'This is huge' as Australia break T20 WC TITLE DUCK

TWENTY20 WORLD CUP CHAMPIONS

2007: India
2009: Pakistan
2010: England
2012: West Indies
2014: Sri Lanka
2016: West Indies
2021: Australia

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SCORES IN BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND

172 for 4 in 20 overs (Guptill 28, Mitchell 11, Williamson 85, Phillips 18, Neesham 13 not out, Seifert 8 not out, extras 9; Starc 0-60, Hazlewood 3-16, Zampa 1-26)

AUSTRALIA

173 for 2 in 18.5 overs (Warner 53, Finch 5, Marsh 77 not out, Maxwell 28 not out, extras 10; Boult 2-18)

RESULT

Australia won by eight wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Mitchell Marsh.

Player-of-the-tournament: David Warner.



WHAT THEY SAID

» "These are a great bunch of guys, great support staff, and great support around the world, especially back home. Always pumped, wanted to put on a spectacle. There were some nerves around as always in a final but great to see the guys deliver." DAVID WARNER

» "I don't really have words, what an amazing six weeks with this group. Love them to death. World champs." MITCHELL MARSH

» "It's huge. We felt like a lot of people wrote us off but we spoke about being the first team to do this for Australia and it feels really special." MATTHEW WADE

» "Kane's a superb player. It was another classical innings, runs all around the ground and he hurts you when you bowl poorly." JOSH HAZLEWOOD

» "The key... this group of boys, we absolutely, we actually love each other. It is beautiful. I can't wait to keep playing with this team. I'm so proud of them. You won't find bigger supporters of Mitch Marsh than right here [except for] probably his family." MARCUS STOINIS

» "They're (Australia) a fantastic side, had a brilliant campaign and came out and turned it on. We weren't far away. Credit to the way Australia chase it, they didn't give us an inch. Wasn't to be today, but proud of how we've operated. Guys committed to what we tried to do in venues that varied a lot. There was a lot of heart shown, always nice to get to the big dance. But credit to Australia again. Some high hopes coming in, some good cricket played, so we're feeling it a bit. There are only two possible outcomes, shame we couldn't get the job done." KANE WILLIAMSON

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AGENCIES



Mitchell Marsh smashed an unbeaten 77 as Australia hammered New Zealand by eight wickets to clinch their maiden Twenty20 World Cup title on Sunday with captain Aaron Finch describing the achievement as "huge".

Chasing 173 for victory, Australia depended on a 92-run second-wicket stand between David Warner, who made 53, and Marsh to achieve their target with seven balls to spare in Dubai.

Warner became Trent Boult's second wicket but Marsh kept up the charge to power Australia home to their long-awaited T20 crown and add to their five 50-over World Cup trophies.

Glenn Maxwell, who made 28, joined Marsh, who hit six fours and four sixes in his 50-ball knock, to put on 66 runs and hit the winning boundary.

"This is huge, to be the first Australian team to do it. I am so proud of how the guys went about

KONKA Fridge

the campaign," said Finch.

"[Bangladesh game turning point?] Certainly was, backs were against the wall. We had to fight and certainly did that, had some great team and individual performances," he added.

Australia skipper also highly praised the performance of David Warner, Adam Zampa,

Matt Wade and Mitchell Marsh.

"Can't believe people wrote Warner off a couple of weeks ago, it was almost like poking the bear. Zampa was the player of the tournament for mine, controlled the game, got big wickets, super player. Mitch Marsh, what a way to start, put pressure on from the start. Matt Wade came in under an injury cloud and got the job done. He came in the semi-final alongside Marcus Stoinis and did the business," said Finch.

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson hit a valiant 85 in New Zealand's 172-4 after being invited to bat first in a crucial toss won by Finch. Teams bowling first won 12 of 13 matches played at the Dubai International Stadium.

Australia, whose previous best was a runners-up finish in 2010, came into this edition's semi-final with one loss to England and beat Pakistan in the final-four clash with a chase of 177.

Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood returned figures of 3-16 and leg-spinner Adam Zampa had 1-26.



Tamim 'disappointed' to sit out Pakistan series

SPORTS REPORTER

After the latest T20 World Cup debacle, Bangladesh are already struggling to regroup as they prepare to face a stern test in their upcoming series against Pakistan, which includes three T20Is and two Tests, later this month.

The ominous phase for the country's cricket seems to be prolonging with Bangladesh ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal now ruled out of the two Tests against Pakistan as his injury to the left thumb resurfaced. "I was desperate to make my return with this series. But I am very disappointed that this happened and now I have to sit out the series against Pakistan," Tamim told The Daily Star yesterday.

The left-hander, who had opted out of the T20 World Cup from which the Tigers crashed out after losing six of their eight clashes, was already unlikely to participate in the T20Is against Pakistan. And now his exclusion from the Test series has come as a major blow for Bangladesh as the Tigers will have to begin their second season of the World Test Championship without the southpaw.

Tamim had picked up the injury while playing in the Everest Premier League in Nepal last October

and was on his way to recovery following around a month of rest.

However, the left-handed opener, who began practising a few days ago as part of his recovery, seemed to have been struggling while playing fast bowlers at the nets. That prompted him to undergo a scan on Sunday which revealed his injury had aggravated.

Bangladesh already have a few injury concerns in the side with all-rounders Mohammad Saifuddin and Shakib Al Hasan, both of whom were ruled out of the T20 World Cup midway, still recovering from a recurring back injury and a hamstring injury, respectively.

However, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) informed that it will meet regarding the injury issues of the side today.

"There are a number of injury issues in the side. After getting the full injury report from the BCB medical team, we will sit for a meeting tomorrow [Monday]. We can confirm anything only after this meeting," informed BCB chief selector Minhajul Abedin to The Daily Star yesterday.

It was, however, learned that Tamim, who last featured for Bangladesh in July this year in an ODI against Zimbabwe, is considering going abroad for further check-up.

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FINANCE



'Rebuilding team morale is key'

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Bangladesh team will look to regain lost confidence in the upcoming series against Pakistan following a disastrous

T20 World Cup campaign in UAE recently. The Tigers had notched series wins against Australia and New Zealand at home ahead of the World Cup but their preparations on slow, docile pitches left them with obvious deficiencies while their qualities proved not to be quite adequate for the challenges of a World Cup.

Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, mentor to many national team players, spoke to The Daily Star on the challenges facing the team for the Pakistan series and how the team morale can be rebuilt now.

"Given the team morale, I don't think they are in a position to do well in international cricket even though I don't know who will feature in the side. I have said before that the preparation we took at home, affected us negatively," Fahim said.

Questions would be asked as to why the players could not make up for bad preparation and adjust. The reality though cannot be escaped regarding the T20 abilities of the side.

"We're not that good a T20 team. People may say that Australia have done well after playing here, and even though Australia didn't bring everyone, had they played here for over a year they would forget their

own game," Fahim opined.

The disaster got out of hand and the team did not show the ability to fight back after the Sri Lanka game. Fahim has great experience of handling national and upcoming stars. He had his say on the team's mental state at the World Cup.

"I would say the environment around the team was one of disrespect and mistrust with the players on one side and the management on the

other. The players had to overcome the challenge but they did not find mental strength. The players were on separate islands of their own in regards to mental balance. If the environment was positive, they could have made a comeback.

The batsmen had a lack of confidence after playing on such surfaces at home while the message we sent to the bowlers were that they were terrific. We didn't tell the bowlers that those surfaces were not the real world. Because the home series were connected to our World Cup

preparations, it created problems."

Where do the team go from here?

"Right now, rebuilding team morale is key. We need someone to correct the individual trust and relationships. The skill at the moment is secondary," Fahim said. The conditions might once again be in focus but Fahim believes the focus should be on performing in adverse conditions. "Pakistan will have the upper hand even here. We're not in a position to take advantage but more importantly, dependence on conditions should be removed altogether from our cricket. We have to play to compete. We have seen good wickets in local tournaments (BCB president's Cup and Bangabandhu Premier League) during even the pandemic. We can't say good wickets aren't possible."

The series will be an opportunity to find good performers and rebuild the side. Setting things right is the first challenge but with talks of big changes, Fahim said things cannot be changed overnight.

"Change has to come slowly. It will be risky to change drastically. You have to understand that we sent these players to the World Cup because they were the best of the bunch. If you change half the team overnight, it means the vision was wrong heading to the World Cup. I don't think the vision was all wrong. Change has to be gradual because the replacement players aren't ready yet. You can lose a series but the thing is you have to face up to losses and rebuild for the longer term," Fahim concluded.

