



## Kiwis turn focus to Afghans

REUTERS

New Zealand have tried to move on from thrashing champions Australia in their World Cup opener but are keen to keep the good times rolling against Afghanistan, pace spearhead Trent Boult said on Tuesday.

The Black Caps can cement their place at the top of Group 1 in the Super 12's with a big win over the Afghans in Melbourne on Wednesday after ending an 11-year victory drought away to Australia.

New Zealand fans and media have dined out on the stunning 89-run win at the Sydney Cricket Ground last Saturday, and Boult admitted it had been difficult to put it in the rearview mirror.

"It is hard, but we quickly got on a plane the next day and moved into a new hotel and started preparing for a new game," Boult told reporters at the MCG.

"The boys spoke leading into this tournament, into that game, of what it means to be here and how exciting it is to be on this stage, and T20 cricket is about fun.

"It's about showing your skills and going out there and having a good time."

Afghanistan lost a low-scoring game by five wickets to England in their first Super 12 match in Perth but their spinners, led by all-rounder Rashid Khan, proved a handful for Jos Buttler's batsmen.

"Their spinners in general, yeah, big players for their team," said Boult. "Obviously, Rashid, Mujeeb, none of them need an introduction.



Najmul Hossain Shanto, Mosaddek Hossain, Liton Das and Yasir Ali did not miss the chance to have their picture taken in front of the iconic Sydney Opera House yesterday. After registering their first-ever Super 12 victory at the T20 World Cup, against the Netherlands, Bangladesh players reached Sydney on Tuesday for their next fixture against South Africa tomorrow.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK



### SCORES IN BRIEF

#### SRI LANKA VS AUSTRALIA

**Sri Lanka**  
157 for six in 20 overs  
(Nissanka 40, Asalanka 38; Maxwell 1-5, Starc 1-23)

**Australia**  
158 for three in 16.3 overs  
(Stoinis 59 not out, Finch 31 not out; de Silva 1-18, Karunaratne 2-21)

**Result**  
Australia won by seven wickets  
Player-of-the-match: Marcus Stoinis

## Buttler rules out complacency against Ireland

REUTERS, MELBOURNE

England captain Jos Buttler said they have "great respect" for Ireland and there is no question of complacency creeping in during Wednesday's Super 12 match at the T20 World Cup.

Ireland, who famously beat England in a 2011 ODI World Cup match in Bangalore, eliminated twice winners West Indies to make the second round for the first time since 2009.

England began their quest for a second T20 World Cup crown with a clinical victory against Afghanistan and Buttler said they would not hold anything back against Ireland.

"Anytime you take things for granted or you don't respect the opposition is when you can get hurt," the opener told a news conference on Tuesday.

"I think in T20 cricket especially, there's the one format where it's as level a playing field as any.

"We give them great respect. We expect a really tough game."

Buttler said there would be a "natural rivalry" on the pitch between the two sides.

"I think anytime we play sort of nations close to home, that brings natural rivalry. It brings some history of certain things into the game," he added.

Ireland coach Heinrich Malan said they were looking forward to the contest.

"We haven't played them in white ball cricket for a long period of time, so it'll be a nice challenge," the South African said, adding that they were looking for ways to curb England's explosive batting order.

"Hopefully our bowlers can go out there and be clear in their own preparation.

"They've all got their own strengths, and if they can play towards them and be clear around that, hopefully they execute well, then we can be on the good end of it."



## Recognising limitations KEY FOR TIGERS

SPORTS REPORTER

After beating the Netherlands in their opening game of the ICC T20 World Cup in the Super 12 stage in Hobart on Sunday, an underperforming Bangladesh, with some psychological relief, will be more relaxed ahead of their second game against South Africa in Sydney tomorrow.

Bangladesh's morale was dented by a prolonged lean patch in the shortest format of the game, with the win against the Dutch being the nation's first win in the main round of the ICC T20 World Cup in 15 years.

According to prominent coach Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, the Tigers not having a false sense of confidence like they did in previous mega-events helped the team recognise their limitations, which may help Shakib Al Hasan and Co. in Australia.

Physical preparations did not go too well. But one good thing happened when compared to previous World Cups is that we realised our actual position. We know the difference between our counterparts and ourselves. And we know what to expect from them in the World Cup," Fahim said during The Daily Star's multimedia show Non Striker's End.

"We're not going there with any false sense of confidence. What happened last year was that we had won two home series against big teams and that injected the belief that they were the best players. But that doesn't happen in international sport. Nobody is going to give you a half-volley in an international match no matter



how many times you practice that in training. So there's no point gaining confidence from that. Instead, if we get the picture of what can actually happen in the tournament, that will give the players better mindset ahead of the World Cup," he said.

Fahim informed that it was

a good move from the team management to forgo their makeshift opening pair against the Netherlands and instead opt for Soumya Sarkar and Najmul Hossain, opining that it would be crucial for Bangladeshi batters to adapt to the bounce against a better South African bowling attack in Sydney.

However, Shakib's mentor also pointed out the need for five specialist bowlers in the playing eleven for the coming games, which was evident during the opening game against Netherlands.

"You never know, I think Mossaddek [Hossain] was included in the eleven, generally to bat at number eight, but everyone thought he was a bowler. But we didn't see the captain show that courage and give him the ball. He was given an over, but he didn't perform well.

"But it's not unexpected as he's not a regular bowler. You can't expect him to bowl like Shakib or [Mehedi Hasan] Miraz. In such circumstances, the captain searches for other bowlers. Thankfully, Soumya was there today but I think we were definitely a bowler short. We should have five proper bowlers in the team, and then if there's an extra bowler like Soumya, nothing beats that."

## Marshall hits ton as rain hampers NCL

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Metro batsman Marshall Ayub scored a century to take his team to 255 against Barisal Division on the second day of the Tier Two match in the National Cricket League following a washout of the first day at the Shahid Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi on Tuesday.

The first day saw only a single delivery bowled but Rajshahi, who were sent into bat, capitalised on the favourable weather on the second day, posting 255 on the back of Marshall's ton and debutant Aich Mollah's 42. Barishal pacers

Kamrul Islam Rabbi and Ruyel Miah scalped three wickets each.

In reply, Barishal lost two early wickets to pacer Asadullah Galib as they ended the day on 9-2, still trailing by 246 runs with Rabbi and Abu Sayem at the crease.

In a Tier One affair between Dhaka Division and Chattogram Division, the former, after managing 54 for two on a rain-interrupted first day on Monday, couldn't come on to bat due to inclement weather at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogura.

After being put in to bat, Dhaka were pegged back by a double blow, courtesy of Chattogram pacer Yeasin Arafat who sent back Rony Talukdar and Mahidul Islam Ankon in the space of four balls in the seventh over. But opener Abdul Mazid and Raqibul Hasan calmed the nerves by putting on a 34-run stand, with the former unbeaten on 26 and Raqibul on 12 at the other end.

The other Tier One contest between Sylhet and Rangpur, and the Tier two match between Khulna and Rajshahi have not seen any cricket due to rain.



## What to WATCH

### T SPORTS

T20 World Cup

England vs Ireland

Live from 10:00 am

Afghanistan vs New Zealand

Live from 02:00 pm

### TEN 1

UEFA Champions League

Ajax vs Liverpool

Live from 01:00 am

(Thursday)

### TEN 2

UEFA Champions League

Inter vs Plzen

Live from 10:45 pm

Barcelona vs Bayern Munich

Live from 01:00 am

(Thursday)

### SONY SIX

UEFA Champions League

Atletico Madrid vs Bayer

Leverkusen

Live from 01:00 am

(Thursday)



Even with little to no hope left of progressing to the next stage, Barcelona players train at the Joan Gamper training ground ahead of their Champions League group stage encounter against Bayern Munich on Wednesday.

PHOTO: BARCELONA

## Barcelona hoping for the 'unexpected'

REUTERS, Barcelona

Barcelona will be eager to show everyone that they are better than rivals Bayern Munich when the two teams face off in the Champions League on Wednesday, manager Xavi Hernandez said.

Barcelona were beaten 2-0 by Bayern in last month's Group C fixture, a result that Xavi said was not a true reflection of the team's talent.

But having won only one of their four matches in Europe this season, Xavi wants his team to show their true worth at Camp Nou on Wednesday.

"We have to show ourselves that even if we are knocked out (of the Champions League) we are a good team and we can compete against the best teams out there," Xavi told a news conference on Tuesday.

"That game in Munich was a disgrace because we deserved much more. That was an accident because we lacked the final touch.

Even though Barcelona had more possession than Bayern and outshot them 18-13, the German side scored twice in four minutes against the run of play to secure the win.

Barca's indifferent form in the competition has left them in danger of being eliminated early in the competition as they are third in the standings with four points, eight points behind leaders Bayern and three behind second-placed Inter Milan with two group matches remaining.

Inter host bottom-placed Viktoria Plzen, who have yet to score a point, in the other group fixture on Wednesday.

If the Italians win, they would qualify for the last 16 and knock out Barca thanks to a better head-to-head record. Bayern have already secured their place in the next round.

"Regardless of what happens in Milan, we have to win. We have to play as if only our game matters, to show that we are better than Bayern," said Xavi.

"I don't like to talk about miracles... we have a small hope. Though we are in a very uncomfortable situation.

"The numbers are all against us. But ... unexpected things can happen."

Barcelona, who also exited the tournament following the group stage last season, suffered another setback when they were handed a 3-1 defeat by Real Madrid in this month's El Clasico.