



**"Cometh the hour, cometh the man" as Ben Stokes rose to the occasion again when England banked on the 31-year-old to edge past Pakistan in what turned out to be a nervy chase of a paltry 138 at the MCG on Sunday. In a way, Stokes' unbeaten fifty became an act of redemption in the competition for the stellar all-rounder, who was left dejected following the 2016 edition's climax -- where he conceded four successive sixes in the final over against the West Indies to extend England's wait for their second T20 World Cup trophy.**

PHOTO: AFP

**SCORES IN BRIEF**

**Pakistan vs England**  
**Pakistan:** 137-8 in 20 overs (Masood 38, Babar 32; Curran 3-12, Rashid 2-22)  
**England:** 138-5 in 19 overs (Stokes 52 not out, Buttler 26; Rauf 2-23, Shaheen 1-13)  
**Result:** England won by five wickets.  
**Player-of-the-final:** Sam Curran.  
**Player-of-the-tournament:** Sam Curran.

**MOST RUNS**

- Virat Kohli 296
- Max O'Dowd 242
- Suryakumar Yadav 239
- Jos Buttler 225
- Kusal Mendis 223

**MOST WICKETS**

- Wanindu Hasaranga 15
- Sam Curran 13
- Bas de Leede 13
- Blessing Muzarabani 12
- Anrich Nortje 11



**HIGHLIGHTS**

UAE leg-spinner Karthik Meiyappan's 3-19 against Sri Lanka in Round 1 saw the first hat-trick of the tournament, while Ireland pacer Joshua Little picked up the second during their Super 12 encounter against New Zealand.

Player-of-the-tournament Sam Curran bowled one of the most impressive spells of the tournament. The England pacer took a fiver while conceding only 10 runs against Afghanistan.

South Africa batter Rilee Rossouw and New Zealand's Glenn Phillips were the only two batters to reach three figures in the tournament. Rossouw's 56-ball 109 against Bangladesh remained the highest individual score in the marquee event, ahead of Phillips' 64-ball 104 against Sri Lanka.

Virat Kohli's 53-ball 82 not out helped India cross the finish line against Pakistan in the most dramatic of finishes as the batting maestro demonstrated a chasing masterclass, hitting three sixes in the last two overs.

## The driving force behind England's white-ball revolution

AGENCIES

England are kings of the white ball game as they became the first to combine the T20I and ODI crowns after overcoming Pakistan and some of the more mesmerising fast bowling the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground has witnessed during the ICC T20 World Cup final yesterday. The defining moment of England and Ben Stokes' ODI career intersects with that of England's 2019 World Cup final triumph. The Christchurch-born all-rounder was instrumental in England's win in the summit clash against New Zealand. England are now the reigning world champions in both limited-overs formats and in both cases, Stokes was the chief protagonist behind their successes. Stokes once again put the burden of responsibility on his shoulders to lead his team to a momentous victory with an over to spare on a lively surface in Melbourne. It is a further endorsement for the white-ball revolution that commenced in the aftermath of England's ODI World Cup failure on these shores back in 2015, when their conservative approach with the bat and reliance on players specialised in the longer format were exposed

ROLL OF HONOUR			
YEAR	WINNER	RUNNER-UP	HOSTS
2007	India	Pakistan	South Africa
2009	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	England
2010	England	Australia	West Indies
2012	West Indies	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
2014	Sri Lanka	India	Bangladesh
2016	West Indies	England	India
2021	Australia	New Zealand	UAE/Oman
2022	England	Pakistan	Australia

through an embarrassing group-stage exit. Eoin Morgan, the captain who oversaw the turnaround and remade England's sides in his image before retiring earlier this year, must have looked on with pride within the television commentary box. England skipper Jos Buttler hailed Ben Stokes as "a true match-winner" on Sunday after the all-rounder's unbeaten 52 off 49 helped steer them past Pakistan to win the final. "He always stands up in the biggest moments, he's a man who can take a lot of pressure on his shoulders and perform," Buttler said of Stokes. "When he's there you know you have a good chance. He's a true

match-winner. He's one of the great players of English cricket." Player-of-the-final and player-of-the-tournament Sam Curran added: "We all look up to him. People question him, but he's incredible." Stokes, however, insisted the bowlers deserved the major share of credit. "In finals, especially when chasing, you probably forget all the hard work before that. To restrict them to 130, the bowlers have to take a lot of credit. Adil Rashid and Sam Curran won us the game," he said. It was England's second T20 crown after tasting success in 2010, joining the West Indies as the only two-time winners since the tournament's inception in 2007.

## 'Shaheen injury shifted the match in England's favour'

REUTERS, Melbourne

Pakistan captain Babar Azam is proud of his team's rollercoaster run in the T20 World Cup and believes the injury to pace spearhead Shaheen Afridi cost them victory in Sunday's final against England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

"We were probably 20 runs short with the bat but we started well with the ball in the first six overs and made a comeback in the middle overs," Babar told reporters after their five-wicket defeat. "Unfortunately, Shaheen got injured and that shifted the match in England's favour. It could have been a different result but for Shaheen's injury."

Afridi, whose two-over spell of 13-1 included the wicket of England's in-form opener Alex Hales, returned to the field after getting treatment but could bowl only one delivery before hobbling off. Spinner Iftikhar Ahmed stepped in to complete the over and was hit for a six and a four by Ben Stokes which eased the pressure on England.

Babar was happy with how Pakistan returned from the brink of elimination to reach the final.

"We did not start well but we grabbed our opportunity and won four matches," he said. "It's always sad to reach the final and not win, and we had the same outcome in the Asia Cup."

"But of course we are proud we made the final." The opener felt they were sluggish in the middle overs and eventually settled for a below-par total.

"We were going steady in the first 11 overs but losing back-to-back wickets robbed us of momentum."

"We played a lot of dot balls because our set batsmen got out and it was not easy for a new batter coming in."

"They needed two to three balls to settle and that forced us onto the back foot."

## MOMENTS OF THE FINAL

STAR SPORT DESK

**CURRAN SHINES**

England pacer Sam Curran made an immediate impact, picking up the crucial wicket of Mohammad Rizwan in the Powerplay just when the batter was getting into his groove. The 24-year-old later added the wicket of Pakistan dangerman Shan Masood, as well as Mohammad Nawaz, to finish with a remarkable 3/12 off four overs and the second-best figures in a T20 World Cup final. With 13 wickets from six encounters, Curran ended as the second-best wicket-taker in the World Cup. Curran's match-defining spell earned him the player of the final award, while his outstanding form throughout secured the player of the tournament honours.

**ENGLAND PACERS FIRE IN POWERPLAY**

England pacers Ben Stokes, Sam Curran, and Chris Woakes knew exactly how to bowl on an MCG surface where batters found it difficult to make shots. Woakes brought variations into the play right from the word go as he kept



Babar and Rizwan guessing. Curran scalping the wicket of Rizwan only made things difficult for the men in green and even though Babar kept the scoreboard ticking over, Pakistan could only amass 39 for one at the end of their opening six overs.

**RASHID'S WICKET-MAIDEN**  
 England's Adil Rashid became only the fourth player to grab a wicket-

maiden in the final of a T20 World Cup, when he got the prized wicket of Pakistan captain Babar Azam in the 12th over. Mohammad Amir, Angelo Mathews, and Samuel Badree are the three others to achieve the feat.

**AFRIDI LIMPING OFF**  
 Despite setting a modest 138-run target, an outstanding effort from the bowlers saw Pakistan back in



the game. Naseem Shah bowled two excellent overs, giving away just five runs, and Shadab Khan removed Harry Brook as the equation was brought down to England needing 41 from 30 deliveries. Skipper Babar decided to hand the ball to his match-winner, Shaheen Shah Afridi, for the 16th over to notch up the pressure even further. And the pacer, who had hurt himself while taking Brook's catch, could only

bowl one delivery before limping off the ground. After that, neither Afridi nor Pakistan could come back into the game.

**THE DECISIVE FOUR-BALL SPAN**  
 With Afridi out of the game, Babar had to hand the ball to part-time off-spinner Iftikhar Ahmed - the best option against two left-handers in Ben Stokes and Moeen Ali. Iftikhar did well for the first

three deliveries, giving away three runs and nearly having Stokes caught at long-off. Stokes knew he had to seize the opportunity and he did that by smashing the part-timer for a boundary and a six in the final two deliveries of the over. Moeen followed it up with two more boundaries in the next over off Mohammad Wasim and England never took their foot off the pedal, needing only 24 off 22.