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## England haven't 'lost faith' as India challenge looms

AGENCIES

England face unbeaten hosts India in Lucknow on Sunday, coming in the contest with four defeats from five matches to languish ninth in the 10-team table and with their hopes of making the semifinals almost over.

The defending champions are feeling the heat of a lacklustre World Cup campaign but assistant coach Marcus Trescothick insisted Saturday that they haven't "lost faith" in the under-pressure 50-over format.

"We're all feeling the heat. But what can you do? We prepared the same," Trescothick told reporters.

Critics have targeted England's approach to the 50-over format after they won the crown in 2019.

They played just 13 ODI matches in the build-up to their title defence.

"Forgive me, I don't want to be blunt here, but we haven't lost faith in what it is," said Trescothick.

"We love playing any form of cricket, any form of the game that we play. And we were desperate to come here and try and win back-to-back 50-over competitions. So, we're still very much focused on all formats."

Oozing in confidence, India remain on the opposite end of the spectrum than England.

India have mostly looked irrepressible as they brushed aside each of their five opponents so far but will still be wary of a defending champion now well and truly on the ropes.

A well-balanced attack has been a key to India's bright start with 46 of a possible 50 batters dismissed thus far, including the full allotment against Australia, Pakistan, and New Zealand.

That will rightly concern an England outfit



India hold a commanding lead with 56 victories to England's 44 after 106 ODIs. At home, India won 33 times against England's 17 in the format.

In eight ICC World Cup matches between the two, England have a marginal edge with four wins. Three of the matches saw victories for India, and one ended in a tie in 2011.

England are yet to lose to India in a World Cup fixture since 2003. England earned a 31-run victory the last time the two collided in the apex event.

that has failed to pass 200 in their two outings since scoring 215 to fall 69 runs short in the loss to Afghanistan that in hindsight exposed a range of deficiencies.

Trescothick said the team is looking forward to playing India and make the occasion their own.

"I think playing against India in a World Cup in their own country is a special part of the game, you get these opportunities that come around - you know there'll be a big crowd, there'll be a wonderful occasion," he said.

"We're looking forward to that chance. I think there's nothing more that we can offer apart from going out and playing that performance. And then hopefully you come out on top at the end of it. So, really excited for it."

England's latest loss was to Sri Lanka by eight wickets in a match their batting folded for 156 to leave their semifinal hopes in tatters.



### SCORES IN BRIEF

**Netherlands:** 229 all out in 50 overs (Barresi 41, Edwards 68, Engelbrecht 35; Shoriful 2-51, Taskin 2-43, Mustafizur 2-36, Mahedi 2-40)

**Bangladesh:** 142 all out in 42.2 overs (Tanzid 15, Miraz 35, Shakib 5, Mahmudullah 20, Mahedi 17, Mustafizur 20; Meekeren 4-23, Bas de Leede 2-25)

**Result:** Netherlands won by 87 runs.

**Player-of-the-match:** Paul van Meekeren

Shakib Al Hasan's sudden trip to Dhaka mid-tournament didn't work out as the all-rounder got caught for just five after another poorly executed cut shot as Bangladesh suffered an 87-run defeat against the Netherlands at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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## Shakib blames batting for 'worst' World Cup

SPORTS REPORTER from Kolkata

Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan admitted that the humiliating 87-run defeat against the Netherlands in Kolkata yesterday is hard to swallow.

Chasing a target of 230, Bangladesh were bundled out for 142 runs after yet another batting disaster at the Eden Gardens.

According to Shakib, the batters were not up to mark throughout the tournament, which he felt was the main reason behind the team's disastrous performance.

"We were sloppy in the field, but I thought we bowled brilliantly. Throughout the tournament we couldn't bat the way we can bat and that's been a big concern," Shakib told the media after the match.

"Today was another day where we gave two points to the Dutch. It's hard to swallow but these things can happen in cricket," added Shakib.

It was Bangladesh's fifth consecutive defeat in the ongoing World Cup following a first-match win against Afghanistan. When asked whether it's the worst World Cup campaign so far for the Men in Red and Green, Shakib said, "Yes, you can say that and I won't disagree with it."

The 36-year-old, however,

admitted that they lacked confidence right from the start of the tournament.

"I think we were way short in confidence as we had high expectations prior to the tournament, which we couldn't meet... We bowled really well today but we were sloppy in the field and we could have restricted them to 170. But having said that, with the target of 230 and considering the Netherlands' bowling attack, I think we should have chased that total. Very disappointing with the way we played the World Cup so far," he said.

The Bangladesh skipper was booed by fans after getting dismissed cheaply once again. When asked whether the fans' indignation, especially following his surprise trip to Dhaka ahead of the Netherlands match, was justified, the skipper said, "Disappointing, but they expect something good and obviously if it doesn't happen they have the right to express themselves. I have no complaints towards them and I think the way we played, we deserve it."

Shakib also admitted that his TV interview to a sports channel prior to the campaign, where he had slammed former skipper Tamim Iqbal, might have had a detrimental impact on some of the team members.

"It can (affect), it's not unusual but it's hard to say what's going on in the mind of the individual but I don't disagree," Shakib added.

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## Bellingham Real's hero in first Clasico

AFP, Barcelona

Jude Bellingham's stunning double snatched Real Madrid a 2-1 comeback victory at Barcelona in his first La Liga Clasico on Saturday.

The England international, who has started his Madrid career in remarkable goalscoring form, unleashed a rocket into the top corner from distance after Ilkay Gundogan had sent hosts Barcelona ahead at the Olympic Stadium.

Bellingham then fired home a second in stoppage time to silence Barcelona fans and reach 10 goals in the top flight this season.

Barcelona hit the woodwork twice and had the better of the game but Bellingham, La Liga's top goalscorer, is in unstoppable form and inevitably made his mark in his first Clasico.

Bellingham's brace sent Madrid to the top of La Liga, ahead of Girona on goal difference, with both teams four points ahead of Barcelona in third.

"He seems like a veteran... the goal to level it totally changed the game," said Ancelotti of Madrid's 20-year-old match-winner.

"What was surprising today was his shot, he's always arriving in the box, today he scored a stupendous goal from in front of the area."

Barcelona were boosted by the returns of Robert Lewandowski, Jules Kounde and Raphinha from injury, with Xavi naming them on the bench, but Frenkie de Jong and Pedri did not recover in time.

His counterpart Carlo Ancelotti selected Ferland Mendy at left back over Eduardo Camavinga and Fran Garcia, once again deploying Bellingham in the number 10 role as he got his first taste of arguably the world's biggest club football match.

However, it was another midfielder playing for the first time in the Clasico who broke the deadlock - Barcelona's summer arrival Gundogan.

Madrid were reduced to long-range efforts but eventually one ripped into the net to level the score, with just over 20 minutes remaining.

Marc Andre ter Stegen saved a Tchouameni piledriver but he could not keep out Bellingham's blast, pulling Madrid level.

"I'm not someone who evaluates the opposition team, he [Bellingham] scored two goals, he did it for Real Madrid and he changed the game," Ter Stegen told DAZN.



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WHAT TO WATCH

## 'Awesome', 'fantastic', but Kiwis again at the wrong end

AGENCIES

Both Australia and New Zealand skippers talked highly of the edge-of-the-seat World Cup thriller that transpired in Dharamshala yesterday even though Kiwis once again had to endure an agonising defeat in the mega event.

The five-time champions Australia made 388 and then saw the Black Caps come agonisingly close to pulling off the second-highest chase in one day internationals.

They finished on 383-9 having started the final over needing 19 to win and then seven off the last two deliveries before key batter Jimmy Neesham was run out. Neesham, like the entire nation, was devastated when New Zealand lost the final of the last editions World Cup just by boundary counts against England four years ago at Lord's.

"You need to play the perfect game when you are chasing near 400," said stand-in New Zealand skipper Tom Latham, adding that losing such a

game "obviously hurts".

"It was a fantastic game of cricket. There were ebbs and flows throughout the 100 overs. Obviously to get so close hurts," Latham added.

New Zealand battled hard with Rachin Ravindra making 116, Daryl



Mitchell adding 54 and Neesham supplying late fireworks with a 33-ball fifty.

With a total of 771 runs, it was the highest scoring game at a World Cup, beating the 754 scored in South Africa's win against Sri Lanka earlier in

this tournament.

"It was a fantastic knock from Rachin, one of the better ones you'll see in a chase. It was pretty special to get close. I'm proud of the guys," added Latham.

Australia's win had been set up by a 175-run opening partnership between Travis Head, who top scored with 109 on his return to the team after breaking his hand, and fellow opener David Warner (81).

"That was awesome," said Cummins. "Sometimes I have to remember I'm out in the field, not a spectator. A fantastic game, they kept coming at us."

"I love the openers, especially Travis who's been away for five weeks," added Cummins.

"It was a good wicket. In patches we bowled really well, sometimes we gave too much width away. Some really good partnerships, it was tough to get into them."

Both Australia and New Zealand, with four wins and two defeats apiece, are well-placed to make the semifinals.

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Australia played the long game with Travis Head. The opener had fractured his hand in September, which made him unavailable for the first few weeks of the World Cup. Still, Australia named him in the squad, gave him time to recover and brought him in once he was fit. The opener repaid that faith yesterday with a scintillating century on World Cup debut that powered Australia to 388 against New Zealand, a match they won by just five runs in Dharamshala.

PHOTO: AFP