

ICC World Test Championship Final

Tuesday, 22 June 2021

Southampton, England, UK

Hampshire Bowl

Tim Southee

New Zealand Media Conference

Q. Tim, how important were those wickets in setting this team up to try and chase a win tomorrow?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, you always probably want more than what you got, but it was nice to get those two tonight, but it's shaping up for an intriguing day tomorrow.

Yeah, it would have been nice to -- you always want more, but yeah, to have two of their more attacking players, as well, it's nice to see the back of them.

Q. It feels like bowlers have sort of been on top throughout this Test match. Is there a real chance for you guys to go out there and dictate proceedings on the final day?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, we'll rest up tonight, come tomorrow with a plan on how we want to attack the day. But yeah, it's exciting to end up on the last day of a Test match with three results still possible. Yeah, I think the first hour, first couple hours is very crucial tomorrow.

Q. 600 international wickets now for you. How much does that mean to you? How big is this personal milestone, and especially on a big stage like the WTC final?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, I guess anytime you have milestones like that, it's always nice. You play for long enough and then you sort of tick off a few milestones along the way. Yeah, I guess it is a nice achievement. When I first started I certainly didn't think I would be sitting here after taking 600, so yeah, I guess it is nice, but hopefully there's still plenty more to come tomorrow and in the coming years.

Q. You seemed to enjoy yourself a bit with the bat earlier today. Were you given free rein to have a go and try and get the score up?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, I guess first initially I was trying to hang around with Kane and trying to sort of scrap for every run, but then when us bowlers got together it was probably about just getting as many as we can, and I think we did well, like I said, the position we were in to



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eke out a little bit of a lead. Again, we probably want move. We would have like to have a bit more of a lead, but to have that little buffer was nice, as well.

Q. The game is obviously pretty even going into the last day. Have you ever played in a six-day match before?

TIM SOUTHEE: No. Yeah, it's obviously unique for the cricket, and yeah, with the weather that's been around, it's nice to have that extra day up our sleeve. It's very exciting any time you turn up to a Test match with all three results still possible on the last day.

Q. There are reports of security escorting two people out of the stadium for hurling abuses at the New Zealand team. Were you aware about it?

TIM SOUTHEE: No, it's the first I've heard of it. Yeah, the game is always played in a good spirit on the field. We're not sure obviously what's happening off the field, but it's the first I've heard of it.

Q. It looked like two very different types of in-swinger you bowled there. Obviously you've always had your out-swinger, but it seems the in-swinger hasn't come as naturally to you. You've seemed to have had a couple of handy variations going on there.

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, I guess as the game goes on and the wicket starts to deteriorate, you try and bring in the stumps a little bit more, and yeah, it was nice one nip back in, first up and then a little bit of swing back in, as well. Yeah, I guess as a player you're always looking at different ways to expand your game, and that's been one of the ways I've looked to sort of develop my game over the last little while, and especially with the Dukes ball, being able to swing that a little bit more, as well. Yeah, it's something I'll continue to work on over time and just trying to keep adding to your game.

Q. It looked like Kane had a word with you as he left the field. Was he basically giving you a little bit of a license to lump it because obviously you're quite well-known for hitting sixes, aren't you?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, like I said, I think it was about trying to hang with Kane for as long as we could and try

to get as many runs as we could, and once he left, I think the way that we play our best is with that freedom as bowlers and as tail-enders, so it was just a bit of reminder to yeah, just keep going and try and, yeah, leak out as many runs as we possibly could.

Q. In a match I think it's probably been the lowest run rates going, but you guys at the tail end, you play at your best when you do hit it, don't you.

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, it's probably the more natural way for us to play, and on that wicket it probably was our best approach. As I said, it would have been nice to extend that lead a little bit more, but yeah, like I said, it's shaping up for a great day tomorrow.

Q. How important was Kane in the context of this match?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, it was crucial. Obviously it was a tough time this morning. I think the Indian bowling asked a lot of tough questions and got off to a great start this morning and put us under a lot of pressure, and he was able to hang tight and dig deep and just sort of battle his way through what was a tough situation there for a while. Yeah, he's a class player, and he's got a very sound offense that he was in full trust with, and as I say, it was a pretty testing time there with what the Indian pace attack was throwing at him.

Q. You got two wickets in the last session today, so I just wanted to ask how much was the pitch helpful to you as a bowler?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, there's a little bit of assistance there, but I think we've seen the Indian side probably had their most challenging period when the ball was slightly older. Hopefully tomorrow morning when the ball is slightly older, it tended to swing a little bit more for the Indian bowlers, so hopefully we can manage to do that, as well, and cause a few questions early on tomorrow.

Q. How confident are you that you are going to finish the Indian batting lineup tomorrow?

TIM SOUTHEE: We'll reassess in the morning and come up with our plan that's best suited for tomorrow. But we know we've got a tough day ahead of us. Like I said, it's exciting to have all three results still possible. It's a quality Indian batting lineup with two of their best in the crease at the moment. We're going to have to be on top of our game tomorrow and to come, and I think that first hour or two hours is going to be crucial to how each side sets up the day.

Q. The way that India has batted, would it be the turning point?

TIM SOUTHEE: Yeah, like I say, we probably would

have liked to get a few more, get a bit of a lead up over 50, but yeah, I think the Indian side were outstanding with the ball and put us under pressure at the start of the day. For us to sneak past and get a 30-odd-run lead was nice in the end, but you always want more. Yeah, like I said, it's shaping up for an intriguing day tomorrow.

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