

ICC World Test Championship Final

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Southampton, England, UK

Hampshire Bowl

Kane Williamson

New Zealand Media Conference

Q. Kane, how big a test was that?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Well, obviously it's the pinnacle, isn't it, really, being involved in the final. Like I said, a formidable side in that of India. They certainly showed their quality, and for us it was a lot of heart that allowed us to stay in the game for long periods.

I think we saw both teams grab momentum at certain points in time, and then to have the sixth day as backup due to weather and see both teams have a real opportunity of a result made for a fantastic game to be a part of. For us a very proud moment in our history and a proud moment just as a team really, to stick to what we do well and come away with the win, which is a really great feeling.

Q. How hard was it out there for you personally batting only today but yesterday, as well? And how much did the elbow come into it ?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I had that injection, which was definitely helpful, but on our side batting was very difficult, and I think that's due to the quality that India have in their bowling attack. You never foul turned out on the pitch offered throughout the game. We saw that. The scores were relatively low, but it made way for a fantastic game of cricket.

A lot of credit to the way our group adjusted, stayed in the battle, because it was a battle. No one -- I think no one with a bat really got momentum at any point in time. The ball kept going past the outside edge, and there was always opportunities that were coming.

A game that ebbed and flowed, and yeah, a special feeling to be on the right side of the result.

Q. After the disappointment of 2019 World Cup finals, how satisfying is it to win the ICC title? And after losing two days to rain, did you give yourself a chance of winning the match looking at how you were still batting in the first innings?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I mean, well, first of all, a



fantastic feeling. 2019 was a great occasion and a brilliant game of cricket, as well. But obviously a slightly different feeling being on the right side of the result for us, and also a part of a great game of cricket and a great occasion where it was the first, I suppose, official World Test Championship, and this is a really good feeling.

I suppose having the backup day schedule in was a good initiative, and there's always a chance of weather in this country, and we certainly saw plenty of it, but also we saw a surface that offered throughout the whole game and brought all bowlers into it whenever they had the ball in their hands.

I think both teams knew that because of that coming into the last day there was three possible results, and that was win, lose and draw, and we saw that things can happen quickly. Everybody has seen that when you play in this part of the world.

Fortunate for us they managed to early on in the day, and it gave us a real opportunity.

Q. Just wanted to ask about how special it was to be there at the end with Ross. You've played a lot of cricket together, and it's obviously an important partnership. I saw that you had a few words at the end. What did you say to each other? It must have been a special moment.

KANE WILLIAMSON: You know, fantastic to be a part of a contribution and a partnership like that, and obviously with Ross, our most experienced player and leader in the group, as well, it was nice that we were able to soak up some of the pressure and then sort of score a few together, although it was really difficult to come by. But having an experienced hitter like Ross out there was certainly helpful.

You know, a really special feeling to be there at the end together and tick those runs off, even though it was 130 odd on that surface. You never felt comfortable. It was nice to soak up, yeah, like I say, some of that pressure and put together a partnership.

Q. Just wanted to ask, your bowling attack acclimatized beautifully with the Dukes balls. Considering the success you've had with the Dukes ball in England would you like to try it out in your

home condition, as well? I'm sure it would suit the conditions over there, as well.

KANE WILLIAMSON: There's always talk about balls, but I think we saw the way our seam bowlers operated with the new Kookaburra ball, as well, at home was really good, but they do enjoy bowling with the Dukes. It is a ball that offers throughout the whole later overs, and then you get a new ball and if the wicket is to offer a little bit, as well, it can make batting certainly challenging, and you see the way that some of these quality seam bowlers, we have a number on our team, but every side in the world has them. You're always getting challenged in a number of areas with it.

I suppose there's always that search for balance between bat and ball, and I think we saw that in this game. We've seen it in a number of other games in this part of the world, and we've also seen it back home, as well.

Q. Kyle Jamieson got Virat Kohli in the first innings and then back out today. Was it something that was pre-planned and maybe something Jamieson understood from being with him at RCB?

KANE WILLIAMSON: No, I don't think a lot of it stems back to T20 cricket at the IPL. Obviously they do know each other playing in the same team, but as we know in the two different formats the cricket is quite different, perhaps from defensive positions to trying to whack him over his head in T20 cricket with a different ball, so it is quite different. But look, Kyle bowled superbly well throughout this Test match and most of the test matches he's been involved in he's added a different dynamic to our attack, which has operated beautifully, and it's been a fantastic part and strength to our team, and it was great that they were able to do the job for us out there, as we did see the spinners come into it, as well.

Q. Virat just suggested that he'd like to see this final played across three matches in order that that might produce a fairer outcome. I just wonder what your view was on that.

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I mean, I suppose the exciting part to finals is that anything can happen. We know how fickle cricket is and we've seen it in other competitions, in other World Cups and in all other bits and pieces.

The one-off factor does bring a unique dynamic, which does make it exciting and all these sorts of things, and on any given day anything can happen. We've been on all different sides of that statement.

I suppose there's arguments for both sides, and I guess the challenge would be scheduling and that series amongst a lot of cricket that's already on, but no doubt the more cricket that you have perhaps within a series,

the more you do find out and the more it does reveal itself, but in the same way it was a really exciting match. The first time that there's been this competition on and both teams were fully geared for the game, and it was a brilliant game of cricket.

Q. On the commentary it was said, "Nice guys do finish first sometimes." What do you think about that? And after finishing second in two Cricket World Cup finals, how much does this mean for your country and the sport and its awareness in New Zealand?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I mean, it's a very special occasion and a fantastic feeling to be involved in a couple of finals previously, and I suppose one was -- the first one was one-sided, the second one was pretty interesting, and this feeling is a bit different to those, which is great. I know the guys will celebrate that.

In terms of our team and our behaviors, we try and commit to what's important to us. I suppose people can comment on that or tag us how they'd like, but it's not about being anything other than authentic to us as a group and the sort of cricket that we want to play and the behaviors that are important to us day in, day out. That's something that is important to us as a team.

Q. Does this mean anything special because it is against India? And what would you like to tell to the Indian fans, as well?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Well, hopefully it's nice that maybe we're India's second favourite team. I hope that still remains the case. It was a great game of cricket played in a fantastic spirit and very, very competitive and on a surface that was offering something throughout and every team had an opportunity to win, lose and draw on the last day.

You know, we know how strong and formidable the Indian team is. We've played them on a number of occasions at home and away and then to meet them at a neutral venue and be a part of the first final is a great achievement and even more special to finish on the right side of that.

You know, a great occasion and nice to be a part of the match.

Q. Just a final word, a word to the fans back home who have supported you guys.

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, it's a little bit unique, I suppose, having a little bit of bubble life involved in the number of distractions that's been going on, I suppose, and COVID has clearly been a big part of that. But it's been great to have so much support from abroad, from back home. We've definitely felt it. We've seen a

number of Kiwis in the crowd, although attendance was limited, but we always know that the Kiwi public are behind us, and yeah, a special feeling to be on the right side and certainly for all the fans that have been supporting us for a long period of time, I'm sure they'll enjoy this moment as much as we will.

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