

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

Bellerive Oval

Scotland

Mark Watt

Pre Match Media Conference



Q. Ireland tomorrow; what's going on the cheat sheet?

MARK WATT: That's a really loaded question. I'm not too sure yet. I've not done my analysis to far. Just take it one game at a time. But yeah, I'll definitely spend a few hours today, and yeah, the cheat sheet will definitely be filled by the end of today.

Q. Is that what that process is like? It's a relatively kind of -- obviously the games are quite close together in this tournament, but a couple hours day before the game, is that how long it takes? It does take hours rather than minutes?

MARK WATT: Yeah, definitely. We've got a great analyst here with George McNiel, so he'll kind of provide all the footage. He'll provide kind of what the strengths and weaknesses are of each batter, and then I'll take that upon myself to go and look at all the videos and try and think about where I want to bowl, what plans I want to go with, what fields I want to set. It's quite tedious process, but something that I feel like I have to do so I know what each batter does.

Q. Is it tedious, or when you have the success like you did yesterday -- obviously you spoke yesterday about how the king wicket was literally just a copy and paste about what you were talking about before the game. Is it tedious when you get those results?

MARK WATT: Probably not, yeah. It makes it all worth it. But just at the time it can be quite boring, and it's quite tough looking at players hitting sixes at the ground against left-arm spin, but it's something I have to do and something I'll probably just keep on doing.

Q. In terms of each batter is different, but for you personally, it strikes me that you go against the normal kind of left-arm spin thing in that you're not looking to turn it as much here; you're looking to skid it more on. Is that just because of the nature of the Australian pitches more than anything else?

MARK WATT: Yeah, so you don't really get an awful lot of turn in Australia, and also I'm not a massive turner of

the ball, so I'll try and stick to my strengths, and hopefully my strength work and I'll just try and keep the batter guessing as much as possible with all these different variations that I use. Sometimes I don't even know what I'm going to bowl next ball. If I don't know what I'm going to bowl next ball, then the batters definitely won't know.

Q. How do you feel about bowling in the powerplay?

MARK WATT: Yeah, I'll enjoy it. It's something that I've tried to develop over the past couple years is just trying to swing the ball, either in the way or out of the way. The fact that I have that in my armory now, it makes me a little bit more at ease going in the powerplay.

Q. Especially tomorrow night you guys are the night game and the guys from the Ireland game were saying it swings more under lights. Eyes light up at that?

MARK WATT: Yeah, definitely. Swinging isn't quite enough for me during the day, so the fact that it's going to be swinging more, yeah, it's definitely going to add to my armory.

Yeah, I think cricket under the lights is a lot more special and a lot more -- brings the atmosphere.

Q. It's kind of a strange one considering geographical proximity to Ireland. You don't actually play them very often. You haven't played them since 2019, and this is the first time ever played at a World Cup. How does that factor into preparation because I know you do your analysis but surely it helps more playing against guys rather than actually watching them.

MARK WATT: Yeah, definitely. But I think we know the Irish guys pretty well. We've played quite a few times against them, even though it was a fair few years back. But yeah, I mean, we're just going to try and stick to our strengths, obviously try and look at their strengths, as well, but we're going to try and stick to what we do best, I'm sure we'll come out on top if we do that.

Q. You've had very opposite preparations; they've played a hell of a lot of T20 cricket in the last year. It's been well-documented that you guys haven't. It kind of changes the way people think about things maybe in terms preparation and what's actually needed in the buildup to a tournament like this?



MARK WATT: Yeah, definitely. You know, we were desperate to play more cricket through the year. It's no lie. Two T20s over a whole year is pretty hard to factor in when you're preparing for a World Cup against the best teams in the world. But actually something that associates have to get on with. We've got to save our special performances for the occasions like this.

Yeah, that's what we try and do, and we're desperate for more cricket, but at this moment in time we've got to take what's given to us and try and save our best cricket for these events.

Q. I know you say you're desperate for more international cricket, but if you look at what's happened to Ireland since they got full membership in 2018, those boys can't play county cricket anymore, and they've suffered. They didn't have the domestic system to keep developing talent, couldn't send guys to county. If you guys were to get Test cricket, would you be able to avoid a similar fate? Do you have the domestic structures set up, or right now is the best thing for you guys to have as many of you playing county cricket as possible?

MARK WATT: I think up until that moment in time like the best sort of strategy we can get is as many guys as possible just playing the high standard. Yeah, high standard cricket and playing against the best players in the world, and that will help them when they come back and play for Scotland. Just playing against the best players in the world for as long as possible, and yeah, that'll evidently help when they come back and play for Scotland.

Q. Obviously you had some success last year, more success here. Are you looking at this as a bit of a shop window for yourself in terms of getting yourself around the world a bit more?

MARK WATT: Yeah, I'd love to think that, but it's just getting through to the next round. I'd love to be able to replicate what we did last year and get through to the proper group stages. We've got unfinished business at this tournament. We know last year we didn't play our best game at all. We've still not done that. Even though we've just beaten the West Indies, we haven't played our best cricket yet, and we've got one to prove. That's kind of the main focus just now, but ultimately I'd love to play cricket across the world in different franchises.

Q. I know you're going to say you want to win the group, but does any part of you say, yeah, give us second and give us a crack at England at the MCG?

MARK WATT: Oh. I'd. Love. That. I didn't know that was the case. So yeah, I'll take second now.

Q. To beat a two-time T20 world champion must

have been an amazing feeling.

MARK WATT: Yeah, unbelievable feeling. I don't think it's really sunk in yet. I just saw the messages coming back from home and seeing how proud everyone is and having my family at the ground, it's starting to sink in a little bit, but yeah, the guys are just -- everyone is buzzing, but we know it's only the first game. We've got to stay pretty level headed at the moment and there's still a lot more to play in this competition.

Q. Obviously you, what a performance, 3 for 12, four overs. Michael, 2 for 14. Was spin a focus to getting through the West Indies batters?

MARK WATT: To be honest, no, not at all really. With Australian conditions, we thought that seam was going to take most of the wickets, and we'd be there to try and just keep climbing, go for many runs, but on that wicket, things went the other way, and myself and Michael, we just kind of thought, we need to take some wickets here. Things aren't going our way; let's try and be ultra aggressive, and thankfully that paid off.

Q. With the bat, George Munsey scored an impressive 66 runs, helped set up a competitive score. How important was that innings?

MARK WATT: Yeah, massively important. I think he assessed the conditions really well and just figured out that it wasn't an easy wicket to bat on, and he needed to bide his time a little bit and have a bit of a swing at the end. I think it was a mature innings for Munsey. I think maybe past years he could have got a bit frustrated in the middle and tried to take down a little bit too soon and struggled in the back end. It was a really mature innings, and 160 on that wicket was a great total for us.

Q. Who in the squad has helped mentor you and taken you under their wing?

MARK WATT: To be honest, I've been in the squad for so many years now. I've not really got someone at the moment. But definitely when I first came into the squad, Calum MacLeod kind of took me under his wing, and the left arm spinner who sadly passed away was Con de Lange. He was a massive help towards me and shared a great insight about bowling left arm spin, when to take wickets when to try and defend. Definitely them two would come to mind.

Q. You're talking a bit about playing in other franchises across the world. Can we see you playing the Australian Big Bash in the near future?

MARK WATT: Yeah, I'm available. I'd love to. But yeah, I've not -- my phone has not rang yet. Yeah, I'm definitely hoping. If you know any coaches, give them a call.

Q. If you keep getting wickets I'm pretty sure your phone will be blowing up.

MARK WATT: Fingers crossed.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports