

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Thursday, 20 October 2022

Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

Bellerive Oval

Scotland

Shane Burger

Pre Match Media Conference

Q. Shane, firstly, big game against Zimbabwe. All teams are on two points, on similar footing. Where do you see Scotland making the difference tomorrow?

SHANE BURGER: Yeah, look, the first thing I'd mention is it's not a position that you're unfamiliar with. We're very used to having to win every single cricket match that we play. As I've mentioned, it's a position we're pretty much in every single time we walk on to the field.

So from a mentality point of view, from a pressure point of view, it's going to be nothing that we haven't experienced before. We'll certainly take a lot of learnings from not only the last game but the last World Cup we were in when we had to win every single game to go through into round 2.

So those are really good learnings for us, and look, we know that Zimbabwe are a very, very good cricket team. They've had recent success. Yesterday they hit a bit of a speed bump last night against a resurgent West Indian team, but that isn't a surprise, and we know that they're going to arrive with us, up their game as we're going to have to, and put in probably their best performance of the three games, which is something we're also going to have to do.

What I can guarantee you is it's going to be a great game of cricket. Both teams are going to be fighting to win the game, and we're going to have to bring our best skills possible.

Q. Shane, about yesterday's game, there was obviously a time when everyone thought that Scotland was going to (indiscernible) Ireland was going to get out of the tournament. Did you talk to the boys about that crucial moment in that partnership, and how does the team get over these moments?

SHANE BURGER: Yeah, look, there was obvious disappointment after the game. There were probably not just one moment but many moments you'll look back on and go, well, what if we did this. Hindsight is a great thing, what if we went back and tried this, and I guess



one thing you can't do is go back and change anything that's happened. All you can do is just learn from it and move forward.

As a Scottish team, we don't have a lot of opportunities to be in those situations, to experience that sort of pressure on sort of a daily basis, and I've been incredibly proud of the way the boys have managed themselves both on and off the field and to -- whilst there was a stumbling block, I think we'll learn a lot from what happened yesterday.

To give credit to the Irish partnership, there was absolutely fantastic batting from Campher and Dockrell, and when they really needed it, they stumped up.

There's certainly one thing I would never doubt is the effort from the lads. I could see the effort was out there, but sometimes things just don't go your way. In T20 cricket there are momentum swings, and you've got to grab them, and we've got to make sure that we're just that little bit better than that if we're ever presented with another opportunity like that, which might well be tomorrow.

Q. A few words on Michael Jones, certainly an attractive batsman at the top of the order. You have a lot of very good batters, but he's stood out as a young batter.

SHANE BURGER: Well, I mean, just to maybe comment on Michael firstly as a person, he's really fitted into the unit very well. He's actually been a part of the unit for a long period of time now, even though many might not recognise the name and he wouldn't have played a lot of games for Scotland, he's actually been a part of the group for a prolonged period of time.

We always knew that he was going to break through at some point. We always knew his quality, and we certainly saw glimpses of that yesterday.

What we do know about Michael Jones is there's a character inside there that wants to keep getting better and wants to keep improving and wants to keep putting in performances not only for his country but county cricket, and I'm sure he's going to do on to do fantastic things in the game. He's a wonderful cricketer. He's got superb skills, and he had a fantastic game yesterday.

Just a real shame we couldn't get over the line and get that victory, which a performance like that probably deserves. But he's a wonderful talent, and we certainly

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are looking forward to what he might bring in the future.

Q. Shane, about the left-hand spinner Mark Watt, the way he bowls from behind the crease, do you expect kids to start doing it? I hear people that they want to try it out. How does it actually affect the batsman? Do you think it's just the depth perception, release point? What do you think it is?

SHANE BURGER: Well, I think as a bowler, you have the opportunity to bowl variations. Variations aren't just what you do with the ball in your hand. Variation is also utilizing the crease in different fashions, whether that's wider of the crease, as some bowlers might utilise it.

Mark is someone that utilises the creeper both forward and backwards, without encroaching on the no-ball line, obviously. But what it does is it creates a bit of a different depth perception for a batter, a contact point so a batter might think a ball has arrived when it hasn't, and then a player is shocked normally would play to a delivery that was bowled from 22 yards but now because it's bowled from 24 or 25 yards, that creates a little bit of deception.

It's a wonderful variation that Mark has -- not developed recently; he's done it for a long period of time. It's not something new, but I encourage kids to try all sorts of different things, go out there and see what you're good at doing, throw with both arms, bowl with both arms and challenge yourself to pick up different skills.

That's the wonderful thing about T20 cricket and cricket in general is there's an opportunity to always go out and do something different. Not every single person is the same, and Wattsy surely has shown that you can be very, very successful doing things just that little bit differently.

Q. Given how Scotland has done in the last World Cup and now you've defeated West Indies, going back home, does cricket become a popular summer sport? Is it becoming a bigger sport than maybe a few years ago?

SHANE BURGER: Yeah, it's a good question. Something we do speak about quite a lot in the group is keep putting in performances that are ultimately going to make the sport more mainstream within Scotland and encourage that young boy or girl or maybe even that club cricketer to want to play the game. That's the key. That's the duty we have, to wear the badge and to go out and put performances in that ultimately inspire and encourage a nation to want to play the game. We know there are many other sports within Scotland that will probably get a bigger fan base, but again, we have the opportunity to grow our fan base and to make sure that the game is there for everybody to play and also to give that young person, whether boy or girl, the opportunity to

dream.

We often speak about having unrealistic dreams within the group and going out and achieving things that people say potentially we can't achieve or we shouldn't be achieving, but we keep raising the bar, and we keep setting our own standards, and we hope that through doing that, that's going to encourage and allow others to want to come out and play the game, and that's why we're here.

Q. Sikandar Raza is one player who's been doing quite well, a lot of runs, lots of wickets, as well, and he was an impact player. I know he has a bit of a Scottish background, as well. How do you plan to stop him, and what's the talk in the group about Sikandar Raza?

SHANE BURGER: Yeah, Sikandar Raza is a fantastic cricketer. He's also a wonderful human being. He's a very humble man, and I respect him massively for that. He's doing it with both bat and ball at the moment, so we're going to have to make sure that our plans are really, really well executed to him and try and prevent him from doing well against us. That's certainly going to be the plan. But Sikandar Raza isn't the only dangerous player within that team. We know that there are many others that are match winners. We were fortunate to play them in Scotland before the previous World Cup, so we've got a little bit of experience on their team.

But we also know if we -- without really focusing too much on the opposition, if we go out and play the way we know we can play, if we know we commit and execute our game plans and our skills, we know that we can beat any team, which we did so not very long ago against a two-times world champion. If we go out and execute the way we know and particularly to him, hopefully that'll send ripples through that Zimbabwean team and we can put a bit more pressure on them.

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