

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Saturday, 22 October 2022

Hobart / Vivaluna, Victoria, Australia

Bellerive Oval

Sri Lanka

Chamika Karunaratne

Pre Match Media Conference

Q. What is the latest on the situation surrounding Pathum Nissanka?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: He's getting better. I don't know what the physios and the trainer, what is the latest news, but I think he's fine. Yesterday he was fine.

I think he will be fine for the match, but I don't know what the physio and the coach's assessment is, but I think he will be fine for the match.

Q. Was he training today?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: He just came for training. So many people didn't practice today, but I was one of them. I saw that he was playing some shots, but I hope that he will be fine for tomorrow.

But I don't know what coach and physio are saying because it's a long tournament and we have more matches. Maybe he can rest, or maybe he will play.

Q. Hello there. Can I have your impressions of the Ireland team last week? You almost played them in a warmup match last week, but it was rained off. Are you surprised they knocked West Indies out of the tournament?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: I was not surprised because when we started, we also lost. That's why we can't take this tournament because World Cup is always a big tournament. It's always that, when the pressure is there, anything can happen and any options can happen, even that West Indies out of the tournament.

I think that's another big upset in cricket history because, even if you look at their opening roster, more than 90% of the players play for IPL. That means they are a very good side, and now they are out of the tournament.

You know in a World Cup anything can happen because it's pressure, stress, a lot of things out there. And always know every team -- it's not like before, like five, ten years ago. Now it's totally changed. Now every team is getting better and better, and they're fighting and playing good cricket and analyzing every player.



So I'm not surprised that Ireland came because Ireland was last year playing good cricket and they are getting better and better as a team and even bowling, batting, fielding, all three of the formats they're doing really well. So I'm not surprised.

Q. Have you identified any of their players as particularly dangerous?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: No, we are just planning, we plan for every player.

Q. Any particular interest in their best players?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: It's not about the players. It's about the team. It's about all the players. It's not about one player or two players. So we plan for every player.

It's whatever happens -- as I said before, attitude is the most important thing. So we will play our best tomorrow, and the better team always wins. So we are ready to bring our best attitude and the best game. As a team also, we are getting better and better, and even with UAE we had a good match. After that now we are playing with Ireland.

So we have a good process after losing the first match. So we are trying to continue the best out of everyone for a good win.

Q. How is the team getting on with all these injuries? I mean, especially with Chameera and Maheesh Theekshana and all of that. Is the team morale going down without these players, or are you all still in good shape?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: I think you have seen it. We played without both players, and we won the Netherlands match. So nothing's happening for the morale of the team because you know it's always, if you aren't doing well or if you are injured, there's always another player to replace.

But if we had those two players, our team would be more better. But whatever happens, we're not thinking about it because always -- that's a team. It's like 15, 17 players are with us. So that's what we're calling up the levels for this team. We are calling for the reserves as a team.

So whoever comes, they will do their job for whomever



they are replacing. For Dushmantha, we have Lahiru. Lahiru is bowling for 145-plus. For Madushanka, we have Binura Fernando. Binura Fernando was out for injury, but he did really well in Australia and is a great bowler and a good thinker. He's doing well there.

So he got here like three days ago. He's getting better and better. Lahiru, everyone knows that his space is his strength.

So I think there's nothing wrong with the players got injured, but I hope they'll recover. Madushan is not too injured. He's having like, I think in the third match he will come back. But Dushmantha is out for more than seven, eight weeks.

Q. What about Pathum Nissanka? Will he play tomorrow?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: I still don't know because for me I think Pathum will be playing, but I don't know. Maybe we'll see the coaches and the staff is going to take the risk or not. For my eyes, he's okay, but we'll see. He played some shots and did some fielding as well indoors.

For me he looks okay, but even if he's not playing, I think Ashen Bandara will come. They're are getting better. Danushka's fine. He's getting better. Danushka's fine. That's why we're keeping him. It's not a big injury, like one to ten days rehab time. So he also will be fine.

THE MODERATOR: If we could direct injury questions to the team management so you can get something a bit more firm and official from the team doctor, that would be really helpful.

Q. Ireland opening batters last night made a big impact. Are they three you have to really keep your eye on come tomorrow afternoon?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: I didn't hear you.

Q. Ireland's top three batters obviously made a really big impact yesterday, only lost one wicket at the top of the order. Do you need to take a bit of homework on it and focus on those three heading into tomorrow?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: Yeah, they batted really well. It's like yesterday they batted really well, and they look strong and hit big shots, very good. The thing is it's really hard to play every day like that. It's different conditions, different teams, different tactics.

So we have a plan, and we know what we have to do and what they did wrong and what they did right. For everything we have plans for them really well. We see they batted really well and congrats for them, but I don't

think that's going to happen tomorrow because we think we are a better team and better players.

We'll see what's going to happen. It's not going to be the same like yesterday.

Q. Between the Irish and the Windies, whom would you prefer to meet tomorrow?

CHAMIKA KARUNARATNE: Anyone. That's what I said before. It's not about the team or the players, even if you always think about the match. But whoever we meet, whoever we are playing, we have to give more than 100 percent and bring more than our A-game for the World Cup. It's because this is a World Cup.

So it's not about the team or the players or the superstars. It's not that. It's about the match. So we always prepare.

Someone also asked me what do you think about England and Australia? It's not about England and Australia. It's like we have New Zealand, a strong Afghanistan, and Afghanistan doing really well. And then it's Ireland and us.

It's not about one team of players. We only think about the game and what's coming next. So whoever comes and we are fine with it, and the better team will always win.

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