

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Sunday, 23 October 2022

Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

Bellerive Oval

Ireland

Andrew Balbirnie

Post Match Media Conference

SRI LANKA 133/1, IRELAND 128/8

THE MODERATOR: Good evening, afternoon, and morning. Thank you for joining us for this post game press conference with Ireland Skipper Andrew Balbirnie.

Q. Was the deck a little stickier than it was on Friday?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: I think so. That was the kind of feedback we got from the guys that spent a bit of time out there. I actually thought we were playing on the wickets we used at the start of last week. That changed.

Yeah, just kind of disappointing. We, obviously, set out to get a good total, which I don't think we did. A couple of guys played some good knocks, but just nothing really around that to get us any sort of a total, which is disappointing.

But, yeah, to answer your question, I think it was just a touch stickier than the other day.

Q. They normally bowl around 8 overs a spin. They went with 10 today. I think you went to under a run a ball. Is that something you presumably anticipated happening in terms of that's how they would attack you?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: We knew this their spinner is a big threat. I think today, again, the guys who spent time in the middle probably have more, but I think it wasn't a massive turn, but just enough to kind of attack us with.

Yeah, I think you get to this stage of any competition, you're going to be playing world class spinners, seam bowlers, batters. That's just the way it is. You have to try to catch up and be on par with those sort of performances as much as possible.

Q. You and Lorcan probably departed going to areas of strength. You scored lower on Friday. Lorcan loves the sweeps. Those are the dismissals you can live with?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: I don't have a choice. I have to



live with them. That's something we practice in the nets all the time. I think it might have had the luck of the ball, but it's an option that's worked for me in the past, and I'll continue to try it.

I think Lorcan is the same. I think in T20 format there's so many games, you just have to stick with your strengths. And some days they'll come off, and some days they won't. Unfortunately for me it didn't come off for me today, but it's not a shot I'm going to be putting away.

Q. Just a quick one, did Paul say anything about his dismissal? I know he stood his ground, and we looked at a video, and it's iffy at best whether that catch was out?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: No, I haven't really spoken to him about it. I didn't really see the replay either, so I'll certainly have to have a look at it. Yes, that's all I can say.

Q. You bowled a few games in Hobart, so you might have had the advantage of familiarity, but do you think playing Sri Lanka now was too significant to step up in quality, and that was maybe one of the adjustments you struggled to make?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: I don't think so. I think we played quality teams last week in a more pressurized environment, but certainly they're a good team. And they had a tough start last week, but then built momentum into this week. So they, obviously, had started winning last week and have taken that into this week.

When we play good cricket we're on par with anyone, but it's that consistency and backing performances up. We didn't do that today from Friday, and we'll have to start to kick it off on Wednesday.

Q. You said it was a sticky wicket. Are you maybe slightly disappointed that the bowler couldn't turn this into a scrappy game and Sri Lanka ended up cruising to the win?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: I wouldn't say it was a sticky wicket. I don't want that to be the headline. It certainly was not a bad wicket at all.

The oddball did sit up a bit, but it was still a pretty good wicket. We've been fortunate here in Hobart to have good wickets all week.



I think it's tough on the bowlers when you are defending 128 or whatever it is. You have to bowl out of your skin and field out of your skin, and we didn't do that particularly in the field. I think we were a bit sloppy. We've got four more games to try to rectify that.

Q. Spinners took, obviously, 5 for 57 I think it was in overs. Do you give them all the credit, or is there something the batsmen could have done differently?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: You have to give them credit. They're pretty impressive figures, but we've played a lot of cricket against good spinners, so we should have maybe played better.

I don't want to criticize because we've got quality players in our top seven, and they've all contributed now pretty much to this tournament, and they will continue to contribute by playing their strengths. And I certainly won't be telling them not to play certain shots and stuff.

Q. (Indiscernible).

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: Yeah. They are naturally good spinners, and good spinners are hard to hit boundaries off. You have to be innovative. We weren't able to do that today, and, unfortunately, the figures you said just played a big part in today's game.

Q. Somewhat better bowling performance?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: Yeah, like I said, it's hard. I thought we bowled pretty well up top. With any luck, we could have maybe set different fields. I could have maybe set a couple more kind of creative fields.

Like I said, they batted pretty well. We came hard at them in the power play, and they rolled that wave a bit and kind of got away from us. If we had 150, 160, could have been different, but 128 in this day and age, you're not really in the game.

Q. Commiserations today. I'm sure you'll lick your wounds and come again hard on Wednesday. How good is it for you that the next game is against England, which, obviously, has that local element to it to get you and your guys up for it?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: Yeah, I don't think we've played England. I've certainly never played against England in a T20. I don't think we've played them for 10 or 11 years; is that right? 2010.

So we've, obviously, played a lot of 50-over cricket against them, and a test match against them. We got a bit of a taste in the MCG in a warmup game before the tournament started for us.

And there's a lot of Irish people in Melbourne, so it's going to be special. It's always special when you get to play England. A few of us kind of played and got a taste of that.

We know how strong a team. They are coming in as one of the tournament favorites. We're going to have to be a lot better than we were today to come anywhere near them, but I know the guys will certainly turn it around.

Once we get up to Melbourne, we'll be fully focused on the challenge that is ahead.

Q. You touched on 2010. That was actually a no result probably with Ireland in a reasonable position. The chance to maybe make up for that in this tournament would be nice.

Q. Yeah. I actually remember watching it in a World Cup, and the rain came down. I couldn't believe it. I think George and Paul Stirling were playing.

It seems... Well, it is a long time ago. Certainly the guys who were there feel like they were maybe hard done by, but, yeah, that was kind of a surreal thing to see Ireland on the tele playing in a World Cup.

That generation inspired a new generation, and certainly we're very fortunate to be in the position we are to play against these high quality teams in such amazing venues.

I can only speak for myself, but I'm certainly champing at the bit to get at them on Wednesday.

Q. Finally for me, the game that they played against Afghanistan last night, they got off to a winning start. Was there anything from that that you took from that might be of use, and I'm thinking maybe in particular the challenge of Mark Wood bowling at pretty decent rate?

ANDREW BALBIRNIE: Yeah. I wasn't able to watch all of it, but I think I'll certainly look at the footage over the next couple of days once I get to Melbourne.

Look, we know where their threats are. They have threats all over the park in every part of the game. We're going to have to be really on it to get near them and try to create an upset.

Certainly Mark Wood is somebody who is probably the quickest bowler in the world. Sometimes that brings out the best in some of our players, and hopefully that can be the case on Wednesday.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports