

# ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Sunday, 23 October 2022

Geelong, Victoria, Australia

Kardinia Park

## Sri Lanka

## Naveed Nawaz

### Post Match Media Conference

SRI LANKA 133/1, IRELAND 128/8

THE MODERATOR: Big performance at the moment. Kusal Mendis seems to be in the form of his life. What has he actually done it as far as scoring? Can you brief us on how it was on good form?

NAVEED NAWAZ: We saw the same with the Asia Cup. We scored quite a lot of runs, and I think the last couple of series he was shifted from No. 4 to open the innings, and that has made a tremendous affect on his batting.

So his roles are defined, and it seems to be working pretty good for him.

**Q. Also, the team seems to be not really affected by injuries. Is that behind you all, and you are concentrating that you can win with anyone coming into the team in placements?**

NAVEED NAWAZ: Well, I don't exactly say that, but obviously losing someone like (indiscernible) and Dasun Shanaka was a big loss for us, but luckily we had a couple of replacements in line with Kumara and Binura Fernando coming in and bowling really well today as well as the game before.

Batting-wise I think it will be nice to have Pathum back, but we got very got replacements in Ashen Bandara to replace Pathum. And we push Dhananjaya De Silva to open, which seems to work really well.

Of course, Charith Asalanka, batting at 3, which was his usual position before he got dropped from the team.

**Q. Pathum, is he available for the match in two days?**

NAVEED NAWAZ: We hope so. We hope so. We've given it four to five days. Hopefully he will bat on the next practice session before the game, and we'll make a call on that.

**Q. What do you take of this game for the game coming up in two days time against Australia?**



NAVEED NAWAZ: Well, we've got to do our basic strike. That's No. 1, which we had been doing in the last couple of games.

Batting, bowling, fielding, we need to raise the bar because from now on we'll be having a couple of strong games to play, and we have to do less mistakes and play our A-game.

**Q. Do you think that the teams have sort of conformed to the cold conditions based on what have you experienced now here?**

NAVEED NAWAZ: Well, yes, it's something -- they have been here for the last 20 days. We came early for climatization. And I'm sure that's something which is not in their control, and I'm sure they're not thinking about it.

They're enjoying the pitches over here. It looks really good for batting, and I'm sure the weather, the coldness is not in their mind.

**Q. You bowled 10-overs of spin today, which is a little bit more than you usually bowl. Was that specifically to target the Irish, who you think were weak again spin, or is this a tactic we can expect over the rest of the time?**

NAVEED NAWAZ: It's more of expanding our strengths. We had eight bowlers of spin from our main bowlers, and we had a couple of overs from the part-timers, which we thought we'll work in.

Dhananjaya has been bowling during all the other series that we have, but we sort of planned to use him a little more during this game in which I think worked really well for us.

**Q. In terms of the chase, there was no messing about. It's one of those games that sometimes some teams can be cautious, but you guys really went for it right from the start. Was that maybe because the bowling was there for the taking, or was it more just a case of maybe getting off to the right start and being positive to start?**

NAVEED NAWAZ: When you are chasing a total like 128 on a placid wicket, if you get a start from the openers, then you are there. Wicket has no threats, and you have all the batting lined up to do that. And once someone like Kusal gets going, I think it's pretty much easy.



**Q. The Irish captain just said that it was sticky wickets likely, but he did say it was a big -- you said it was placid. Was it something that changed between the two innings --**

NAVEED NAWAZ: It was slightly slow. The message I got from some of the boys over there saying wicket is slightly slow.

But, I mean, that didn't affect batting. We saw our batters playing really well. Whenever they were short, it was sitting up a little bit and gave the batters enough time to go back and make runs. I thought it was a pretty good batting wicket, to be fair.

**Q. My question is that Kusal Mendis played very brilliant today. He was excellent today, Kumar Mendis. The match ended, and you won by a massive margin. As the tournament to the group stage will proceed ahead, so how can they capitalize on Kusal Mendis? And if somehow at the moment, top order phase, so is it stronger to cope with the things?**

NAVEED NAWAZ: I hope I'm answering the right question. But, yes, I would say we've got a strong order, and we've got Mendis, Pathum, Dhananjaya, Charith Asalanka batting at the top.

And we've got the Skipper Dasun Shanaka and the four batters in the middle who can manage. If a couple of wickets from early on, we've got enough batters to cope with that.

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