

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Friday, 28 October 2022

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Sydney Cricket Ground

Sri Lanka

Naveed Nawaz

Pre Match Media Conference

Q. With your seam attack having so many injuries, do you think the best form of attacking against New Zealand, going for a win against them, is with the spin?

NAVEED NAWAZ: Well, we have to think about it and probably have a look at the wicket, and that's a call that we'll have to make.

Q. What do you think the combination could be in the sense that -- what did you get out of the match with Australia for today's game?

NAVEED NAWAZ: Yeah, of course. Batting-wise, I thought we batted pretty well on a wicket that had a lot of movement and a lot of help for fast bowlers. We were still probably 10, 15 runs short. We should have made 165 to 170 at least.

The way we were going, it was -- unless for the collapse in the last couple of overs, we lost probably four wickets, four to five wickets for 60-odd runs in the last six overs, I would say, and if not for that, I believe that we could have looked for a total somewhere around 165 to 170, and that's one of the learnings for us moving forward as a batting unit.

I think bowling-wise, it was unfortunate that Binura Fernando pulled a hamstring and we were short of bowlers, and the Australians knew exactly the issues that we had, that the captain was trying to make up bowlers by bowling the sixth and the seventh bowlers. They came out with a strategy of attacking one of our main bowlers at that point, so that was unfortunate I would say.

If we continuously think about bowling disciplined and bat as well as we did in the last game, I think that's where we want to be.

Q. How do you rate the New Zealand side, knowing the way they played against Australia in the opening game? What are their strong points and weak points from their side?

NAVEED NAWAZ: Well, obviously they're one of the top



sides in the world, and we rate them pretty highly. We know coming to a World Cup and we know in a group which has Australia, New Zealand, England, Afghanistan, you know that any of the matches that you cannot take easy. So we are prepared for it, and we know exactly what we need to do, if we need to put ourselves there in the semifinals.

We're up to it, and we'll try to play our best cricket and try to give every chance for us to get qualified into the semifinals.

Q. Obviously you've got to do at least one change leading into tomorrow's game; have you sort of made a decision as to who it's going to be? Would it be right to say that Kasun Rajitha is the most likely person to come in for Binura Fernando?

NAVEED NAWAZ: We haven't made a decision on that as yet.

Q. The injuries that you're carrying, we know all the six guys that have got injured in the World Cup, any reason as such that you guys have figured out why this keeps happening?

NAVEED NAWAZ: I guess that's something that we have to go back to and sit down and figure out why this has happened and what's the best solution that we can take on that. We haven't had time to sit down and find solutions right now on the long-term of what is going on, but we are trying to field the best 11 in the field as much as possible by replacing the injured players right now.

Q. Your top four, Naveed, has fired and quite a few guys are in good nick. You'd be hoping that the middle order, the likes of Dasun Shanaka and Bhanuka Rajapaksa, they'll come -- and Hasaranga, as well, if that happens, you've basically got all bases covered?

NAVEED NAWAZ: Yeah, exactly. If you look at all the games that we played, the top order has batted through, and there was fairly few overs at the end for the late order and the middle order.

We need them to come out with their hands up at the right moment. Although they are short of overs, there are a very limited number of overs for them to go out there and show what they can do, I think they will come up -- there's nothing to say that they're out of form or they're out of nick or anything like that, but I think when the

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

moment arises, they'll definitely come into the game and show us what they can do.

Q. Just to go back to the question on the number of injuries and you're coming off a defeat to Australia, how is the spirit in the team? Does it make it quite difficult to keep the morale high in the team at the moment?

NAVEED NAWAZ: Not exactly. This is something that we cannot control, and I think it's an opportunity for a new guy to come in and play. The spirits are pretty high. The hopes are still there for us to -- our opportunity to make it to the semifinals. We're all very well motivated and still looking forward to the rest of the tournament.

Q. You're coming here to Sydney now; this has looked the best batting pitch of the tournament so far. Are you going to need to adjust your game plan at all? Do you think you're going to need to be a bit more aggressive early on to try and get that higher total in this game, particularly if you're batting first?

NAVEED NAWAZ: Exactly. If it's a good batting wicket and a fast outfield, obviously the runs are there for taking. Yeah, we need to go with a different game plan on a pitch like this.

Q. Sri Lanka also played I think it was a couple of games here on the tour of Australia earlier this year. I know again, a lot of the players have played on similar venues before, but is it good to come back to a ground where you've got some recent experience? Do you think you can take some learnings from those games you played back in February?

NAVEED NAWAZ: Yeah, exactly. I think Sydney is a very favorable venue for Sri Lanka. It has been throughout the years, and we are looking forward to this game against New Zealand.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports