

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Tuesday, 8 November 2022

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Sydney Cricket Ground

New Zealand

Kane Williamson

Semi-Final Pre Match Media Conference

Q. Is there any relevance that tomorrow's match Pakistan (indiscernible)?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I mean, we have a strong team. We know it's going to be a tough match. Both teams are going to play in the semi, playing some good cricket throughout. The past is the past, and I think both teams are looking forward to tomorrow.

Q. You've become very familiar with the semifinals. What is it about your team that makes it so special that they're constantly in this position?

KANE WILLIAMSON: For us, it's just focusing on our cricket. You come to these tournaments, and as we've seen, all teams can beat each other and it's definitely a pretty exciting event. I guess you're going through it trying to adjust to conditions as quickly as possible, make those changes to the different opposition and really go out and try and express yourselves. It's been nice that we've been able to see that throughout this competition. And certainly want to be doing that again tomorrow.

Q. A lot of talk about '99 you being young, is there anything about that game?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Not really. I was two. So not a lot. But there's history in New Zealand. A number of great moments. So for us, as a team, we're really focusing on where we are at the moment and the sort of cricket we want to play.

Q. There's been a court case happening behind the scenes here at the moment. Do you think it's been overshadowing the semifinal this week?

KANE WILLIAMSON: For us, we're just focusing on the cricket.

Q. Everybody's talking about this is going to be a batsman's game. But your new bowler is doing well. Tell us about that because they're not restricting (indiscernible)?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I mean, they're experienced players for us. They've played for us a long time,



whether that's taking wickets or, in particular, adjusting to conditions which certainly we need them to come to tournaments, world events, that's a big part of playing.

So they've been outstanding throughout this tournament. And tomorrow we're at another venue against another opposition, and we'll have to make those adjustments again.

Q. Do you think it's an advantage coming back to a ground where you've played twice already this tournament?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I suppose it's kind of interesting, the first game we played here, the wicket was a very good one. And then the second time we played here it had changed.

And sometimes you can take perhaps what you were expecting the wicket to be like in the first game and think it would behave in the same way, which it didn't.

So whether that's a disadvantage or an advantage, it's sort of hard to know. Both teams are played here. So it will be looking to focus on our cricket really and the plans we want to look to execute and make sure we do adjust to the conditions and try and play smart.

Q. Does it feel like it's been a team effort to get to this stage? It looks as everyone's chipped in at some stage, outstanding performance, but does it bode well for you that someone has had a say at some stage?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I think the fickle nature of T20 and the competitive nature of the tournament, with all teams, all games being close, basically, and all teams beating each other, sort of means that there's not a reliance on one or two. It's guys trying to play their roles as well as they can and make contributions towards what we're trying to do as a team.

We've seen that. You mentioned Glen, he's been outstanding. But there have been a number of other players that have stood up on a number of occasions, and everybody, like you mentioned, certainly has put their hand up. For us, it's really trying to play together as a team and focus on that.

Q. The semifinal in white ball tournaments, and obviously you've had two finals in between that came pretty close in 2019. Obviously a great bunch of



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guys you've got together in that squad. Is it a case of now or never, or it's not going to happen to you guys if it doesn't happen now, is that sort of setting into the dressing room? And if it is, how do you cater to it?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I think there's been a lot of good in tournament play and for us you know that in any game you play the competition is fierce and you come across many other good teams match winners and on any day anything can happen. We're just focusing on one game at a time as we have done throughout this tournament.

And now we're in a semifinal, which is a nice place to be, but it's about cricket and the type of cricket we want to committing to and keep playing and that will be our focus.

Q. Does it help in any way that you've done what you've done in the past, or does that not really matter? For example, you came close last year or 2019, does that matter at all or it's just about the game?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I suppose when you turn up everybody wants to win, that's kind of a big part of the idea, I guess, of tournament sport. If you can find yourself in positions where you can compete to get across the line, that's a really good thing. But we're going into a semifinal. There's four teams there that certainly have the ambition to go the way and it's certainly been the case in the other tournament.

So it's exciting. They're all great teams. All playing really good cricket. And we're certainly focused on our challenge tomorrow. And it's a strong Pakistan.

Q. You haven't shown (indiscernible) flogging Australia and losing to England. How does it feel one (indiscernible) and tipping the Australians there, and, two, what do you think went wrong with them?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I suppose when you go through the round robin or pole play, we had three teams on the same opponents and it came down to run rates. And similarly a match is a match. And we know how strong they are.

Obviously it's only a year ago that they won this tournament. So I think the fickle nature of it, the fact that you go out, you have to play with freedom and there are match winners on all teams means it's a very difficult tournament to read. So, I mean, they played good cricket and every team has lost a game I think through the whole tournament there's not one team that's steam rolled into the end. It's been really competitive cricket. I think that's been the nature of the tournament.

Q. (Indiscernible) can you just talk about how as a captain and how you allowed him that freedom,

taking pressure off him, how important is he given that you gave him that number three, just potentially the way he plays, give you the fast bowl like he did against Australia, could you talk about how he's progressed and how you've gone about it as a leader to talk with him?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yes, that's the strength of his game, his ability to go hit the ball hard and play with freedom and encouraging that is important. Not just for him to play his natural game, but also for our team and the balance that he brings with his style of play. So, yeah, he's enjoying it cricket. And he's young and he's got heaps and heaps of talent has we've already seen.

So, yeah, he's excited at the challenge tomorrow.

Q. (Off microphone)

KANE WILLIAMSON: It's cricket and having different roles and coming in and looking to commit to your role and like you mentioned it can vary a lot, whether it's betting at three or four. Or even at the other end batting with them it's building those partnerships together, complement each other as a team, and ultimately try to put together competitive totals or chase them down playing fancy cricket.

It's great. It's been great watching him go about his business and go out and play with freedom.

Q. Do you feel like you've (indiscernible) right into the tournament the last couple of games, obviously the (indiscernible) that follows. And history suggests that when it comes to big games, you say enough. Is this something you sort of embrace whenever you are in this part of the tournament?

KANE WILLIAMSON: For me, it's focusing on the role and we've seen throughout this tournament the variety of conditions and naturally factor in the different opposition and the different strengths they have.

So it's really trying to do your bit for the team and make as big a contribution as you can. Give it towards where we need to be as a side and that's the focus and that's I think the focus for all the guys.

That's very much a team focus for us. That ball on the field and we're going to try and continue that and try and carry that through.

Q. Do you think other teams it's going to be a slight favourite or going to be even-steven?

KANE WILLIAMSON: It's hard to tell. It's been hard to read throughout this whole tournament. Naturally you have teams that are ranked at different sort of places on the chair, I suppose. The final sport can go any way.

Both teams match up pretty well. There's been some similar trends. But been playing really good cricket. So I know it will be a good match.

Q. How do you rate Pakistan's pace attack, (indiscernible) faced them in the Tri-City?

KANE WILLIAMSON: They've got an understanding pace attack. Like I mentioned, they've been playing really good cricket. Very experienced players on their side, match winners. So real strength.

Q. What do you think about the Pakistan opening pair; they are not performing at their best? Is it a sign of advantage for New Zealand camp and what do you think about the middle order of Pakistan, they really performed well against South Africa pitch?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yes, they're a strong side. A very well-balanced side. In this format, it can be fickle. You're certainly trying to take the risks required you need to move your team forward. And as we know the quality they have, the Pakistan team from 1 right down the order.

For us, it's focusing on our cricket and what we want to do.

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