

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

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Adelaide Oval

Netherlands

Max O'Dowd

Post Match Media Conference

Netherlands - 120/5, Zimbabwe - 117

Q. Max, congratulations. Can you just sum up your emotions for playing such a pivotal role and also the emotions in the team dressing room after such a result for you guys?

MAX O'DOWD: I'd probably say a sense of relief to get some points on the board. Obviously pride. Guys are proud that we won that game. It was a game that we backed ourselves to win.

Then I guess also a bit of a mixture of regret because I feel like there were games earlier in the tournament that we could have won as well. Had we won those, things might have looked different at this end of the table.

No, of course, extremely happy to win against such a strong side.

Q. In the bigger picture of what it will do for cricket in Netherlands, what do you think the win will do?

MAX O'DOWD: Hopefully everyone's watching back home. No, it's big. Playing in a World Cup is such a huge event for us because we just don't get the exposure. You know it's in the major newspapers. It's probably not on TV just yet.

Just getting out there in the lights on national television hopefully spurs on some youngsters back home in the Netherlands to take up the game.

Q. I remember back in Dharamshala in 2016 how shattered you all were at the end of that first week. You looked very different. I noticed when I was going back with that squad. But does going through that make this all the more special that you've got through to this, you've got your first win, and maybe people might look at the Netherlands a little bit differently?

MAX O'DOWD: I think so. I've been to three World Cups, 2016 in India, didn't win a game. Then the last one in Dubai as well where we didn't win. It's disappointing. But you've got guys like Peter Borren and



the team who beat England that first game, so they know what that feeling is like.

For us coming into this World Cup, we know the quality we have, so we were expecting big things. Not just to make it into the Super 12, but to go even further.

Sure, winning's great, but we didn't just come here to compete and have a bit of fun. We came here to turn over some big teams, which we haven't done. So I guess on that side it's a little disappointing.

There's still one more game to go against South Africa. We'll gladly take these two points and really looking forward to the next one.

Q. You've had some teams come and play in the Netherlands this year. Has that made a big difference?

MAX O'DOWD: Huge difference. Massive difference. Biggest difference in my career, and I think most boys would agree. We've had bilateral series, the Super League. We played against West Indies, England, Pakistan, went away to the World Cup qualifiers. We're playing the best teams in the world.

I think guys are slowly starting to adapt to what it's like playing at the highest level, like a Vikram Singh or a Shiraz Ahmed are playing club cricket on a Monday on an artificial in the rain and then facing Alzarri Joseph on a Wednesday. So that's how they're learning their trade.

I guess, the more you play against the highest nations, the quicker you can adapt. So when you eventually take, I guess, from playing West Indies, England, and then you go to a qualifiers, it felt like, wow, okay, we've played against some of the best teams in the world. This should be a lot easier.

I think that was such a big part of our success in the qualifiers in Zim that we made it here in the first place.

Q. What was the biggest challenge when you talk about facing one after the other and going against those teams? What's the hardest thing to adapt to?

MAX O'DOWD: That's a tough one. Obviously the skill level goes up massively. You're playing club cricket is completely different than facing Alzarri Joseph or Naseem Shah. It's a depth thing and really trying to learn on your feet.



That's something we have to do as Dutch cricketers. We don't have the pathway of playing club cricket, first class cricket, Netherlands A cricket and playing international cricket. It's just from first game to first game, just like that, which is exciting but also can be detrimental to a lot of guys because there's no pathway and no way of learning.

Hopefully going forward, we play more cricket against the best nations in the world because you can see, the more you do it, we're starting to get better. We're starting to get more belief, more confidence, and upsets, I guess, won't feel like upsets anymore.

Q. A quick word on your personal form. How do you rate yourself going in this tournament?

MAX O'DOWD: I'm not going to lie, I was pretty scrappy to start today. I think I hit three boundaries and faced about 12 dots, but it's nice. It's actually pretty nice to score runs in a winning cause. I think over the last two World Cups I've scored runs in losing causes, which doesn't feel great.

Just to get out there and help the team get over the line for me is the most important part and something I'm proud of today.

Q. Max, congratulations. My question is that the Netherlands have a good lot of cricketers, a lot of ability, including Bas, you as well. How can the team count on these players in future to come up hard against some big names on big teams?

MAX O'DOWD: It's a mixture, I think. I think it comes down to basic funding. We probably don't get the same amount of funding that other teams get, so there's no real cash involved in the game for us to really be professional. A lot of guys have to go overseas to play to earn their money. You're expecting guys to be full-time professional cricketers, and we probably don't have the same amount of cash as other teams do.

Just to hold guys accountable. Guys are working two jobs and playing cricket full-time and training full-time. So I think that's one of them.

Then consistent cricket, I think against the best in the world, is so important. Like I said, it's helped guys a lot improve their game. It's helped improve their game even quicker than what they're used to normally.

So I think those are the two probably biggest points for me.

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