

ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Thursday, 3 November 2022

Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

Adelaide Oval

New Zealand

Kane Williamson

Pre Match Media Conference

Q. Are you happy with the way you're going or is there something you're working on as you get more and more used to these conditions?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I mean, I'm always working on different things, wanting to try and improve and keep getting better and try and keep playing the role as best I can. For me, it's still looking for that little bit of rhythm. There's a role there that's being played, but obviously wanting to do it as best as you can.

Obviously it was frustrating the other night, we're getting close, getting ourselves into position and didn't quite throw that last punch. Yeah, definitely in T20 training, it's keep on exploring, keep trying to grow your game.

Q. Anything in particular about the whole exploration bit that you are working on or something that you picked up as this tournament has gone on?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I think it's a bit more specific to like venues and opposition, sort of trying to prepare specifically, and the shapes of the ground keep sort of changing and the dimensions keep changing.

Trying to keep addressing different areas of your game to try and utilise when you're out in the middle.

Q. Is it the same, the very experienced bowling attack that you have at your disposal, just getting them used to the dimensions and seeing what's happened the previous games like the games yesterday?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, absolutely. It's the same for everyone, I think. It's looking for different areas of the ground to exploit, looking for the changing conditions, as well. We've seen a real variety of conditions throughout this tournament, and whether that's with the ball or with the bat, it's just trying to make those adjustments and prepare as well as you can.

Q. It's a pretty open group at this moment even though you guys started really strong. Is it just about focusing on winning and just take everything else out of the equation?



KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I mean, we've seen the quality throughout all teams in this tournament, through the qualifiers, into the Super 12. For us it's really just continuing to focus on our cricket, trying to make those little improvements from game to game, and try and put out improved performances.

There were some good bits in our last one. We came up against a strong England side who played very, very well, and so it's just addressing some of the bits we want to improve on and keep touching on the bits that are going okay.

Q. Batters who play more of an anchor role seem to be open to more criticism in this tournament; is that just part of not being perhaps a 150-plus strike rate player all the time, or is there something about the pacing of your innings that you think you might be able to do differently?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Absolutely looking for things to keep improving on, keep trying to make bigger and better contributions. You know, at the end of the day you're trying to adjust to the conditions and try and get a real understanding of what a role looks like. We've seen a variety of sort of medium-level scores throughout the tournament, and sometimes the challenge is pulling back.

But definitely when the wickets are good, it's actually pushing and pushing.

I don't know if it's so much an anchor role, it's just trying to utilise the skill sets that you have to try and generate a strike rate, and sometimes it's one boundary, two boundaries away, and as a batter that's what you're trying to explore and achieve when you're out in the middle and bat, complementing the player at the other end.

There's a few parts to, I guess, consider, but without a doubt as a player you're always wanting to keep improving, keep addressing where you can get a little bit better with your game and making better contributions.

Q. Looking at what Ireland did against Australia, they put them in a difficult position with net run rate after being 5 for 25, and I just wonder, are Ireland the sort of team that you have to be really wary of for that reason now that things are so tight?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, not just for that reason. They've been playing really, really well, and they've got a number of good players, match winners throughout their team and a very well-balanced side.

For us, it is just focusing on our cricket, planning as well as we can and trying to put out a better performance.

Q. How much are you keeping an eye on things like that? Obviously winning seals the deal, but at what point do you start looking at what is happening in other games with net run rates, all that sort of thing, or do you just put that out of your mind?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, it's difficult to control that, so we're trying to focus on what we can control. I suppose if you're playing the last game of the round-robin and you need to factor that in to give yourself a chance, then you'll definitely consider that.

But first things first, and it's focusing on what's in front of you, and we know we've got a tough match tomorrow, and that's against Ireland, and we need to put out an improved performance from our last one.

Q. Getting back to your form, these runs, does it affect you, does it bother you, because we've seen Virat Kohli talking about how the slump in his form affected his mental state. Does that affect you?

KANE WILLIAMSON: You're always wanting to get better, and cricket is a pretty fickle game by its nature. You sort of do go through different periods where there's better rhythm and then other times where you're working harder and you're trying to make sure that you're making a valuable contribution. So that's the focus.

Sometimes that's when you're flying and you're going well, and sometimes it isn't. It's trying to really just continue to address what's in front of you, keep working hard, trying to make the best decisions you can to make good contributions.

And staying a little bit patient with it, as well. The game forever challenges us, tests us, and we try and work hard and navigate and improve.

Q. Are you thinking about the semifinal, final, crossing that big hurdle that always is there with New Zealand? Of course, you won the test championship for sure.

KANE WILLIAMSON: One game at a time, without a doubt. Our focus is on tomorrow.

Q. Sorry to harp on about your form like people have been, but do you feel like you're in a rut, and when you are in a rut, are you the type of person who will train or bat in the nets for longer to try and get you

out of that rut?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I mean, I'm always working hard on my game to continue to improve it. I feel like there's some parts of it that are going well and there's other parts where I'm looking for a bit of rhythm, and often it's a boundary or two away, and so sort of staying with it, working hard, focusing on what the team needs and just trying to align your decision making with that is very much the focus.

Also knowing that within this game over long periods of time you go through different periods of how you feel and adjustments that you need to make, and so at the moment I'm looking to keep improving, trying to play the role as best I can and enjoy it.

Q. There was a question earlier on about strike rates in a tournament like this. Sometimes is a runner ball innings actually a very good innings in a T20 if you've got a batter at the other end who's taking it apart?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, that's right. Context is really important, so it does depend on conditions. Partnerships, as well, and really where you want your team to be at certain points in time, and if that is runner ball, then that's of value if the team is moving forward with that, and if it's not, then obviously you need to keep exploring; there's different areas to get those boundaries away. It is dependent on the situation.

In the other night and the other game there were partnerships that were of value, and it's just trying to take that little step further really, and so for me that's a focus for continuing to develop my game after being out for a little while is to keep just pushing it, looking for those other options and just making those small tweaks.

Q. I was wondering, can you talk a bit about what you make of Glenn Phillips and how he's performed in this tournament and his approach to the game and how it's perhaps quite a bit different to yours?

KANE WILLIAMSON: He's been absolutely on fire in all facets of the game, with the bat coming out in the situations that he has been, at times under pressure, on surfaces that haven't been perhaps what we're quite used to when we come over here, and he's, yeah, just expertly worked, managed the situation and then sort of reversed the pressure. That hundred that he got in Sydney on a difficult surface was exceptional, one of the best T20 knocks that I've seen, and he's a real power dynamic player, and we see that in the field, as well.

He's always very eager to bowl and play a part there, too.

He's been going incredibly well, and we certainly hope that continues.

In terms of our mindset, yeah, they're probably different. We're different people in slightly different roles, but certainly enjoy batting with him and watching him go.

Q. With all the criticism or questioning of your role and your strike rate, how do you feel about it? Do you think it's fair?

KANE WILLIAMSON: I mean, you guys are allowed to chat about lots of different things, and that's quite okay. For me, I really -- it's all about just trying to make contributions to the team and moving the team forward in whatever way I can.

With the bat, there's a number of, I guess, phases or gears to go through. I definitely want to keep touching on those third and fourth gears where you are exploring some different areas of the ground, which when in full rhythm is something that comes reasonably naturally, and when you're not you're working very hard to try and bring that into your game whilst factoring in your role in a partnership and trying to position -- help position your team in a place where perhaps you have momentum and you're ready to start the next phase as a team.

Yeah, I mean, I feel like there's some good parts, but there are definitely some parts I want to keep touching on. I sort of see it as one or two boundaries away, where you start sort of building some momentum throughout an innings.

Some good bits but definitely some bits I want to keep touching on.

Q. We know how prolific you are training-wise. Is there anything in particular you can do in the nets, or is it kind of just a matter of getting in the middle and finding yourself?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I mean, you're always training to work hard and bring different parts out of your game, exploring with your game, to then try and utilise that in the middle, and that's conditions dependent and a number of different parts to that. That's what practice is for largely, I think, is to keep sort of growing your game and getting better, and that's certainly a focus that I have.

Q. You've been part of a few T20 World Cups now; there's been so much focus on the weather and the rain here, but with a week and a bit to go, does this really stand out because of the variety we've seen in terms of conditions and the uniqueness of T20 cricket in October in Australia, does it make this like a standout tournament in that sense?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I mean, I suppose we've seen more weather than we've expected, which isn't perhaps ideal when you come into a short tournament

and it plays a reasonable part. I suppose most teams have probably had one maybe rained out and maybe it's sort of worked out a little bit evenly. Yeah, it's the nature of what it is, I suppose. I don't know, it's hard to control it.

You sort of focus on what you can control, and the weather is not one of those things. Obviously sun throughout would have been great, but yeah, what do you do.

Q. My question was the fact that if you leave the weather out, do you think it's been one of the more fascinating T20s?

KANE WILLIAMSON: Oh, yeah, definitely. Sorry, forget about the weather.

Yeah, it's been incredible. The games that have been played throughout qualifiers and into the sort of main part of the tournament where forever we've said that all teams can beat each other, and that's absolutely been the case throughout this tournament, which I'm sure has made it incredibly fascinating and entertaining to watch for all supporters, and knowing that you're going to a match, and on any given day there are match winners throughout each team that can change the course of the match, and we've seen that.

Yeah, it's been incredibly competitive.

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