

# ICC T20 World Cup 2022

Thursday, 3 November 2022

Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

Adelaide Oval

## Afghanistan

### Rais Ahmadzai

#### Pre Match Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the prematch press conference. We've got Rais Ahmadzai for Afghanistan Assistant Coach for today's press conference.

**Q. I want to start by asking about Rashid Khan fitness. He had a bit of a knee problem and a back problem apparently. How is he traveling?**

RAIS AHMADZAI: He is fine. He is very good, and he has been in today's session, so he is okay.

**Q. Everyone else is fit? Everyone is ready to go?**

RAIS AHMADZAI: Everyone is okay, and we want to finish the tournament with some positive things, yeah.

**Q. Obviously, Australia have an assignment they need to win quite emphatically to get to the next round. Does that give your team a chance, do you think, if they're chasing the game a bit?**

RAIS AHMADZAI: It's really not an easy game for us to get play against Australia in Australian conditions, but we are here to give them a tough time.

I think it will more Australia will be, like, say, they will be under pressure because they want to win, and we are here to finish the tournament with high morale, yeah.

**Q. The tournament for you has had two wash-outs, but what other positives do you take from the little cricket that you have played?**

RAIS AHMADZAI: I think everyone was very excited before start the tournament that we were going to Australia to play in Australian pitches against top-level teams. At the start of the tournament everyone was talking that Afghanistan side is a tough side, group, of the tournament.

But what we decide we will think that let's play against good teams on conditions like Australia. But, unluckily, our two matches went wash-out, and we were thinking that a New Zealand match was a challenge for us and against Ireland.



I'm not saying that Ireland was an easy side, but I think we missed two points there. But we want to play against New Zealand, and the first match when we played against England in Perth. So after that match we decide if we can improve something in the batting department, I think we give a tough time to the opposition.

**Q. Do you think this team has really grown leaps and bounds? A good Asia Cup for Afghanistan, as you said, could have gone here or there for you in a few games. You think this team has really grown?**

RAIS AHMADZAI: I think the Afghanistan team, like everyone knows, have good talented players and especially the spin department. And we have some good T20 players in the team that are playing around different leagues around in the world.

So I'm not sure that any team will think that Afghanistan is an easy side. What we think that. But after the two wash games, the momentum just we work really hard in Brisbane from in the start of the tournament, two weeks. But, unluckily, not get to that momentum.

To be honest, very sad against Sri Lanka. We think that we will beat them. We were short, like, a few runs there.

Again, two wash matches. We know that momentum in the tournament.

**Q. Coach, just you were speaking about strengthening the batting and kind of improving on the batting front. I just wanted to ask you, for a team that has really quality T20 bowlers like Rash, Mujeeb, and Farooqi, what is the reasoning behind picking seam bowling all-rounders instead of a specialist batter given even that Naib hasn't been in the greatest of forms apart from that warmup game again Pakistan where he hit it really well? Do you think you missed a trick by not playing specialist batter given that you already have solid T20 bowlers in your lineup?**

RAIS AHMADZAI: I think the way we have those spinners, like, three top spinners in the side. And if you have Fazalhaq, a youngster, the way he bowled in the Asia Cup, everyone knows he is quality the way he has bowled with the new ball. And we have another good bowler.

So our bowling package was complete, and we want as



much with a good to promising allowance in the slide. This is the best opportunity for the team, like Afghanistan and for the players, the youngster, to learn to play against top level teams.

Our bowling department was okay, but have to improve our batting to play against top level, especially singles or finish the matches in the end.

**Q. So just a follow-up, do you think seven bowling options have (indiscernible) usually? Conventional wisdom would dictate that when conditions are so heavily in favor of the bowling in this World Cup particularly, teams tend to look back on extra batsman just because the team with the better batting might win. Do you think that in hindsight you could have probably played an extra batter instead of by just having, say, six bowling options?**

RAIS AHMADZAI: I think in T20 cricket if you are bowling more, your teammates will help you a lot. Then you have some good options. It will give something positive for the opposition.

If you have some allowance that can bowl when team need it and they can bat when team need it. In modern cricket, you know hardly some of the matches will go one-sided. If you have batting in, like, eight or nine can make some runs, so it will help the team.

And to nowadays all-rounder will help a lot. Sometimes one bowler can -- he is playing in the batting department number 4 in the top position, but he can bowl also, so it will help the teams. Luckily, we have some option in that.

**Q. (Question in Pashto.)**

RAIS AHMADZAI: I think the way the team losing the match, there is something not going well. We miss our top two players.

The way we are famous about bowling was giving a good start for us, but unluckily, in this tournament it was not given that opportunity to give some runs in the power play.

Yes, I our spin bowling department is really famous around in the world. Especially, like, Mujeeb or Russia. They are the best spinners with the wide ball cricket.

The second thing. Yes, we have enough experience the way he was bowling with new ball, with the old ball, and the way we were watching him. To reward sometime the new ball, so we learned a lot from him, and he transferred his experience upon fast bowlers.

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