

# ICC T20 World Cup 2022

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Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

Adelaide Oval

## India

### Rohit Sharma

#### Semi-Final Pre Match Media Conference

**Q. A good time for you to translate what you spoke about when you became captain, that you want to win titles for India?**

ROHIT SHARMA: Yeah, absolutely. It's an opportunity for us to come and do what we do understand. It's been a long process for us, and we will stick to our process. I think it's important not to get ahead of ourselves, and we do understand, as well, that we have to play good cricket to win that game, which I think we've done in this tournament.

We just need to stick to it. I know we're a long way away from it, but I think it's important to just understand that it's a contest between bat and ball which we have to come on top with, and yeah, and stick to and trust what we've been doing so far.

**Q. A lot is made out of your record, Virat Kohli's record, KL Rahul's record in knockout matches. Do you actually believe in the facts that this is actually a statement on the quality of player, that they are not doing so well in the so-called big matches? Is it actually a different game than any other game for you as a player and do you think of yourself as lesser of a player if you don't have a great record in a knockout match which comes once in a year or so?**

ROHIT SHARMA: I think knockout games are important. We do understand that. It's a simple logic to it, knockout games, because you get to play only once and there's only one opportunity to do well in that knockout game.

But for us, I think, not just for me but for the players, what they've done in their entire career doesn't define them by just one knockout game. The entire year you work so hard to get where you want to and to do well in whichever format you play. So that one particular game is not going to decide that.

I think it's important we do understand the importance of knockout, but at the same time, it's also important to realize and understand what sort of effort you put in the entire year to come to that stage.

For us as players, as a team, I think we can pride



ourselves to be here at this point in time because we saw two of the quality teams which were knocked out, and anything can happen in this format.

For us, I think to be here at this point in time, I think we can take a lot of credit and pride ourselves in where we have come.

But again, it's just a phase. It's just one phase of the tournament. We know there are two crucial phases of it. We do understand when you play this kind of tournament, you have to break it into parts. We've done one part of it really well. There are two more parts to go.

But tomorrow is going to be one part of it where we have to play well to get the result.

But yeah, specifically to talk about that, I think it's important to understand that knockout games are important, and you do well, it gives you that immense confidence. But we do not forget what has happened in the past, what the players have done in the past. All the performances that they've put in for the team over the year, that one game cannot be dictating that.

I think there's a lot of effort that goes into putting ourselves and playing for the country and getting those efforts, getting those runs, getting those wickets, so I really don't believe that one bad game in the knockout can truly define what kind of player you are.

**Q. How much fun have you had just being a captain in this World Cup, so many different conditions everywhere, and where does Adelaide fit into it? You played a game the other day; just different dimensions. Are there different hitting areas, different lengths you want to bowlers to bowl, and how different are they?**

ROHIT SHARMA: Yeah, that's one of the challenges that we have had in this tournament. Usually when you play -- for example, last year in Dubai, the dimension of the ground didn't change too much. We know there was one side bigger, but other than that, not too many things changed. But when we play here in Australia, obviously some of the grounds have longer, straighter boundaries, some of the grounds have smaller on the sides. So you've got to adjust to it as quickly as possible.

Guys have not been here before. For them, it's a huge challenge to adjust to that length and the shot making, as well. I think we adapted to that pretty nicely. We were

... when all is said, we're done.®



put under pressure in some of the games, but I thought we responded to that pressure really well.

Adelaide is one ground where again, you have to go back and understand what sort of tactics you want to use here because the last game we played in Melbourne, completely different. Now Adelaide, the side boundaries are a little shorter.

Of course we've had a lot of talks about it in our group, about what we want to do before we actually played that game against Bangladesh because since then we've been playing on the grounds which had longer straight boundaries -- sorry, side boundaries, so you could bowl your slower balls into the pitch. The bouncers and the batsmen needed to adjust to that, as well, but when we came to Adelaide it was a completely different scenario, and we do understand that having played a game here, we do understand what we need to come up with when it comes to planning and tactics.

**Q. What's your assessment of Axar Patel's performance in this World Cup so far, and does that worry you that he has gone at an economy rate of nearly 10 per over? How do you look at things going to the semifinals?**

ROHIT SHARMA: To be honest, not really worried, as such, because he hardly got to bowl in this tournament. Except that game against Netherlands, he's not bowled full overs of his quota, only because of the condition that has to offer. We've got four seamers who have particularly bowled all of their quotas, which means the spinners will not bowl their overs.

If you look at the conditions, except Sydney, all the grounds we've played had a lot to offer to the seamers, which means we never got an opportunity to bowl Axar in the powerplay, which is his specialty, and yeah, honestly have not looked too much into his bowling and gotten worried about his performance because we do understand his quality and the series that we played before coming here bowled exceptionally well.

Guys can have one bad tournament; it doesn't mean that he's out of form or not bowling well or not been able to execute plans. I thought the kind of space he's in for me that is important, and when I talked to him, when I hear his thoughts, I pretty much feel that he's in a good space, and that is exactly what we want when you're about to play a game like that.

**Q. Just wanted to ask you about Suryakumar. Where do you think his fearlessness to play the way he does, start the innings that he does, where do you think that comes from? Also, how much do you think it's benefitted him that he's come into the Indian side as a mature player, a guy who knew who he was about almost before he got established in the**

**side?**

ROHIT SHARMA: Yeah, that's probably his nature. That's where it comes from. I think he's a very -- he's the sort of guy who just doesn't carry any baggages with him -- not his suitcase. He's got a lot of suitcases, honestly speaking. He loves his shopping. But when it comes to carrying the extra pressure, extra baggages, I don't think he has that in him.

You can see that when he plays. It's not like he's played a couple of tournaments like that. He's been playing like that for a year now, and it shows, and you can judge the kind of character he is, and he likes to play like that.

I don't know if you've heard him talk in interviews; he likes to bat in a similar fashion where we were 10 for 2 or 100 for 2. He likes to go out and express himself, and that's probably the reason he was in the team in the last World Cup.

Although we didn't have a great World Cup, but looking at what he's done in the entire year from that World Cup onwards, as we say, the sky's the limit for him. But yeah, he's shown great maturity, as well, has taken pressure from a lot of the guys the way he plays, and it rubs off on the other side, as well, when they bat around him.

Yeah, we do understand his game pretty well, and we do understand what the bowler is trying to do well when he's batting. So it's a collective of everything.

He understands he likes playing on the big ground. He hates playing on small grounds. As he told me once, he doesn't like the smaller boundaries, smaller grounds. He can't see the gaps. I believe that he likes to see big gaps, and that's where his strength is.

**Q. Just going back to different dimensions for a second, each of you have certain shots that you play instinctively. You said you've had discussions about shorter boundaries and longer boundaries, but when you're making that decision in a split second, how do you balance the two, a plan for a particular ground and your go-to shot, like the pull for you, for example?**

ROHIT SHARMA: Yeah, look, a lot of it is quite instinctively. A lot of the players in our squad are quite instinctive players. They like to see the ball and react to it, and if you see from the top order until No. 7, No. 8, we've seen different kind of performances from them, as well.

That's only because a lot of the players are instinctive, and also some of the players like to play according to the situation, as well.

I remember talking about coming out and playing

fearlessly for a number of months now, but certainly in this tournament it has not happened quite well for us because looking at how the conditions are here, you just don't want to come out and swing your bat; you want to understand the conditions. The ball is swinging a little more than what we have experienced in the last year.

So you've got to respect that condition. It's not just us; you can see the number from the entire tournament of the powerplay overs from all teams. It's not been that great from all the teams.

It's only because of the conditions that has to offer, and I thought that is where our adaptability came into the picture, and guys adapted quite well, understood the situation and played accordingly, which is a good sign. That is what a good team can do, adapt quickly, assess the conditions really quick, because it's not -- we don't have too much time here.

All of that I think we did that pretty well. It's just about now understanding and going out and executing the same plans.

**Q. If you could tell us how you're doing after the hit at the nets yesterday, and last game you made a change with Pant coming in. Was that a one-off or will you be sticking to it now?**

ROHIT SHARMA: The first part is obviously I was hit yesterday, yes, but it seems to be fine now. There was a little bruising, but it's absolutely fine now.

But Pant, I said it before the last game, as well, Rishabh was the only guy who didn't get to play on this tour at all except the two games that we played in Perth. That was an unofficial practice game. But since then he hasn't had a hit, and he was the only guy who was missing some game time, so we wanted to give him some time and have some options, as well, whether if we want to make changes in the semis or the finals, we should be able to do that.

It would be unfair to just bring the guy from nowhere and make him play the game, so that was the thought. But again, at the same time we've told the guys right from the beginning that everyone needs to be ready for whichever game that they have to play, whether it's semis, final, lead games. They've got to be ready for it.

But yeah, it was a little tactical, as well, considering we were not knowing which team we would be playing in the semis before that Zimbabwe game, so we wanted to just give a left-hander an opportunity to counter some of the spinners who bowled in the middle for New Zealand and England. That was the thought, and we thought Rishabh was the guy for us to go and give him some time, as well.

But again, what is going to happen tomorrow, I think I

won't be able to tell you right now, but both of the keepers will be in play for sure.

**Q. You beat England in the summer in that series; how relevant will that be tomorrow?**

ROHIT SHARMA: I mean, certainly going into the game, it'll give us some confidence because beating a team like England in England, obviously it's a big challenge, and we overcame that challenge pretty well.

But again, like we do understand the dynamics of this T20 cricket. You just have to be good on that particular day, otherwise it's not good enough. But certainly the guys will have some confidence going into tomorrow's game.

Also to say a lot of the guys who played in that series are not part of this team, a lot of the guys who are here now didn't play that game against us in that series, as well.

For us in the back of our mind, yes, we can have that confidence knowing that we did pretty well against them, but tomorrow's game is going to be a fresh game. We just have to be good on that day in terms of our skills. We just need to be better than them to come out on top. All those records of the past, I don't think it's going to matter too much. It's just that you can carry that confidence with you.

But again, we just need to start fresh and think about tomorrow with a fresh mind. We can't go into the game thinking that we've beaten this guy or beaten this team and it can happen again just like that. We do understand we need to play well to win the game.

These guys are quite dangerous. They've played some really good cricket in the tournament, as well, which is why they're here. So we've got to be at our best to win the game.

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