

# West Indies speedsters bounce out Pakistan in quick time

After Thomas & Co. skittle out the latter for an embarrassing 105, Chris Gayle delights with a blistering half-century



**REUTERS**  
NOTTINGHAM

West Indies steamrollered Pakistan to seal a seven-wicket victory in its World Cup opener at Trent Bridge on Friday after an Oshane Thomas-led pace attack swept the latter away for a dismal 105.

Opener Chris Gayle, set to retire at the end of the tournament, led the Windies reply with a blistering 50 off 34 balls as the two-times champion chased down the total with ease, reaching 108 for three off just 13.4 overs.

Having elected to field, West Indies made full use of overcast conditions as Thomas took four wickets for 27 runs, while captain Jason Holder (three for 42) and Andre Russell (two for 4) completed the demolition job.

## Gamble pays off

"It's good to have a young quick like Oshane, we know he can be expensive at times but he's a genuine wicket-taker," Holder said at the post-match presentation. "That's the gamble we need to take in one-dayers, with big scores going around."

Pakistan's batting unit has repeatedly struggled against short deliveries and West Indies' plan to pepper it with bouncers soon paid off.

Opener Imam-ul-Haq was cramped for room and caught behind down the leg side off fast bowler Sheldon Cottrell before Russell hit Fak-



**Merry men in maroon:** The West Indians had a lot to celebrate on a day when everything went right for them. •AFP

har Zaman on the helmet and the ball ricocheted onto the stumps.

Wicketkeeper Shai Hope grabbed two more catches when Russell and Holder removed Haris Sohail and captain Sarfaraz Ahmed to leave Pakistan on 75 for five.

Wahab Riaz struck 18 off 11 balls to help Pakistan breach the 100-run mark.

"I was confident of running in and doing my job," said man-of-the-match Thomas said. "Andre Russell started it for us, I just followed his footsteps today. Lot of guys tried to mix it up with short balls. We wanted to execute our plans well."

## Injury concerns

The only concerns for the West Indies were Russell

limping with a knee issue in the first innings, while Gayle appeared to have sustained a back injury.

After smashing two fours and a six in the 10th over, Gayle appeared to hold his back and limp to the other end for a single.

He looked increasingly edgy before holing out to point for Mohammad Amir's third wicket of the match.

## Outstanding effort

"It was a good game. I think the bowlers were outstanding today," said Holder.

"We kept our foot on the accelerator. We've eased off in the past but it was good to see the killer instinct today.

"We wanted to be aggressive. It's the nature of our cricket with bat, ball and in

INNINGS SCAN			PROGRESSION		
PAK		WI	PAK		WI
1	Maidens	1	45/3	10 overs	71/2
9	Fours	11	86/9	20 overs	--
3	Sixes	5	--	30 overs	--
22 (10th)	Best stand	36 (1st)	--	40 overs	--
4.84	RR	7.90	--	50 overs	--

  

TOP SHOWS		
For	Batting	Bowling
Pakistan	Zaman 22 (16b, 2x4, 1x6) Azam 22 (33b, 2x4)	Amir 3/26 (6)
West Indies	Gayle 50 (34b, 6x4, 3x6)	Thomas 4/27 (5.4)

the field. We've definitely come to win this World Cup but I just want us to enjoy our cricket, play fearless cricket and make the fans back home proud."

The hammering was Pakistan's 11th consecutive ODI defeat in matches where a result was achieved, following series losses to Australia and England. It was also its low-

## Gayle force to the fore

**2** Pakistan's 105 was its second lowest total in the World Cup after the 74 against England (Adelaide, 1992)

**2** The defeat, with 218 deliveries remaining, is Pakistan's second biggest in ODIs (balls to spare) after its loss with 225 balls left against West Indies (Cape Town, 1993)

**2** The match, which lasted just 35.2 overs, is the second shortest between two Test-playing nations in the World Cup in which a result was achieved, after the Bangladesh-West Indies game at Dhaka in 2011 finished in 31.1 overs

**6** Number of consecutive 50-plus scores by Gayle, pulling him level with Gordon Greenidge,

Andrew Jones, Mohd. Yousuf, Mark Waugh, Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor. Miandad leads the chart with nine

**11** Number of completed ODI games Pakistan has lost in succession -- its longest in the format

**120** Number of catches by Gayle in ODIs, the joint-most for West Indies, with Hooper. The two are followed by Lara (117) and Richards (100)



**40** Sixes hit by Gayle in the World Cup, the most by a batsman. He also became the third West Indian to reach 19,000 international runs after Lara and Chanderpaul. Gayle now has 317 sixes in ODIs, only Afridi (351) has hit more in ODI history

MOST SIXES IN WORLD CUP	
40	Gayle
37	de Villiers
31	Ponting
29	McCullum
28	Gibbs
27	Jayasuriya & Tendulkar

## Next assignment

**PAKISTAN:** June 3 vs England, Trent Bridge, 3 p.m.

**WEST INDIES:** June 6 vs Australia, Trent Bridge, 3 p.m.

## SCOREBOARD PAKISTAN VS WEST INDIES

PAKISTAN		WEST INDIES BOWLING	
Imam-ul-Haq c Hope b Cottrell 2 (11b), Fakhar Zaman b Russell 22 (16b, 2x4, 1x6), Babar Azam c Hope b Thomas 22 (33b, 2x4), Haris Sohail c Hope b Russell 8 (11b, 1x4), Sarfaraz Ahmed c Hope b Holder 8 (12b, 1x4), Mohd. Hafeez c Cottrell b Thomas 18 (24b, 2x4), Imad Wasim c Gayle b Holder 1 (3b), Shadab Khan lbw b Thomas 0 (1b), Hasan Ali c Cottrell b Holder 1 (4b), Wahab Riaz b Thomas 18 (11b, 1x4, 2x6), Mohd. Amir (not out) 3 (6b), Extras (nb-2, w-2): 4; Total (in 21.4 overs): 105.	Cottrell 4-0-18-1, Holder 5-0-42-3, Russell 3-1-4-2, Brathwaite 4-0-14-0, Thomas 5.4-0-27-4.		
WEST INDIES		WEST INDIES BOWLING	
Chris Gayle c Shadab b Amir 50 (34b, 6x4, 3x6), Shai Hope c Hafeez b Amir 11 (17b, 1x4), Darren Bravo c Azam b Amir 0 (4b), Nicholas Pooran (not out) 34 (19b, 4x4, 2x6), Shimron Hetmyer (not out) 7 (8b), Extras (lb-3, w-3): 6; Total: (for three wickets in 13.4 overs): 108.	1-36 (Hope, 4.3 overs), 2-46 (Bravo, 6.2), 3-77 (Gayle, 10.5).		
FALL OF WICKETS		PAKISTAN BOWLING	
1-17 (Imam, 2.6 overs), 2-35 (Zaman, 5.5), 3-45 (Sohail, 9.4), 4-62 (Azam, 13.1), 5-75 (Sarfaraz, 16.1), 6-77 (Wasim, 16.6), 7-78 (Shadab, 17.3), 8-81 (Hasan, 18.3), 9-83 (Hafeez, 19.3).	Amir 6-0-26-3, Hasan 4-0-39-0, Riaz 3.4-1-40-0.		
<b>Toss:</b> West Indies			
<b>Man-of-the-Match:</b> Thomas.			
West Indies won by seven wickets and 218 balls to spare.			

## Kiwis comfortable as 'underdogs'

Sri Lankans have a nightmare to put behind them



**Master craftsman:** Veteran Ross Taylor's recent form has raised New Zealand's hopes of claiming the elusive trophy. •AFP

## PREVIEW

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

New Zealand is happy to go under the radar as it prepares to launch the campaign for World Cup glory against Sri Lanka in Cardiff on Saturday.

The Black Caps reached the final four years ago for the first time after six semi-final defeats, only to be soundly beaten by Australia in Melbourne.

Kane Williamson has replaced the swashbuckling Brendon McCullum as captain but the core of the team that came so close in 2015 remains.

## Rise

Since the last World Cup, New Zealand has risen as high as second in the world, but has also been beaten at home by South Africa, England and India.

New Zealand beat India in its opening World Cup warm-up game before going down to the West Indies.

Taylor has been in breathtaking ODI form in recent years, averaging over 60 in 2017 and more than 90 last year.

Williamson, ranked 12th,

and Martin Guptill, ranked 10th, are the other dangers in the batting line-up.

Trent Boult leads an impressive bowling attack, with Colin de Grandhomme and Tim Southee for company. Spinners Ish Sodhi and Mitchell Santner offer useful variety.

The Kiwis start clear favourites in their opener against 1996 winner Sri Lanka, a side that has slumped to ninth in the rankings.

## Tough job

Newly-appointed captain Dimuth Karunaratne, who has returned to the ODI fold after four years, has been handed the responsibility of lifting a team that has lost eight of past nine ODIs.

But Sri Lanka has an impressive World Cup record, with one title, two runner-up finishes and one semi-final appearance.

"Sri Lanka always find a way to do well in World Cups," said former captain Mahela Jayawardene.

"There have been some changes to the set-up. The captain himself hasn't played one-day cricket for a while, but he's a wonderful player."

## The squads:

**New Zealand:** Kane Williamson (Capt.), Martin Guptill, Henry Nicholls, Ross Taylor, Tom Latham, Colin Munro, Tom Blundell, Jimmy Neesham, Colin de Grandhomme, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee, Matt Henry, Lockie Ferguson and Trent Boult.

**Sri Lanka:** Dimuth Karunaratne (Capt.), Lasith Malinga, Angelo Mathews, Thisara Perera, Kusal Perera, Dhananjaya de Silva, Kusal Mendis, Isuru Udana, Milinda Siriwardana, Avishka Fernando, Jeevan Mendis, Lahiru Thirimanne, Jeffrey Vandersay, Nuwan Pradeep and Suranga Lakmal.

THE FACE-OFF					
NEW ZEALAND V SRI LANKA					
CARDIFF					
HEAD-TO-HEAD					
	Matches	NZ	SL	Tie	NR
Overall	98	48	41	1	8
World Cup	10	4	6	-	-

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 (SD & HD), 3 P.M.

## Smith and Warner's IPL stint has helped, says Finch

The Aussie skipper feels that the high standards of the league has helped the duo adapt quickly

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Australia captain Aaron Finch said on Friday that Steve Smith and David Warner's stint in the IPL was important as it helped them adapt faster to international cricket.

On the eve of the team's opener against Afghanistan, Finch said, "I think when you are a world-class player, you adapt really quickly. Having them play in the IPL was really important. That's a higher standard of cricket and it just gets you back up to as close to international competition as you can."

The skipper said he also knew they would make a strong comeback.

"There was never any issue about how he (Smith) would bounce back, and the same with David. They are both so competitive, they have got great records. There was never any doubt how well they would come back."

Warner is fit to face Afghanistan after recovering



**Single-minded:** Smith will be keen to shut out all distractions and focus on the task ahead. •LUKE WALKER/GETTY IMAGES

from a sore muscle, he said.

"David is fine. He will play tomorrow [Saturday], no doubt about that. We are very close to a starting XI but we are not going to name it yet. Everyone is in contention."

"Afghanistan has turned into a really world-class side at times, they've got some of the best bowlers in the world and their batting is improv-

ing all the time."

## Fairytale

Afghanistan's rise from associate-nation status to cricket's elite has been nothing short of a fairytale.

The team witnessed a captaincy change two months before the start of the World Cup, with little-known Gulbadin Naib named captain in place of Asghar Afghan, a

THE FACE-OFF					
AFGHANISTAN V AUSTRALIA					
BRISTOL					
HEAD-TO-HEAD					
	Matches	Afg	Aus	Tie	NR
Overall	2	0	2	-	-
World Cup	1	0	1	-	-

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 3, 6 P.M.

move that did not go down well with some senior members of the team.

But the team has now settled to focus on its World Cup campaign.

"The team has changed from four years ago, and the last couple of years we have improved very well in every department. We are just focusing on tomorrow. The World Cup is a big stage, and we are looking forward to doing our best," said Naib on Friday.

Star spinner Rashid Khan carries the team's hopes on his shoulders with his ability to run through opposition batting -- he tops the world

Twenty20 bowling rankings and lies third in ODIs.

## The squads:

**Australia:** Aaron Finch (Capt.), Jason Behrendorff, Alex Carey, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Pat Cummins, Usman Khawaja, Nathan Lyon, Shaun Marsh, Glenn Maxwell, Kane Richardson, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, David Warner, and Adam Zampa.

**Afghanistan:** Gulbadin Naib (Capt.), Mohammad Shahzad, Noor Ali Zadran, Hazratullah Zazai, Rahmat Shah, Asghar Afghan, Hashmatullah Shahidi, Najibullah Zadran, Samiullah Shinwari, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Dawlat Zadran, Aftab Alam, Hamid Hassan, and Mujeeb Ur Rahman.

## Langer against booing Smith and Warner

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BRISTOL

Australia head coach Justin Langer has called on fans to show Steve Smith and David Warner respect in the World Cup, and not jeer them.

"I think it's really important that people show respect as well," said Langer.

"They made a mistake and paid a big price for it. After the experience of Hampshire [the two were booed], we have a pretty good idea about to expect. We've talked about it a lot and we can put strategies in place.

"When it happens, it doesn't make it any easier. They are human beings, that's the truth -- and that's what I find the hardest."

## Work hard, Play hard



**Downtime:** Kohli and his men, at a bonding session, are ready for an ambush. •COURTESY: VIRATKOHLI/TWITTER