

India sweats over Dhawan's fitness

The opener injured his left thumb in the game against Australia



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
NOTTINGHAM

It rained all night here and as Tuesday dawned moist and cold, the water dripped off tiled roofs, window panes, park benches, garden roses, branches and leaves. Rivulets slithered on the roads while denizens of this town famous for its Robin Hood tales, clutched their all-weather jackets and walked. There was an acoustic symphony to the pitter-patter and the temperature wavered between seven and 10 degree Celsius.

With India and New Zealand scheduled to clash in a World Cup game at Trent Bridge here on Thursday, the damp climate affected the practice stints of both squads. India cancelled its session, while New Zealand retreated into the indoor facility for a hit. And as room heaters in the adjoining apartments went on over-drive, news began to trickle in from sources stating that Shikhar Dhawan had suffered a suspected hair-line fracture of his left thumb.

Under observation

Speculation raged around whether a replacement would be sought and Rishabh Pant's name was propped up. But there was no clarification from the team-management until much later in the evening when the media manager Moulin Parikh texted a message in the BCCI's media WhatsApp group: "Shikhar Dhawan will be under observation."

After a while, he added that "the team-management has decided that Mr. Dhawan will continue to be in England and his progress will be monitored. Mr. Dhawan sustained an injury on the back of his left hand in the region between the index



Painful blow: Shikhar Dhawan has injured the back of his left hand in the region between the index finger and thumb, according to a BCCI message. •HENRY BROWNE/GETTY IMAGES

finger and thumb." It may be recalled that the opener was struck on his hand by a delivery from Pat Cummins, during the early part of his 117 in the World Cup game against Australia at the Oval on Sunday. The southpaw, however, swallowed a pill, applied some pain-relief spray and soldiered on till he was dismissed in the 37th over.

Subsequently, he did not turn up to field while Aaron Finch's men launched their chase. Television cameras showed Dhawan sitting inside the dressing room, with an ice-pack around his bruised thumb.

Later Virat Kohli was asked about Dhawan's injury and the skipper replied: "I

am not too sure at the moment. Patrick [Farhat, the physio] is in control of the situation. He will give us an update."

Tweaking the eleven

If Dhawan's injury is indeed of a grave nature, Kohli and the management will have to tweak the playing eleven. A straight-forward swap would be for K.L. Rahul, traditionally an opener, to be promoted up the order.

But the solidity and weight of accumulated runs (4,681 at an average of 45.89), that Dhawan and Rohit Sharma bring to the table, would be missed. Add to it their left-right combination which forces bowlers to constantly alter their lines.

HMD DISPO VAN
THE MOST TRUSTED BRAND
NOW IN INSULIN PEN NEEDLE
www.hmdhealthcare.com

Presuming Rahul moves to the top, it opens a middle-order slot that could either feature Dinesh Karthik or Vijay Shankar. Thankfully for India, all its batsmen flourished against Australia.

"I got runs, Hardik [Pandya] played outstandingly

well, M.S. [Dhoni] played his role perfectly, K.L. [Rahul] struck the ball so beautifully. So from that point of view, I think we played a really good one-day game, something that any team would want to do," Kohli had said after the 36-run triumph over the Aussies.

Eyes on weather

Meanwhile, eyes will be peering at the skies as wet weather has affected three contests so far in these early days of the World Cup. The forecast for Thursday states: "Light rain showers and a moderate breeze." However, more than the atmospheric patterns, Dhawan's fitness or the lack of it will be the bigger worry for Kohli & Co.

Another game abandoned

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRISTOL

Sri Lanka's World Cup match against Bangladesh was abandoned without a ball being bowled due to rain here on Tuesday.

The umpires' decision left tournament organisers with the unwanted record for the most number of abandoned games at a World Cup, surpassing the two each at the 1992 tournament in Australia and New Zealand and the 2003 edition in southern Africa.

It was the second successive World Cup match at Bristol that had fallen victim to bad weather, with Sri Lanka's group game against Pakistan at southwest county Gloucestershire's headquarters on Friday also a no-result washout.

Only one of three World Cup matches scheduled to take place in Bristol produced any play.

Heavy overnight and early morning rain delayed the scheduled start of Tuesday's match.

And with rain continuing to fall, the umpires – after several inspections – bowed to the inevitable by calling off the game off at 1:57 p.m. local time.

Both sides received a point for the washout.

It was the second World Cup no-result in as many days after rain cut short South Africa's match against the West Indies in Southampton on Monday.

Next assignment

SRI LANKA: June 15 vs Australia, The Oval, 3 p.m.
BANGLADESH: June 17 vs West Indies, Taunton, 3 p.m.

Zings stands by its bails

No review of use for now, says ICC

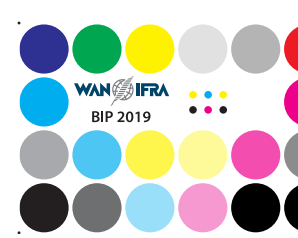
AYAN ACHARYA

Five times in 13 games of Cricket World Cup 2019 the ball has hit the stumps only for the electronic 'zing' bails to light up but stay firmly in place.

The latest incident of the bails not being dislodged came when Australia opener David Warner edged India seamer Jasprit Bumrah onto his leg-stump at the Oval on Sunday.

Zings International director David Ligertwood says the company is monitoring the situation. "The Zing wicket system has operated in well over a thousand

games. The recent cluster (of incidents) has us stumped," said Ligertwood.



The bails have been in use since 2012. They were used at the 2015 World Cup and have been regular fixtures in the Indian Premier League and Australia's Big Bash League. Zing was looking at

whether practical modifications were possible, said Ligertwood, co-developer of the wicket system.

"The issue isn't about the weight of the bails, as a complicated interdependent range of factors come into play.

The bails, stumps, stump grooves, pitch conditions, stump cam, etc," he said.

The ICC, meanwhile, has made it clear it will not review the use of the zing bails. These perform exactly as regular ones and, in fact, are lighter than those used by umpires when it is windy," a spokesperson said.

Waugh heaps praise on Pandya

Says he's reminded of Klusener's fireworks in the 1999 edition

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

Former Australia captain Steve Waugh foresees Hardik Pandya dominating the ongoing World Cup the way South African Lance Klusener did in the 1999 edition as he feels the Indian all-rounder's clean-hitting is something that no opposing skipper can deal with.

Pandya stroked his way to a 27-ball 48 at The Oval.

"...it's the innings of Pandya that will send shivers down opposition spines. This guy might just be the equivalent of Klusener at the 1999 World Cup.

"He has the ability to begin his innings like most finish, with clean hitting that no opposing captain can protect," Waugh wrote in his



Hardik Pandya... packing a punch. •AP

column for the ICC's official website.

The damaging stroke-play by Pandya reminded Waugh

of Klusener's fireworks in the 1999 World Cup.

Klusener was player of the tournament 20 years ago in England for his destructive lower-order hitting that netted 281 runs at a strike rate of 122.17.

The left-hander's exploits powered South Africa to within one run of making the final at Lord's, but a frantic run out in the semifinal at Edgbaston resulted in Waugh's Australia securing a famous tie.

Australia went on to win the World Cup outclassing Pakistan in the final.

"When they (India) get off to a solid opening partnership they then have the luxury of seeing Virat Kohli orchestrate the remainder of the innings," Waugh wrote.

Malinga bereaved

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BRISTOL

Sri Lanka fast bowler Lasith Malinga will leave for home after Tuesday's World Cup match against Bangladesh, following the death of his mother-in-law, but will return in time for Friday's game against Australia.

"Malinga will leave the team following Sri Lanka's World Cup game against Bangladesh as his mother-in-law has passed away," Sri Lanka Cricket Board said on its official Twitter handle. He is expected to join the team, before the team's next #CWC19 game against Australia on 15th."

Gym time



Getting ready: Members of Team India after a training session on Tuesday. •COURTESY: TWITTER.COM/JASPRITBUMRAH93

Rain plays on captains' minds

Luck with the weather may play a role in teams' progress

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TAUNTON

Australia captain Aaron Finch hopes the holder doesn't become the latest World Cup team to be derailed by bad weather.

Where they stand

Team	Mat	Won	Lost	NR	PTS	NRR
New Zealand	3	3	0	0	6	2.163
England	3	2	1	0	4	1.307
India	2	2	0	0	4	0.539
Australia	3	2	1	0	4	0.483
Sri Lanka	4	1	1	2	4	-1.517
West Indies	3	1	1	1	3	2.054
Bangladesh	4	1	2	1	3	-0.714
Pakistan	3	1	1	1	3	-2.412
South Africa	4	0	3	1	1	-0.952
Afghanistan	3	0	3	0	0	-1.493

*till the Bangladesh-Sri Lanka match on June 11

Heavy rain has impacted three matches in the World Cup so far.

And Finch has been anxiously eyeing the forecast to see if Australia could be the next victim when it faces Pa-

'I am always looking to improve'

Ferguson has had a dream start to his WC campaign

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NOTTINGHAM

Lockie Ferguson has had a dream start to his World Cup campaign. The New Zealand speedster's returns so far have been three for 22, one for 40 and four for 37 against Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan respectively. Ferguson spoke to the media at Trent Bridge here on Tuesday. Excerpts.

Perfect launch: A very good start from the whole bowling group and we have taken 30 wickets in three games.

Pleasing to contribute in each game and getting bounce off the wicket has been pretty nice. I am working on a few areas on how to put batsmen under pressure.

The process: I am always looking to improve. Fortunately I have a very experienced bowling group around me and we always talk a lot, particularly when we are playing in the middle. It's a big positive environment to be playing in.

Bounce and pace: I don't



On the ball: Lockie Ferguson is working on how to put pressure on the batsmen. •DAVID ROGERS/GETTY IMAGES

swing the ball upfront, so I tend to bowl in the middle overs, create chances and wickets. In the last game, James Neesham came in and bowled the way we knew he could bowl.

He is a big lad and can bowl quick and get bounce. It's important we focus on what we do best. It's exciting for Trent Bridge to have some bounce, hopefully it plays in our favour.

Countering India: India is an exceptional side with

world class players. In Trent Bridge, there's pressure on batters to score runs. If they get out, we get early wickets. The pressure accumulates and we have done that in the first few games.

Weather woes: That's part of the game. In New Zealand we often get games rained out. It's really hard to make a call on that now.

Hopefully we will get a full day's game. We will adjust our game plans according to the pitch and weather.

Reserve days logistically impossible: Richardson

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NOTTINGHAM

Damp weather has played spoilsport and three World Cup games have concluded with a no-result. There have been whispers about the need for reserve days even for the round-robin league fixtures but the International Cricket Council's chief executive Dave Richardson, through a statement, clarified that logistically it is impossible.

"Factoring in a reserve day for every match at the ICC men's cricket World Cup would significantly increase the length of the tournament and practically would be extremely complex to deliver. It would impact pitch preparation, team recovery and travel days, accommo-



Dave Richardson. •AFP

dation and venue availability, tournament staffing, volunteer and match officials' availability, broadcast logistics and very importantly the spectators who in some instances have travelled

hours to be at the game. There is also no guarantee that the reserve day would be free from rain either," Richardson wrote.

Unexpected rains

He explained that there are reserve days for the knock-out games and blamed unexpected rains as the cause of the tournament's current predicament: "This is extremely unseasonable weather.

"In the last couple of days we have experienced more than twice the average monthly rainfall for June which is usually the third driest month in the UK.

"In 2018 there was just 2mm of rain in June but the last 24 hours alone has seen around 100mm."

THE FACE-OFF
Australia vs Pakistan
TAUNTON
HEAD-TO-HEAD

	Matches	Aus	Pak	Tied	NR
Overall	103	67	32	1	3
World Cup	9	5	4	0	0

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

