

STOKES SET FOR FIRST T20 START SINCE FINAL TRAUMA

LONDON: All-rounder Ben Stokes is set to play his first international T20 match since his traumatic experience in the World Cup final earlier this year after being named in the squad for next Wednesday's match against Pakistan.

The 25-year-old has not played T20 international cricket since the West Indies' Carlos Brathwaite smashed him for four successive sixes in the final over of April's

World Cup final to seal an unlikely victory for the West Indians.

Stokes is joined for the game at Old Trafford by Durham county team-mate Mark Wood in a squad that includes nine of the team which beat Sri Lanka in their previous T20 match in July.

Captain Eoin Morgan can also call on the experience of prolific batsman Joe Root, who is named in the squad along-

side all-rounder Moeen Ali and Alex Hales. All three were rested for the Sri Lanka match earlier in the summer.

"It is excellent to see the progress we are making in white ball cricket across both formats," said national selector James Whitaker. "The IT20 international against Pakistan will give the squad another opportunity to measure their development. "The squad

has an exciting feel with exceptional talent throughout.

"We are delighted to welcome back Ben Stokes and Mark Wood into the squad. Both are world-class players and are an important part of our long-term plans to become the best side in the world.

"It is testament to the excellent work being nurtured in the county structure

and through the England Lions, that there is a depth of quality pushing the nucleus of the current group."

Squad

Eoin Morgan (capt), Moeen Ali, Sam Billings, Jos Buttler, Alex Hales, Chris Jordan, Tymal Mills, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Jason Roy, Ben Stokes, David Willey, Mark Wood. — AFP

MATCH-WINNER STEYN HUNGRY FOR MORE

CENTURION: Fast bowler Dale Steyn set up a series-clinching 204-run win for South Africa on the fourth day of the second and final Test against New Zealand at SuperSport Park on Tuesday, then said he was still not quite at his best after a lengthy injury lay-off.

Playing in his first Test in eight months after recovering from groin and shoulder injuries, Steyn took three wickets with his first 11 balls of the innings and finished with five for 33 as New Zealand were bowled out for 195 despite a defiant innings of 76 by Henry Nicholls.

"I'm still a long way from where I want to be," said Steyn, 33.

"There was a lot of assistance in this wicket and I put the ball in the right spots enough times to ask questions. But I want to get the pace up a bit more. "Overs under the belt and a little more strength work and I'll eventually get there."

Steyn took his total of wickets to 416 in 84 Tests, going past Pakistan's Wasim Akram into 11th place on the world all-time list, only five behind ninth-placed Shaun Pollock, South Africa's leading wicket-taker.

But he said going past Pollock and setting records did not motivate him.

"It really doesn't bother me," he said. "I'm not going to sit on my couch when I'm 70 and go, I was the leading wicket-taker. "I'll remember tonight, I will remember beating Australia in Australia, I will remember winning in England and hopefully I will remember winning a World Cup. I just love this game."

Stand-in captain Faf du Plessis said it had been an almost perfect Test for South Africa. "If I had written a script it would have been almost like this."

He said South Africa's plunge from top of the Test rankings to number seven they climbed two places after Tuesday's win - had prompted some soul searching. "We had some real good discussions and the

guys took it on board," he said. "We've found our passion again."

It looked as though it would be easy for the hosts when Steyn and Vernon Philander ripped through New Zealand's top four batsmen for seven runs inside the first four overs of the innings.

But the left-handed Nicholls, playing in his sixth Test match, displayed courage and concentration in making his second Test half-century and highest score to delay South Africa's celebrations.

He found a similarly determined partner in BJ Watling, who made 32 in a two-hour, 68-run fifth wicket partnership, while Mitchell Santner, Doug Bracewell and Tim Southee all provided varying degrees of resistance.

Nicholls was last man out for 76, scored off 140 balls with 12 fours.

Williamson said that sending South Africa in after winning the toss had been based on their expectations of a well-grassed pitch. "They played very well to get 450-plus but there was enough in the wicket to perhaps bowl them out for a below-par total," he said.

"It was a good toss to lose and unfortunately I won it. Credit goes to the way they applied themselves with the bat. Their first innings was the winning of the match."

Batting on a pitch which deteriorated more quickly than expected had been difficult. "Steyn and Philander are world-class bowlers. Throw Rabada into the mix, who is young and extremely talented and it makes an extremely tough challenge but one that all the batters were excited to come up against. In terms of experiences there's nothing better for you as a player to move your game forward."

He singled out Nicholls. "For a young cricketer starting his career to come up against an attack like that on a tough surface is a great experience to have. He showed a lot of character." — AFP



NOTTINGHAM: England's Alex Hales bats watched by Pakistan wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed during the third one day international cricket match at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, England, Tuesday. — AP

ENGLAND HIT WORLD RECORD 444-3 TO CRUSH PAKISTAN

RECORDS GALORE AS ENGLAND WIN SERIES

NOTTINGHAM: England amassed a world record one-day international total of 444 for three as they crushed Pakistan by 169 runs at Trent Bridge on Tuesday to take an unbeatable 3-0 lead in the five-match series.

Jos Buttler struck the last ball of the innings for four to take Eoin Morgan's men past Sri Lanka's 443 for nine against Netherlands in July 2006. Hales plundered 171, the highest individual limited-overs score by an England batsman, before Buttler reached his fifty off 22 deliveries, another record for his country.

The hosts passed their previous highest total of 408 for nine, made against New Zealand last year, while captain Morgan got to his half-century off 24 deliveries as he and Buttler shared an unbroken fourth-wicket partnership of 161.

"Quite a monumental knock from Alex Hales," said Morgan. "To score 171 in any form of the game is remarkable and our innings was based around that. "Records are hugely important, it emphasises we're not just a chasing side. We probably have 17 or 18 players who have played in the last year and a half and could come into this side." Hales flayed four sixes and 22 fours in his 122-ball knock to surpass Robin Smith's 167 not out against Australia in Birmingham in 1993.

Caught off a no-ball on 72 and dropped on 114, the 27-year-old right-hander passed Smith's score by pulling Hasan Ali to the mid-wicket boundary.

PAKISTAN PAIN

The bowler trapped him lbw with the next delivery to end a second-wicket stand of 248

SCOREBOARD			
NOTTINGHAM: Scoreboard Tuesday at the end of third one-day international between England and Pakistan at Trent Bridge: England Innings			
England Innings		Pakistan Innings	
Jason Roy c Ahmed b Hasan Ali	15	Sami Aslam c Moeen Ali b Woakes	8
Alex Hales lbw b Hasan Ali	171	Sharjeel Khan c Stokes b Woakes	58
Joe Root c Ahmed b Nawaz	85	Azhar Ali c Rashid b Woakes	13
Jos Buttler not out	90	Babar Azam c Morgan b Stokes	9
Eoin Morgan not out	57	Sarfraz Ahmed c Root b Rashid	38
Extras (6b, 8lb, 3w, 9nb)	26	Shoaib Malik c Buttler b Plunkett	1
TOTAL (for 3 wickets)	444	Mohammad Nawaz c Morgan b Rashid	34
Overs:	50.	Hasan Ali b Moeen Ali	4
Fall of wickets: 1-33, 2-281, 3-283		Wahab Riaz lbw b Wood	14
		Yasir Shah not out	26
		Mohammad Amir c and b Woakes	58
Bowling: Mohammad Amir 10-0-72-0 (1w), Hasan Ali 10-0-74-2 (3nb), Wahab Riaz 10-0-110-0 (2w 6nb), Mohammad Nawaz 10-0-62-1, Yasir Shah 6-0-48-0, Azhar Ali 1-0-20-0, Shoaib Malik 3-0-44-0.		Extras (4b, 2lb, 5w, 1nb)	12
		TOTAL (all out)	275
		Overs: 42.4.	
		Result: England won by 169 runs. — AP	

with Joe Root, who fell soon after for 85, but the pain was far from over for the Pakistan bowlers.

Buttler hammered six sixes and three fours to get to his half-century and finished 90 not out off 51 balls while Morgan ended unbeaten on 57. Hales and Root's partnership was also England's third-highest in one-day internationals. Pakistan, in reply, were bowled out for 275 in 42.4 overs with paceman Chris Woakes the chief destroyer, taking four for 41. Opener Sharjeel

Khan hit 58 but wickets fell at regular intervals until Mohammad Amir smashed 58 in 28 balls to share an unlikely last-wicket stand of 76 with Yasir Shah (26 not out).

Amir's half-century was the first by a number 11 in ODIs. "It was very tough today," said Pakistan skipper Azhar Ali. "I think they were exceptional innings from Hales and Buttler. "On a wicket like this you really need to support the bowlers and that didn't happen." — Reuters



HWASEONG: In this Sept. 3, 2015, file photo, South Korea's Son Heung-min celebrates scoring a hat-trick against Laos during the Asian zone Group G qualifying soccer match for the 2018 World Cup at Hwaseong Sports Complex Main Stadium in Hwaseong, South Korea. The third round of the Asian region World Cup qualifiers begins today, with 12 teams still in the running for a place at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia. — AP

CHINA OUT TO PROVE W CUP RUN NO FLUKE

SEOUL: Ambitious China are out to prove that reaching the third round of 2018 World Cup qualifying was no fluke when they take on bogey side South Korea today.

China scraped through thanks to their shock 2-0 win over Qatar and the Philippines' almighty 3-2 upset of North Korea on the last day of round two. It means that China, who boast Asia's most expensive league and whose tycoons are snapping up football assets around the globe, are within shouting distance of the World Cup in Russia.

The top two in each of Asia's two groups of six will qualify for the World Cup, while the third-placed sides will face each other for the right to play an intercontinental play-off.

Perennial under-achievers China have only ever reached one World Cup, in 2002, but they have set their sights on hosting and even winning the competition.

First they will need to upset the odds against South Korea, who have reached nine World Cups—and have lost just once to China in the past 30 years.

Coach Gao Hongbo said underdogs China were taking heart from their women's volleyball team, who upset Serbia to win the gold medal at the Rio Olympics. "Everyone in Korean football thinks that within Chinese football we lack fighting spirit and we give up easily," Gao said, according to the ESPN FC website.

"But I'm hoping this time we can show an improvement in this area. "China's women's volleyball team won the Olympic gold medal as an underdog in Rio. They fought with solidarity, and realised all of

their potential. "They are the best role model for us, and we have been inspired greatly by them. Now it is our show."

CHINA RISING

Some 30,000 Chinese fans are expected at Seoul World Cup Stadium but hosts South Korea will start as strong favourites after they breezed through the second round.

"There are no easy teams in the final round," warned Korea's coach Uli Steilike, according to Yonhap news agency. "China have recently pulled up their FIFA rankings and they are a competitive team." Asian champions Australia open with a tricky assignment against Iraq in Perth before flying to UAE, where they will play Mahdi Ali's talented side on Tuesday.

"We kind of pride ourselves on being already prepared for the challenges, then nothing is a surprise," said coach Ange Postecoglou, according to the Soccerobs website.

"We've trialled this kind of scenario of playing in Australia and going into the Middle East a couple of days later. We know exactly what works, we know exactly how our players adapt."

UAE, organisers of the next Asian Cup, also have a globe-trotting schedule as they play Japan in Saitama on Thursday before heading home to face Australia. Also on Thursday, Iran take on 2022 World Cup hosts Qatar in a heavyweight clash in Tehran.

Thursday's games kick off a series of home and away fixtures which finishes in September next year. — AFP

FIVE BRITISH PLAYERS WHO PLAYED IN ITALY

LONDON: Frozen out by new manager Pep Guardiola at Manchester City, England goalkeeper Joe Hart completed a season-long loan move to Italian side Torino on Wednesday.

AFP Sport recalls five British players who went to Italy seeking fame and fortune.

JOHN CHARLES (JUVENTUS, ROMA)

Nicknamed "Il Gigante Buono" ('The Gentle Giant'), Wales international Charles joined Juventus from Leeds United in 1957 and would go on to become one of the Turin giants' greatest foreign signings. The strapping striker, who could also play at centre-back, scored 93 goals in 155 appearances over five years at the club, helping Juve to three Serie A titles and two Coppa Italia crowns. Formidable in the air, he was also renowned for his sense of fair play. He came third in the Ballon d'Or voting in 1959 and was in 1997 elected Juve's greatest foreign player by the club's fans. Charles also spent time at Roma, scoring four goals in 10 Serie A games during the 1962-63 season. He died aged 72 in 2004.

GERRY HITCHENS

(INTER MILAN, TORINO, ATALANTA, CAGLIARI) A largely unheralded figure in his homeland, Hitchens enjoyed the most enduring success in Italy of any British footballer. He joined Inter Milan

from Aston Villa in 1961 and did not return to England until 1969 following subsequent spells at Torino, Atalanta and Cagliari. When he was named in England's squad for the 1962 World Cup in Chile, he became the first English player to represent his country while playing for a club overseas. But manager Alf Ramsey's preference for domestically based players meant Hitchens won only seven international caps, scoring five goals. He died at the age of 48 after suffering a heart attack during a charity football match in North Wales.

DENIS LAW (TORINO)

Law was 21 and a Scotland international when he joined Torino from Manchester City in 1961 for a fee of 115,000 pounds (\$151,000, 135,610 euros). But his time in Italy was dogged by problems from the start, with Inter Milan attempting to hijack his move to Turin before it had been completed. Law struggled to get to grips with the defensive nature of Italian football and in February 1962 he was injured in a car crash with Scottish team-mate Joe Baker. After being sent off in a match against Napoli, he flew home to Aberdeen and managed to force through a move to Manchester United. He would form part of a 'Holy Trinity' alongside George Best and Bobby Charlton at Old Trafford and remains United's third-highest goal-scorer with 237 goals.

PAUL GASCOIGNE (LAZIO)

Gascoigne first caught Italian eyes by starring for England at the 1990 World Cup, capturing hearts with his tears in the semi-final against West Germany after receiving a booking that would have kept him out of the final.

He was due to join Lazio in 1991, but the transfer was delayed by a year after he suffered a serious knee injury playing for Tottenham Hotspur against Nottingham Forest in the FA Cup final. The madcap 'Gazza' endeared himself to Lazio's fans with an 89th-minute equaliser against hated city rivals Roma in his first season. But injuries prevented him making a sustained impact and he returned to Britain with Rangers in 1995.

ASHLEY COLE (ROMA)

Following eight glittering seasons at Chelsea, former England left-back Cole surprisingly pitched up at Roma in 2014. He was praised in Britain for seeking to broaden his horizons, but the move proved a disaster. The early signs were ominous, with Cole mocked on social media after a photograph showed him lurking conspicuously on the edge of a squad photo during pre-season. He played 11 league games in his first season, none in his second and had his contract terminated by mutual consent in January this year after just 18 months. — AFP