

## Sports

# Morgan hopes World Cup win will spark a new English cricket revival

**'I certainly hope participation levels go up or continue to rise'**

**LONDON:** England captain Eoin Morgan hopes his side's "incredible journey" to World Cup glory will inspire a new generation of fans in the sport's birthplace. There have long been concerns about declining player numbers in English cricket, with the sport hidden behind a television paywall in Britain since England's iconic 2005 Ashes series triumph.

But Sunday's match at Lord's — the first of the 12 World Cup finals to end in a tie and to be settled by a Super Over contest — was on free-to-air television. "I certainly hope participation levels go up or continue to rise," said Morgan, who has overseen England's climb from the depths of a miserable first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup.

Morgan, asked if the final would have resonated far beyond cricket's core audience, replied: "I hope so. Obviously today is a big day of sport with Wimbledon and the Silverstone GP going on. "But with Sunday evening, people normally settle in for a bit of (naturalist) David Attenborough or some random film that's on, so I hope they were tuned into the cricket." England, set 242 to win, were dismissed for 241, with Ben Stokes stranded on 84 not out after Mark Wood was run out off the last ball of regulation play.

They then made 15 in their additional Super Over, bowled by Trent Boult, before New Zealand matched that in their own Super Over, bowled by Jofra Archer. But with Martin Gupthill run out off the last ball of the match going for the winning run, England triumphed on boundary count during the match — 26 to 17. England had a moment of astonishing good fortune with a bonus four runs during their main innings when a Gupthill throw deflected off the bat of Stokes, who was diving to make his ground.

**'Allah with us'**

But the Dublin-born Morgan, asked if England had

enjoyed the famed luck of the Irish, said: "I spoke to Adil (England leg-spinner Adil Rashid), he said Allah was definitely with us." It actually epitomizes our team, quite diverse backgrounds and cultures." The 32-year-old added: "It was the most incredible game of cricket, with nothing between the sides. "I commend the Black Caps and Kane (Williamson, New Zealand captain), they've been absolutely incredible."

England have consciously tried to emulate New Zealand's aggressive one-day style since the Black Caps thrashed them in a 2015 group match, with Australian coach Trevor Bayliss appointed after that World Cup. "The biggest risk for us throughout the tournament was not playing a positive brand of cricket," said Morgan after England's World Cup win, which following defeats in the 1979, 1987 and 1992 finals.

Williamson, for whom this was a second straight World Cup final reverse after Australia overwhelmed New Zealand four years ago, said he felt "just gutted". "I think throughout this whole campaign I have spoken about 'uncontrollables' and there were a couple today that were pretty hard to swallow," added star batsman Williamson, named man of the tournament for his 578 runs. Barbados-born fast bowler Archer only made his England debut in May but Morgan still entrusted the 24-year-old with the Super Over.

"Jofra was pretty easy, he's an unbelievably talented player," Morgan explained. Archer said his nerves had been settled by Stokes, who three years ago had four straight sixes hit off him by Carlos Brathwaite during a last-over loss to the West Indies in the 2016 World Twenty20 final in Kolkata. "Stokesy came over and told me, win or lose, today will not define me as a player," said Archer.

The success meant England's cricketers matched the nation's 1966 football team and the 2003 rugby union team



**LONDON:** The winning 2019 England World Cup cricket team (back row LtoR) England's James Vince, England's Ben Stokes, England's Joe Root, England's Jos Buttler, England's Moeen Ali, England's Tom Curran and England's Liam Plunkett, and (front row LtoR) England's Mark Wood, England's Jonny Bairstow, England's Jason Roy, England's captain Eoin Morgan, England's Adil Rashid, England's Chris Woakes and Archer pose with the trophy during a victory event at The Oval yesterday. — AFP

in becoming world champions. But Morgan, asked if he had joined fellow captains Bobby Moore and Martin Johnson on the English sporting equivalent of Mount

Rushmore, said: "Not at all. There's no Mount Rushmore. "Primrose Hill (a northwest London suburb near Lord's), that's about it." — AFP

## Technical knockout: Kiwis praise team, query 'cruel' rules

**WELLINGTON:** Heartbroken New Zealanders expressed pride yesterday in the Black Caps' fighting spirit after defeat to England in the Cricket World Cup final, but also bemusement at the obscure rules that cost them the match. The Black Caps lost even though scores were tied at the end of both regular play and a Super Over shootout, with England's superior boundary count giving them victory.

As Kiwi fans absorbed a second straight loss in the tournament decider, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was concentrating on the positives. "That was undeniably an incredible game. I think as a nation we all aged a year in that Super Over," she posted on social media. "Congratulations to England. And to the Black Caps, I feel nothing but pride. What a team." But her sports minister



**LONDON:** New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson reacts on the pitch after the 2019 Cricket World Cup final between England and New Zealand at Lord's Cricket Ground. — AFP

Grant Robertson questioned the tie-break method.

"What an extraordinary game. Not sure Super Over is the right end," he tweeted. "Whatever, NZ you can be so, so proud of this team." Former Black Cap Scott Styris labeled governing body the ICC "a joke" over the rules but congratulated both teams on a stunning effort. Former New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming's one-word reaction to the result was "cruel",

while even the father of England's Kiwi-born match-winner Ben Stokes felt the Kiwis were hard done by.

Gerard Stokes, a former New Zealand rugby league international who took his son to England as a boy while he pursued his career, said honors were even. "It's a shame there has to be a loser," he told the New Zealand Herald. "They could have shared the trophy but that doesn't seem to be how things are done these days."

## England v New Zealand: WC final talking points

**LONDON:** England beat New Zealand to win their first World Cup in the most dramatic fashion at Lord's on Sunday. Needing a modest 242 for victory, the hosts ended on 241 all out, with Ben Stokes unbeaten on 84, sending the match into a Super Over. The six-ball shootout also ended in a tie, with both sides hitting 15 runs, but Eoin Morgan's side won by virtue of a superior boundary count in the match. Take a look at three things we learned from a memorable final:

### Stokes-Buttler team up to make history

With Jason Roy, Jonny Bairstow, Joe Root and Eoin Morgan back in the dressing room, it needed a special effort from the England middle-order. Stokes was joined by Jos Buttler at the crease and a defiant 110-run partnership got the hosts back in the game. Both renowned for their big hitting, the two men dug deep, running hard for the singles and twos, while the occasional boundary kept the run rate in check.

But after Buttler's departure it was Stokes who almost single-handedly kept England's World Cup dream alive. The prolific partnership was reunited in the Super Over as Stokes and Buttler combined for 15 runs. Wicketkeeper Buttler also made a telling contribution with the gloves as he ran out Martin Gupthill with the final ball of the match.

### Plunkett unbeaten, Archer holds his nerve

England did not lose a single match with Liam Plunkett in the side and he again proved the lucky charm with the prized scalp of Kiwi skipper Kane Williamson. A master of the art of bowling in the middle overs, Plunkett then bowled the dangerous Henry Nicholls for 55 and sent Jimmy Neesham trudging back to the pavilion.

He was ably supported by pace spearhead Chris Woakes, who also took three key wickets. However, it was Jofra Archer whom captain Eoin Morgan trusted to bowl the Super Over. Archer had bowled a brilliant final spell in the New Zealand innings and after a terrible start to the Super Over, the 24-year-old held his nerve to restrict the Black Caps to four runs off the final three balls.

### Nicholls, Latham finally step up

Throughout the World Cup New Zealand were over-reliant on Williamson's runs, but the skipper found support in battling innings from Nicholls and Tom Latham on Sunday. Nicholls stood guard with Williamson for a key second-wicket stand after the Kiwis lost Martin Gupthill early following their decision to bat first in overcast conditions. The usually attacking Nicholls curbed his natural instincts to bring up his first fifty of the tournament. After Nicholls' departure it was Latham who put up his hand in a gritty knock. The wicketkeeper-batsman knuckled down, nudging to point and cover as he put valuable runs on the board against the accurate English attack. — AFP

## The World Cup team of the tournament

**LONDON:** England won the World Cup for the first time after beating New Zealand in Sunday's thrilling final at Lord's, bringing the curtain down on a dramatic event featuring some superb individual performances. AFP Sport names its team of the tournament:

### Rohit Sharma (India)

The 32-year-old emerged as the tournament's star batsman, making history by becoming the first player to hit five hundreds in a single World Cup — a scintillating run that included three successive centuries against England, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Sharma, the tournament's leading scorer, totalled 648 runs, just short of Sachin Tendulkar's World Cup record of 673 scored during the 2003 edition.

### Jason Roy (England)

England did not look the same without their go-for-broke opener when he was missing for three matches after suffering a torn hamstring. With Roy, who scored 443 runs at an average of 63.28, restored to the line-up, England's confidence was back and, with it, the aggressive style that has served them so well over the past four years.

### David Warner (Australia)

Warner is one of only four Australians to pass the 500-run mark at a single World Cup, joining Matthew Hayden and Ricky Ponting, who both made their runs at the 2007 event, and his 2019 captain Aaron Finch. The 32-year-old finished with 647 runs and registered the highest individual score in this year's World Cup when he made 166 against Bangladesh — his prolific form at least partially healing his reputation after returning from suspension following last year's ball-tampering scandal.

### Shakib Al Hasan (Bangladesh)

Showing why he is ranked as the world's top all-rounder in ODIs, Shakib made the most of his promotion to the number three position, accumulating 606 runs and also picking up 11 wickets.

### 'Did we lose?'

News website stuff.co.nz said New Zealand had been denied by the fine print. "England did not win the Cricket World Cup final and the Black Caps did not lose it," an editorial said. "But the tournament had to have a winner, somehow. And in the end, what was perhaps the most dramatic ODI ever played, was decided by a curious, contentious fine-print rule." It was a theme echoed by Sam Flynn Scott from pop culture website The Spinoff's cricket podcast.

"Did we lose the game? It seems like it was tied and then it was tied again, then there was just some stupid rule about who wins the World Cup," he said. "It should have been who took the most wickets (which would have given New Zealand victory)." Former New Zealand bowler Daniel Vettori said it "feels unfortunate" the final was decided on boundaries scored but the Black Caps had to accept the rules.

He said the match also turned on several key moments, including a freak fielding deflection off Stokes' bat that raced to the boundary and a missed opportunity for Trent Boult to catch the England batsman on the boundary. "It's going to be remembered for so many little moments and unfortunately all those little moments probably went against New Zealand," he told ESPN. — AFP

### Kane Williamson (New Zealand)

The unflappable Black Caps batsman scored 578 runs in the tournament — the most by a captain in a World Cup, going past Mahela Jayawardene's mark of 548 in 2007. He was named man of the tournament, but that will not erase the heartache of his team's defeat in the final.

### Ben Stokes (England)

Man of the match in the final with an unbeaten 84, Stokes was the ninth-highest run scorer in the tournament despite coming in at five in the batting order, with 465 runs. Stokes also proved handy with the ball, taking seven wickets, and produced one of the catches of the tournament in the opening game to dismiss South Africa's Andile Phehlukwayo.

### Alex Carey (Australia)

Confident with the gloves and capable of explosive hitting, the 27-year-old Carey was the tournament's most eye-catching wicketkeeper-batsman and by the semi-final he had been promoted to number five in the batting order as a reward for his composed displays.

### Mitchell Starc (Australia)

Mitchell Starc finished as the tournament's leading wicket taker with 27, in the process setting a new record for most wickets at a single World Cup. The lethal left-arm quick's haul broke the previous record of 26 held by retired Australia paceman Glenn McGrath.

### Jofra Archer (England)

Barbados-born paceman Archer took 20 wickets to underline why England were so keen to rush him into the squad. His fiery spells were crucial to England's victory — no-one took more wickets for the champions — and fittingly he bowled the Super Over that sealed the trophy in a final to remember.

### Lockie Ferguson (New Zealand)

Ferguson's 3-50 in the final made him the second-highest wicket taker in the tournament with 21 in just nine games at an impressive average of 19.47. It meant he outshone his more celebrated team-mate Trent Boult, who finished with 17 wickets.

### Jasprit Bumrah (India)

With his awkward bowling action, Bumrah will never earn many style points, but the paceman makes up for that with a potent combination of speed and accuracy that helped him top the India charts with 18 wickets. — AFP

## England 'mistakenly' awarded extra run in World Cup final

**SYDNEY:** England were mistakenly awarded an extra run during their nail-biting World Cup win over New Zealand at Lord's, a member of the sport's chief rules committee told media yesterday. A freak fielding deflection off Ben Stokes' bat that raced to the boundary saw the team awarded six runs with three balls to go in the final over on Sunday.

Scores were tied at the end of regular play and the resulting Super Over shootout, with England then handed their first-ever World Cup victory for their superior boundary count. But former umpire Simon Taufel told Fox Sports Australia that umpires had made a "clear mistake", as the batsmen had not crossed for their second run.

"They should have been awarded five runs, not six," he said, adding that England's Adil Rashid should have faced the second-last ball instead of Stokes as a result. Taufel, a five-time winner of the International Cricket Council's Umpire of the Year award, now sits on the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) laws sub-committee, the worldwide custodian of cricket's sometimes obscure rules of play.

The Australian defended the match umpires, who he said had to make a complicated judgment, and said it would be "unfair" to say the decision altered the outcome of the tournament. "Unfortunately that sort of thing happens from time to time. It's a part of the game that we play," Taufel said. "I don't wish to nitpick, just hope it never happens in such moments ever again."

England, who have often cited a humiliating defeat by New Zealand at the 2015 World Cup as the catalyst for their climb to the top of the one-day international rankings, finally have a World Cup win to go with their three losing appearances in the 1979, 1987 and 1992 finals. By contrast, defeat is devastating for New Zealand, who were also looking to win the trophy for the first time after being well beaten by Australia in the 2015 showpiece. — AFP



**LONDON:** England's Ben Stokes holds his hands up in apology after the ball hit him and deflected to reach the boundary, as he dived to make his ground during the 2019 Cricket World Cup final between England and New Zealand at Lord's Cricket Ground. — AFP