

New Zealand on brink of World Cup semi-finals with win over Sri Lanka

Inspired bowling display by Trent Boult and dominant batting propel New Zealand to brink of semi-finals

● **New Zealand secures an emphatic five-wicket victory over Sri Lanka**

● **Chasing a modest target of 172, New Zealand achieves victory with 160 balls to spare**

AFP | Bengaluru

Trent Boult led an inspired bowling display to help New Zealand down Sri Lanka by five wickets yesterday and move to the brink of the World Cup semi-finals.

Chasing a modest 172 for victory, New Zealand rode on an opening stand between Devon Conway (45) and Rachin Ravindra (42) to achieve the target with 160 balls to spare in Bengaluru.

The Kiwis remain in fourth position with 10 points ahead of Pakistan and Afghanistan and a with much superior net run-rate than their rivals.

Both Pakistan

and Afghanistan need improbable victory margins in their last matches against England and South Africa respectively to have any of chance of making the final four.

The Black Caps, in their last league match, bounced back from four straight losses to close in on a likely semi-final clash against undefeated India.

Ravindra, who also took two wickets, added to his blazing form in the tournament including three centuries to

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Rachin Ravindra plays a shot



with the wicket of Conway and soon Ravindra followed his partner to

the pavilion.

Skipper Kane Williamson fell for 14 and Mark Chapaman was run out but Daryl Mitchell's attacking 43 ensured an easy way home despite his departure 10 runs short of the target.

Boult returned figures of 3-37 after the Kiwis elected to field first and bundled out Sri Lanka for 171 in 46.4 overs.

Opener Kusal Perera smashed



New Zealand, after four consecutive losses, bounces back with an inspiring performance, with Rachin Ravindra topping the batting chart with 565 runs in the tournament, surpassing Quinton de Kock

51 but the rest of the batting fell apart.

Sri Lanka slipped to 128-9 before number nine Maheesh Theekshana (38 not out) and Dilshan Madushanka (19) put on a 43-run 10th-wicket to add some respect to the total.

Sri Lanka lost half their side for 70 inside 10 overs after Lockie Ferguson sent back the left-handed Perera, who hit nine fours and two sixes in his 28-ball knock.

Perera was dropped on nought by wicketkeeper Tom Latham off Tim Southee who struck with

Scorecard

New Zealand 172 for 5 (Conway 45, Mitchell 43, Mathews 2-29) beat Sri Lanka 171 (Perera 51, Boult 3-37, Ravindra 2-21) by six wickets

a wicket on the next ball to send back Pathum Nissanka, caught behind for two.

Boult then took the wickets of skipper Kusal Mendis (six), Sadeera Samarawickrama (one) and Charith Asalanka (eight), who was given not out but the Kiwis successfully reviewed the decision in their favour.

The Mendis strike was Boult's 50th World Cup wicket to enter elite company including Glenn McGrath, Muttiah Muralitharan, Mitchell Starc, Lasith Malinga and Wasim Akram.

Leg-spinner Mitchell Santner struck twice with his left-arm spin to claim the key wickets of Angelo Mathews (16) and Dhananjaya de Silva (19).

Mathews looked dejected after being caught at slip off Santner's left-arm spin in his first innings after his "timed out" dismissal -- the first in international cricket history -- in the team's previous loss to Bangladesh.

Sri Lanka suffered their seventh loss in nine league matches.

'BRAVE CF 79 is the craziest fight card we've ever put on', celebrates president Mohammed Shahid

TDI | Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation, the most global Mixed Martial Arts organization in the world, is set to make history with the announcement of the third edition of BRAVE International Combat Week, which takes place between December 5 and 16 at the Khalifa Sports City Arena, in Bahrain.

BRAVE CF 79, the second of three events was hailed by president Mohammed Shahid as "maybe the craziest card we've put together".

Speaking at a press conference to announce the BICW in front of the Middle Eastern Media, Shahid listed all the top action fans can expect from BRAVE CF 79, which takes place on December 8, and has hailed the level of talent within the fight card.

The headline bout for BRAVE CF 79 features a high-stakes Middleweight clash between two formidable fighters, Tahar Hadbi and Ismail Naurdiev. This showdown could very well de-



vide the future of the 185-pound division, as both men come in to BRAVE CF 79 desperately in need of a win.

"BRAVE CF 79 is honestly one of the craziest events we've put on out of the 80 fight cards we've done so far. The pure amount of talent is on another level. Everyone knows the history of Tahar Hadbi in BRAVE CF and we're so glad to have him back and headlining this show against Ismail Naurdiev. I expect a treat for striking fans of MMA. And the deeper it goes, the card just gets crazier -- Ramazan Gitinov,

the best amateur fighter of all time; Rasul Magomedov, one of the few men who can say they beat the great Kyle Snyder in a Wrestling match and he's also an amateur world champion", said Shahid, who then continued with what might be one of his favourite fighters currently.

"You want to know how crazy this card is? Just look at the first fight. The Cristiano Ronaldo of wushu sanda, the best of all time in the sport, is fighting in the opening bout. Mohsen Mohammedseifi is opening up BRAVE CF

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BRAVE CF PRESIDENT MOHAMMED SHAHID

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BRAVE CF 79 is the second of three world-class professional events that will take over Bahrain between December 5 and 16 as the most global MMA organization in the world celebrates a historic 2023, when it broke the world record of being hosted in only seven years of operations.

Miller says Afghanistan 'World Cup joy' with one eye on Maxwell and Australia



South Africa's David Miller (left) and head coach Rob Walter inspect the strip in Ahmedabad

AFP | Ahmedabad

South Africa's David Miller hailed Afghanistan as "one of the joys of the World Cup" yesterday but admitted thoughts were already turning towards their semi-final clash with Australia.

South Africa have qualified for the last four with six wins and two losses in eight games while Afghanistan, their opponents in Ahmedabad on Friday, still harbour outside hopes of squeezing into the semi-finals.

"They've been really, really good to watch," said Miller of Afghanistan who have beaten defending champions England as well as former winners, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

They were in touching dis-

stance of another major scalp on Tuesday when they had five-time champions Australia on the ropes before Glenn Maxwell launched his spectacular one-man rescue mission

"They're a team that's certainly growing in confidence. They've shown that they can compete. I mean this World Cup they've done really, really well, beaten some big teams." He added: "It's been good to watch the Afghanistan group going the way that they have with the spinners that they've got, the batters up front.

"They have a chance to make the semifinals. That's the joy of the World Cup. You see different teams doing well, people that don't necessarily rate a certain team exceeding in a certain phase of World Cup."

Djokovic faces Sinner, Tsitsipas and Rune at ATP Finals

AFP | Milan

Novak Djokovic will take on Jannik Sinner, Ste-

fanos Tsitsipas and Holger Rune in the group stage of the ATP Finals as the world number one chases a seventh

season-ending triumph. Title holder Djokovic is looking to cap another memorable year in which he has

won three Grand Slams, taking his tally to an all-time record of 24, and leads the Green Group.



Novak Djokovic