



All-round England clinch unassailable 3-0 series lead



In a difficult chase, England won a 3-0 series lead over the West Indies in St. Lucia on Thursday thanks to three wickets from Sam Curran (41), Liam Livingstone (39), and Will Jacks (32). Earlier, the West Indies were held to 145 for 7 in the first innings by fast bowlers Saqib Mahmood and Jamie Overton, who each took three wickets. This was a decent score given that the hosts were once 37 for 5.

England chose to field on one of the highest scoring venues in the West Indies, and Jos Buttler won the toss for the third consecutive game. With four wickets in the first four overs, England quickly proved their captain's choice was correct. In the opening over, young Jacob Bethell ran out Shai Hope, and in the second over, Mahmood hit with his third ball after Evin Lewis holed out to third man.

The West Indies' situation worsened when Roston Chase edged one to slip and the dangerous Nicholas Pooran played across the line, only to have his stumps rattled off Jofra Archer. Hetmyer skied a pull to deep mid-wicket, leaving the hosts reeling at 39 for 5 at the end of the PowerPlay, while Mahmood claimed his third in the sixth over.

To try to lead their team to a reasonable score, Rovmann Powell (54), and Romario Shepherd (30) put up a 73-run combination in 9.3 overs. As the hitters amassed 26 runs in the ninth and tenth overs, they targeted Livingstone and legspinner Rehan Ahmed. Powell also had an inside advantage that allowed him to survive an LBW judgment by DRS. With a six off Curran, the West Indies captain reached his fifty, but Overton added another surprise just as the hosts appeared ready to go for a big score.

Powell fell in the 18th over, while Shepherd and Motie were taken out by the fast bowler in the 16th over. The hosts reached 145 after scoring 23 runs in their final two overs thanks to Alzarri Joseph and Akeal Hosein.

The visitors' response did not start off well either, as Hosein knocked Phil Salt out for four cheaply. While Bethell hit a boundary before being caught behind off Joseph, Jacks gradually got his eye in and scored a couple of boundaries before he witnessed his captain Buttler give his opponent a thick edge. After the PowerPlay, the hosts were now 42 for 3.

Jacks, who saw his partners give up runs at low scores, partnered with Curran for 38 runs. The tourists' camps were calmed when the left-hander secured two boundaries off Terrance Hinds. However, Jacks punched one straight to cover and collapsed at a critical moment. Livingstone made the most of his reprieves and had an exciting start to his bat, hitting a six off Joseph before being dismissed twice in two overs. Curran subsequently decreased the equation to 38 off 30 balls by catching onto Motie with a six over long-off.

Hinds took his first wicket off Curran, but England had five runs to get off 12 balls after Dan Mousley hit a six and Livingstone scored 16 runs in the 18th over. England easily passed the finish line, but the damage was already done when Livingstone collapsed in the penultimate over.

Brief Scores: West Indies (Rovman Powell 54, Romario Shepherd 30; Saqib Mahmood 3-17, Jamie Overton 3-20) lost by 3 wickets to England (Sam Curran 41, Liam Livingstone 39; Akeal Hosein 4-22) 149/7 in 19.2 overs.