



RAZA... put on 82 in win

Too Raza sharp for Ireland

By KEN BEAMISH

IRELAND'S top order crumbled as they kicked off their T20 World Cup campaign with a 31-run defeat to Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe made 174-7, a stiff total that proved beyond the Boys in Green as they finished on 143-9 in Hobart, Australia.

Ireland crashed to 22-4 and drifted to rank outsiders by the end of the early powerplay.

Josh Little had earlier continued his impressive year, taking three for 24, while there were two wickets apiece for Mark Adair and Simi Singh.

But nobody could get to grips with Sikandar Raza, who hit five sixes and five fours in his knock of 82.

The response lacked anything as substantial, with three scores of 20-plus but nothing more than Curtis Campher's steady 27.

The evening began well for Ireland, who opted to bowl first and saw Little open their tournament tally with his second delivery as Regis Chakabva was caught behind.

The left-armer, who proved a hit with Manchester Originals in The Hundred this summer, also removed Wesly Madhevere with the new ball.

Singh continued the good work by nipping out veteran duo Sean Williams and Craig Ervine to leave the score at 79-4 at the 10-over mark. Raza turned the equation in Zimbabwe's favour as they piled on a further 95 runs in the second half of the innings, racing to his half-century in 26 balls.

Ireland mirrored their opponents in losing a wicket from their second ball, with big-hitting Paul Stirling cleaned up by Richard Ngarava, who picked off Lorcan Tucker in his next over.

Campher (27), George Dockrell and Gareth Delany, both with 24, put up a stand but the game played out to its inevitable conclusion.

Ireland tackle Scotland tomorrow.

UNITED RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIP

INTERPRO DERBY

Not the end

of the World

STU REASSURES STARS



RYAN MIGHTY... Ryan Baird is lifted in lineout in Leinster training yesterday

STUART LANCASTER has told Leinster's sidelined stars not to fret about the World Cup yet.

Andy Farrell is set to name his squad this week for Ireland's November series clashes with South Africa, Fiji and Australia as the countdown to next year's World Cup gets underway.

The head coach will be without Ronan Kelleher, Harry Byrne – both out for eight weeks with hamstring problems – and Will Connors (below), who will miss the next three months after bicep surgery.

But Lancaster – England head coach for the 2015 World Cup, with Farrell in his back-room team – insisted none of the trio should think it puts a question mark over their involvement in next year's tournament.

He said: "What happens in November 2014 and the Six Nations 2015, it had a bearing on your squad but there's so many things that can happen."

"I think they all want to play now because they want to play in November. You want to put your hand up for Andy in terms of being in the squad – being available to play in the November internationals, which puts you in the right place for the Six Nations, which then puts you in the right place for the World Cup training squad."

"But the World Cup is next season, not this season. The club season will finish in May, the boys will have, what, three or four weeks off and Andy will call a squad together at the end of June, start of July."

"They've got to get through the selection process and then you've got to play the warm-up games and that's when you're getting anxious."

"Now it's more about putting your hand up and your best foot forward for the November internationals."

"And you want to play for Leinster as well obviously because there are European games coming straight after November."

"It's more that they're frustrated because they are professional rugby

By OWEN COWZER

players and they want to play rugby and there's nothing more frustrating as a player than to be training or be rehabbing and then not playing."

While the trio are sidelined, senior coach Lancaster was more upbeat about Hugo Keenan (knee), Jamison Gibson-Park (hamstring) and James Lowe (calf) being fit for November.

He added: "I think they're all getting very close. They've trained in bits and pieces with the squad but they are moving definitely in the right direction."

"It's going to be up to Andy as to whether he brings them into the squad and runs them out in November, waits for them to train and get robust enough and confident enough in the training to be able to put them in games or wait until after they've come back to play for Leinster."



Meanwhile, Lancaster is relishing a clash with his old England coaching colleague Graham Rowntree as the Blues clash with Munster on Saturday.

Rowntree is in his first head coach position and his Reds have had a shaky start to the season, losing three of their opening five URC games. Leinster have won five from five.

But Lancaster has no doubt Rowntree will be a success, highlighting how big last Saturday's victory over the Bulls could be for confidence.

He said: "We go back a long way. He was obviously coaching England under Martin Johnson."

"Then Martin Johnson left in 2011 and I got the interim job and he was the only coach who stayed on and he came on as the forwards coach."

"He went on to the Lions in 2013 with Andy so he is very experienced. He has been in a lot of good roles."

"He is competitive, good with the lads, he is very engaging with the players. He studies the game, he works hard, he has good integrity and he is a good bloke. I won't say that to him on Saturday though! But if I saw him tomorrow we'd have no problem having a beer together, that's for sure."



SWING LOW... (back row from left) Andy Farrell, Stuart Lancaster and Graham Rowntree



SWEENEY... winner

Cloud 9 for Irish at Euros

By KEN BEAMISH

SHANNON SWEENEY and Caitlin Fryers became the eighth and ninth Irish fighters to reach the quarter-finals of the European Championships.

Westport's Sweeney made light work of Gayane Ter-Bargseghyan in the minimum weight division.

She cruised to a unanimous decision over three rounds against the Armenian in Montenegro.

Donegal native Fryers made it through after a far more competitive bout against Savannah Stubley of England in the light-fly-weight division.

A great final-round showing saw her through on a split-decision win.

Amy Broadhurst, Carly McNaul, Aoife O'Rourke, Michaela Walsh, Kellie Harrington, Kaci Rock and Christina Desmond are already through to the last 16.

Meanwhile, Bernard Dunne has been named high-performance director of Team India ahead of the 2024 Olympic Games.

Joe feels the sting

By ADAM HATHAWAY

JOE LAUNCHBURY and the rest of the Wasps squad were out of work last night as the club had administration rubber-stamped.

Skipper Launchbury was one of 167 players and staff let go as rugby's financial crisis claimed another victim.

Former Munster prop John Ryan must now seek a new club after leaving the Reds for the Ricoh Arena last season.

England head coach Eddie Jones said: "Everyone feels for Wasps. I feel for their players, the staff, I feel for their fans."

Mine of your life

By ROB MAUL

UKRAINE'S top darts star is relishing swapping a bleak MINE for the Ally Pally fancy-dress coalface this Christmas.

Vladyslav Omelchenko will play at the PDC World Championship in London after winning a qualifier.

The 47-year-old – who lives in the Ukrainian city of Mukachevo – has been a miner for 26 years and plays in his spare time.

Omelchenko said: "It's a great honour to be the first Ukrainian to play in a tournament like this."

"I had to leave my home after the invasion, I didn't train for half a year."

Legal Notices

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

Permission is sought for construction of a single storey extension to the rear and a bedroom extension at first floor level to the side of existing house; alterations to elevations and internal layout; 2 No. of roof lights and all associated site development works at No. 22 Monastery Crescent, Clonsilla, Dublin 22, D22 VPO2 by Paul Campbell. This application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of South Dublin County Council during its public opening hours of 9am – 4pm, Mon-Fri, and a submission or observation may be made to South Dublin County Council in writing and on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 6 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by South Dublin County Council of the application.