

Cottrell, Hope guide Windies to victory

Cottrell and his fellow West Indies pacers bowled out Bangladesh for just 129 runs

AFP | Sylhet, Bangladesh

Left-arm pacer Sheldon Cottrell delivered a career best 4-28 before Shai Hope struck a half-century as West Indies crushed Bangladesh by eight wickets in their Twenty20 series opener yesterday.

West Indies raced to 130-2 in just 10.5 overs after Cottrell and his fellow pacers bowled out Bangladesh for 129 runs in Sylhet.

Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan scored 61 off 43 balls for the home side but could not stave off a thumping defeat.

Hope accelerated the West Indies' run chase with 55 off 23 balls that included six sixes and three fours.

Victory never looked in doubt as he struck spinner Mehidy Hasan for three sixes and a four in just the second over of the innings, yielding 23 runs.

Spinner Mahmudullah Riyad dismissed Hope after medium pacer Mohammad Saifuddin broke a 51-run opening stand with Evin Lewis, who fell for 18.

But Nicholas Pooran and Keemo Paul ensured West Indies cruised to their target, with quickfire innings of 23 and 28 respectively.

Cottrell and fellow pacer Osane Thomas earlier choked



Bangladeshi cricketer Mohammad Mahmudullah plays a shot

Bangladesh, who opted to bat first, at the start of their innings.

Openers Tamim Iqbal and Liton Das, as well as Soumya Sarkar, all fell for single-figure scores to short-pitch deliveries.

In-form Mushfiqur Rahim was run out for five, leaving Bangladesh on 48-4 before six overs of batting power play had elapsed.

Shakib put on two small part-

nerships of 25 and 30 respectively with Mahmudullah Riyad and Ariful Haque to lift the side briefly.

"Everything (fell) apart from the toss. Batting failed and then the bowling also obviously went wrong," Shakib said after the match.

"Was a good pitch, should have probably got about 180 on the board."

Bangladesh	
Tamim Iqbal c Brathwaite b Cottrell	5
Liton Das c Brathwaite b Thomas	6
Soumya Sarkar c Powell b Cottrell	5
Shakib Al Hasan c&b Cottrell	61
Mushfiqur Rahim run out	5
Mahmudullah c Hope b Cottrell	12
Ariful Haque c Pooran b Allen	17
Mohammad c Pooran b Brathwaite	1
Mehidy Hasan c Hope b Paul	8
Abu Hider not out	1
Mustafizur Rahman b Paul	0
Extras (b4, lb2, w1, nb1)	8
Total (all out; 19 overs)	129
West Indies	
E. Lewis c Ariful b Saifuddin	18
S. Hope c Mustafizur b Mahmudullah	55
N. Pooran not out	23
K. Paul not out	28
Extras (lb 5, w1)	6
Total (two wickets; 10.5 overs)	130
Result: West Indies win by eight wickets	



The West Indies lost their Test and one-day international series 2-0 and 2-1 respectively against Bangladesh

Messi hat-trick restores Barcelona's La Liga lead



Levante's midfielder Enis Bardhi vies with Lionel Messi

AFP | Madrid

Lionel Messi continued his sublime form by netting his 31st La Liga hat-trick as Barcelona thrashed Levante 5-0 on Sunday to regain their three-point lead at the top of the table.

The 31-year-old Argentinian arrived in Valencia having scored two free-kicks in last weekend's derby thumping of Espanyol. He took his goals tally for the season to 20 after a virtuoso display, while also teeing up Luis Suarez's 35th-minute opener and Gerard Pique's late fifth.

Barca were under pressure after Atletico Madrid and second-placed Sevilla had both moved level on points with the Catalan giants.

But after resting his key stars for their final Champions League group-stage match against Tottenham in mid-week, coach Ernesto Valverde saw his refreshed side cruise to a third straight league win without conceding a goal.

"At the beginning it was difficult, they squeezed us

and had a chance that hit the woodwork," said Valverde.

Levante started the game brightly and visiting goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen was forced into an early save by Ghanaian Emmanuel Boateng. But Barca did not take long to start moving through the gears, with Messi curling wide from long range before testing Oier Olazabal in the Levante goal with a free-kick.

Just seconds after Boateng hammered a left-footed strike against the crossbar, the reigning Spanish champions broke the deadlock as Messi jinked through a mesmerised home defence and picked out Suarez who volleyed home.

But Levante, who had ended Barcelona's dreams of going through last season's La Liga campaign unbeaten with a remarkable 5-4 victory in the penultimate game, came close to a quick response as Jose Luis Morales fired over.

The match was all but ended as a contest when Messi bore down on goal two minutes before half-time and drilled low into the net.

Liverpool draw Bayern as United face PSG in Champions League last 16

AFP | Nyon, Switzerland

Liverpool will take on fellow five-time winners Bayern Munich in the last 16 of the Champions League, while Jose Mourinho's struggling Manchester United face French giants Paris Saint-Germain.

Holdings Real Madrid were paired with Ajax in yesterday's draw in Nyon as the Spaniards attempt to lift the trophy for the fifth time in six seasons, while Lionel Messi and Barcelona will play Lyon.

Both Liverpool and Bayern have a rich tradition in the competition, each winning it five times and Liverpool were beaten finalists last season.

Liverpool are the current form side of the two and sit top of the Premier League while Bayern, under new coach Niko Kovac, have been far short of their own high standards in the Bundesliga this season.

"That's the team of the hour, the league leaders in England, they are playing really good football, very physical, really stepping it up. We are looking forward to it," Bayern sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic said of the tie with Liverpool.

"A tough cookie, but that's something to look forward to as a player."

Ronaldo awaits

Pep Guardiola's Manches-



Bayern Munich's Polish forward Robert Lewandowski (L) heads the ball with Ajax's Dutch defender Matthijs de Ligt (C) during a Champions League match (file photo)

ter City take on German side Schalke 04 while Atletico Madrid, beaten finalists in 2014 and 2016, come up against Cristiano Ronaldo and Italian heavyweights Juventus.

"A very difficult match, with few goals," Juve vice-president Pavel Nedved predicted.

"No doubt Cristiano is the man of the Champions League, he has always shown that, with goals and victories. Our team is very strong and we can be calm and confident."

Bundesliga leaders Borussia Dortmund will meet Tottenham Hotspur for the second season in a row, having faced each other in last year's group stage, while Roma meet two-time former

champions Porto.

"We've already met them (Tottenham) twice. A strong opponent, the chances are at 50-50. The team has top players. We are also strong, it will be interesting," Dortmund CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke told Sky. Meanwhile, United go into

Champions League last 16 draw

Schalke 04 v Manchester City
Atletico Madrid v Juventus
Manchester United v Paris Saint-Germain
Tottenham Hotspur v Borussia Dortmund
Lyon v Barcelona
Roma v Porto
Ajax v Real Madrid
Liverpool v Bayern Munich

Teams that finished in second place in group stage will host first legs on February 12/13 and 19/20 with return matches scheduled for March 5/6 and 12/13

a first ever meeting with PSG trailing Premier League leaders Liverpool by 19 points following Sunday's 3-1 defeat at Anfield, and face a formidable task against a side featuring Neymar and Kylian Mbappe -- the world's two most expensive players.

Lyon coach Bruno Genesio says his team can draw on their group stage displays against City -- a 2-1 win and 2-2 draw -- ahead of their clash with five-time European champions Barca.

"We'll need to pull off two big performances, in the first leg and in the return, but we can do it. We did it against City," said Genesio.

"It's tough. They are a team that Lyon has already played against but never beaten. Barca are more experienced and stronger but over two matches anything is possible," Gerard Houllier, who holds an advisory role at the French club, told RMC Sport.

Shaqiri revels in beautiful feeling in putting Man United to the sword

AFP | London

Xherdan Shaqiri says scoring a double in the 3-1 win over Manchester United on Sunday for Liverpool was a "beautiful feeling" and puts him on course for his most prolific Premier League campaign.

The 27-year-old Swiss international midfielder came off the bench to take his tally to five goals in 13 league appearances, meaning he is already just three shy of his best previous total in the Premier League for Stoke last season.

His double restored Liverpool to the top of the table, one point clear of champions Manchester City.

Shaqiri, who is seeking to prove he is up to playing for a big club having failed at Bayern Munich and Inter Milan, puts his good form down to Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp's philosophy in how to play the

game.

"Of course the style, how they play, it's for me too," he said.

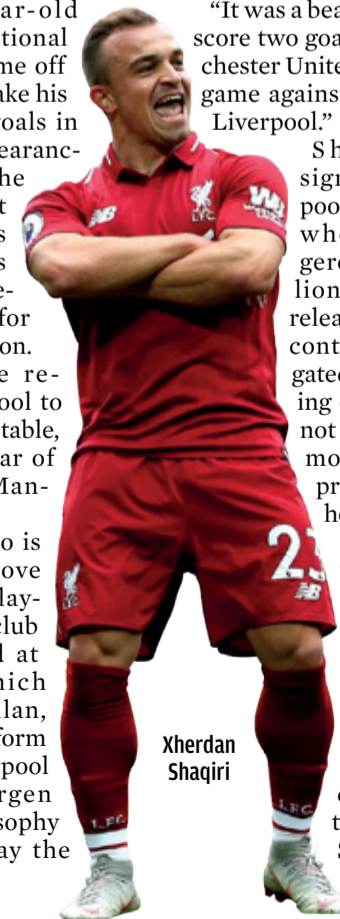
"I have to go on the pitch and perform and I have qualities to be in the team, to have an impact, to decide games.

"I'm very happy at the moment with my performances.

"It was a beautiful feeling to score two goals against Manchester United, an important game against a big rival for Liverpool."

Shaqiri, who signed for Liverpool in the summer when they triggered a £13.5 million (\$17 million) release clause in his contract with relegated Stoke, says being on the bench is not ideal but it only motivates him to prove himself like he did on Sunday.

"For me, I just want to improve, I'm 27, my best age to perform at a high level, so I hope the best times are coming," said Shaqiri, who spent three seasons at Stoke.



Xherdan Shaqiri