



George Hill celebrates a wicket for England U19s (IBC/Getty Sports)

Jan 31, 2020 16:01 GMT

England beat Zimbabwe to reach Plate final at ICC U19 Cricket World Cup

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George Balderson put in a captain's performance to help England to victory over Zimbabwe in the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup in Kimberley, South Africa.

Balderson scored an unbeaten 45 from 30 balls batting at number eight and picked up three wickets in Zimbabwe's reply as England won by 75 runs.

Batting first, England scored 286 from their 50 overs thanks to an almost run-a-ball 90 from George Hill – his highest U19 ODI score – and 59 from Jordan Cox. The two came together in the 17th over with the score on 82 for three and added 83 together before Cox fell.

Balderson and his vice-captain, Hill, put on 56 for the seventh wicket, before the skipper and the lower order blitzed 26 from the last 15 balls.

Zimbabwe's reply started rapidly, going at nearly nine runs an over through the first seven. They did, however, lose three wickets in that time – one to Scott Currie and two to Balderson.

Opener Wesley Madhevere scored quickly to reach 52 in the 14th over before being run out by Joey Evison. At this point the run-rate dropped sharply as Emmanuel Bawa and Taurayi Tugwete attempted to get the chase back on track.

They added 70 from 17 overs, but once Bawa fell LBW to Currie the runs and wickets came thick and fast once more, with six wickets lost for 62 runs in 10 overs.

Left-arm spinner Lewis Goldsworthy took two for 29 from 10 overs, while Hamidullah Qadri picked up his 12th victim of the tournament. Balderson finished off the innings with his third wicket, bowling Tadiwanashe Nyangani for a duck.

The win sees England move into the final of the Plate competition, with a chance to finish ninth overall.

Balderson said: “It’s great to get to the Plate final, with a chance to leave the tournament on a high. Zimbabwe proved tough opposition today and we expect another challenge in the final on Monday regardless of who we play.

“Jordan and George set us up well with the bat, helping us post a very competitive score. It was nice to contribute some runs with the bat myself in the later stages as well, to give us a good total to defend.

“The Zimbabwe batsmen put together a few partnerships and looked to score quickly, but our bowlers stuck to their task well to take regular wickets and

secure the victory.”

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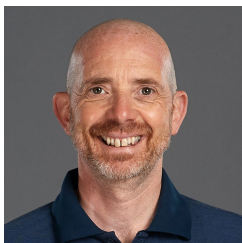
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