



Sophie Ecclestone took 2-19 from her four overs. Photo: Getty Images

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England Defeated In Final-Over World Cup Opener

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South Africa beat England by six wickets in the final over of their ICC Women's T20 World Cup opener in Perth.

England fought hard with the ball to take it down to the wire after Nat Sciver's 50 had led them to 123/8 and given them a sniff at the interval, but Mignon Du Preez and Sune Luus got their side over the line.

Heather Knight's team would have felt below par with the bat, struggling to find the boundary throughout with South Africa's bowlers making it hard to score at a pace.

But it was a similar story in South Africa's reply. Dane van Niekerk and Marizanne Kapp combined for an 84-run partnership but England controlled the rate and were always in the game.

A flurry of late wickets got South African hearts racing - and perhaps with 33 needed from the final three overs England were even in the ascendancy - but some late hitting saw it go the Proteas' way.

It leaves England - like hosts Australia - effectively needing to win their remaining group games in order to progress to the semi-finals. They face Thailand next in Canberra on Wednesday February 26.

QUOTES

Heather Knight: "We didn't quite get enough runs on the board and it was going to be tricky to defend that total on that pitch but the bowlers did tremendously well.

"We showed a lot of fight and all of the bowlers made it tough for South Africa.

"It's not panic stations, far from it, it could easily have gone the other way and we know that we've got a lot more to give."

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Contacts



Hen Cowen

Press Contact

Senior Communications Manager (they/them)

hen.cowen@ecb.co.uk

+44 (0)7585 987 302