

Henry, Young power New Zealand to nine-wicket ODI win over Sri Lanka

AFP- Matt Henry claimed four wickets and Will Young scored an unbeaten 90 Sunday as New Zealand coasted to a nine-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the first one-day international. The tourists never recovered after slumping to 23-4 inside 10 overs, dismissed in the 44th over for 178 after being asked to bat in cold, windy Wellington.

In response, Young was barely flustered during a fluent 86-ball knock, putting on 93 for the opening stand with Rachin Ravindra, who scored 45.

Mark Chapman was not out 29 as the home side reached the target from 26.2 overs in an emphatic start to the three-match series.

Coming off a productive Test series against England, Henry was a handful with the new ball in seam-friendly conditions, taking the key wicket of opener Pathum Nissanka for nine in the fifth over.

The relentless seamer returned to help mop up the tail, finishing with 4-19 off 10 overs.

Seamers Nathan Smith and Jacob Duffy snared two wickets each, capitalising on bouncy conditions offering some sideways movement at the Basin Reserve.

Captain Mitchell Santner praised the patience shown by his pace attack.

“The boys up front did the job with the ball but when there’s movement there, you’re expected to take wickets,” Santner said.

“We were patient, especially at the start, and were able to chip our wickets out that way. All four seamers did a hell of a job.”

Opener Avishka Fernando rode out the early storm to top score with 56 off 63 balls, hitting six fours and a six.

He put on 87 for the fifth wicket with Janith Liyanage, who departed for 36, caught in the deep.

Off-spinner Santner took one wicket and three catches, as well as executing a sharp run-out of danger man Kamindu Mendis with a direct hit.

Tailenders Wanindu Hasaranga (35) and Chamidu Wickramasinghe (22) scored late runs before both were caught off Henry.

Batting conditions improved and the in-form Young took advantage, hitting 12 fours.

The 32-year-old was named player of the series following the 3-0 Test sweep in India and scored 42 and 60 in his only appearance during the home Test series loss to England before Christmas.

Wickramasinghe took the only wicket, when Ravindra was caught on the deep square leg boundary.

Visiting skipper Charith Asalanka refused to blame the cold and blustery conditions for a substandard display.

“We knew when we came here it’s too windy and it’s going be hard for us but that is not the reason we lost,” he said.

“As professionals we have to play any kind of situation.

“I think they bowled really nicely up front and it’s hard for us to come back.”

The second game is in Hamilton on Wednesday.

New Zealand won the preceding Twenty20 series against Sri Lanka 2-1.

AFP