Theekshana hat-trick restricts NZ to 255-9 in 2nd Sri Lanka ODI

AFP – Sri Lanka spinner Maheesh Theekshana took a hat-trick Wednesday as New Zealand posted a competitive 255-9 in a rain-reduced second one-day international in Hamilton.
The tourists will need 256 off 37 overs in Hamilton to keep the three-match series alive after Rachin Ravindra and Mark Chapman blasted half-centuries to lay the foundation of a competitive score.

The match was reduced to a maximum 37 overs each after rain delayed the start by more than two hours at Seddon Park.

The home side lost momentum late in their innings, and recalled off-spinner Theekshana capitalised on some wayward hitting to finish with 4-44 off eight overs.

He removed Mitchell Santer and Nathan Smith with successive deliveries at the end of the 35th over.

The hat-trick was completed – all from mistimed lofted shots – when Matt Henry was caught off the first ball of the final over.

It helped to pull back a New Zealand innings which threatened to surpass 300 when opener Ravindra raced to 79 off 63 balls and Chapman scored 62 off 52.

The pair put on a rapid 112 for the second wicket, ending when Chapman holed out to long-off from Theekshana.

Ravindra departed soon afterwards, caught brilliantly at short cover by Sri Lanka captain Charith Asalanka off leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga (2-39).

Daryl Mitchell scored 38 off 38 balls but struggled for support late in the innings.

Both sides made one change from the first game, which New Zealand won by nine wickets in Wellington.

Veteran New Zealand wicketkeeper Tom Latham returned after missing game one with “soreness”, replacing Mitchell Hay, while Theekshana came in for seamer Lahiru Kumara.

The third and final match is in Auckland on Saturday.

AFP