
Rauf and Ayub shine as Pakistan levels series with Australia in dominant 9-wicket win



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Pakistan secured a comprehensive 9-wicket victory over Australia in the second ODI at Adelaide Oval, leveling the series 1-1. Chasing a modest 164-run target, Pakistan's openers, Saim Ayub and Abdullah Shafique, laid a solid foundation, despite a cautious start. Once settled, Ayub launched an aggressive assault, scoring 82 off 71 balls with five boundaries and six sixes. Shafique supported with an unbeaten 64 off 69, while skipper Babar Azam hit the winning six to seal the win.

The hero of the first innings was fast bowler Haris Rauf, whose fierce spell dismantled Australia's batting lineup, securing him a five-wicket haul. Rauf's onslaught, supported by Shaheen Shah Afridi who claimed two early wickets, reduced Australia to a mere 163 runs in 35 overs. Rauf's performance, his second five-wicket haul in ODIs, earned him the Player of the Match title. Afridi finished with three wickets, while Mohammad Hasnain and Naseem Shah chipped in with one each.

For Australia, Steve Smith top-scored with 35, but the hosts struggled to maintain partnerships. In an exceptional day behind the stumps, captain Mohammad Rizwan equaled the world record with six catches, nearly grabbing a seventh.

Reflecting on the game, Ayub praised his team, stating, "Credit goes to Rauf, and our bowling unit." Australian skipper Pat Cummins acknowledged Pakistan's dominance, admitting, "It wasn't one of our best days."

With the series now tied, both teams head to Perth for the deciding third ODI on Sunday, where the stakes will be high for the series win.