

New Zealand thrash Pakistan to seal ODI whitewash



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Mount Maunganui – New Zealand sealed a commanding 3-0 clean sweep over Pakistan in the ODI series with a 43-run win in the final match on Saturday, once again exposing the visitors' fragile batting lineup.

In a rain-delayed encounter reduced to 42 overs per side at Bay Oval, the hosts posted a competitive 264-8. Pakistan, despite a brief fightback, faltered in the chase and were bowled out for 221 in 40 overs.

Speedster Ben Sears was the chief architect of Pakistan's downfall, claiming a fiery 5-34—his second consecutive five-wicket haul—exploiting the bounce with short-pitched deliveries that rattled the tourists. Jacob Duffy added pressure with 2-40, including the key wicket of Mohammad Rizwan (37), which snuffed out any hopes of a recovery in the 33rd over.

Captain Babar Azam top-scored with a fluent 50 off 58 balls, while opener Abdullah Shafique struggled for rhythm with a labored 33 off 56. Pakistan's troubles were compounded early when Imam-ul-Haq retired hurt for just 1 after being struck on the jaw by a throw while attempting a quick single.

Earlier, New Zealand, asked to bat first after a two-hour delay due to a wet outfield, were led by young opener Rhys Mariu, who notched a composed maiden half-century. Playing just his second international, Mariu struck 58 off 61 balls with six fours and two sixes. Skipper Michael Bracewell added late firepower, smashing 59 off 40 balls with six towering sixes before falling to Akif Javed on the last ball.

Javed returned the best figures for Pakistan with 4-62, while Naseem Shah bowled with impressive pace and accuracy to claim 2-54.

New Zealand's victory capped off a dominant tour, having also taken the preceding five-match T20 series 4-1. For Pakistan, the tour exposed glaring weaknesses against pace and bounce—an area they'll need to address ahead of upcoming assignments.