

Abrar, Saim Lead Pakistan to Series-Clinching Win Over South Africa



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Faisalabad, November 8 – Pakistan sealed a 2-1 One Day International (ODI) series victory against South Africa with a commanding seven-wicket win at the Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad, on Saturday. The triumph marked a successful start for **Shaheen Shah Afridi** in his first assignment as Pakistan's ODI captain.

Opting to bat first, South Africa began steadily with an opening partnership of **72 runs** between **Quinton de Kock (53 off 70)** and **Lhuan-dre Pretorius (39 off 45)**. However, Pakistan's spinners quickly turned the momentum. **Salman Ali Agha (2-18)** broke the stand and dismissed **Tony de Zorzi** soon after to leave the visitors at 87-2.

The turning point came when **Mohammad Nawaz (2-31)** trapped De Kock leg-before in the 25th over, sparking a collapse. Mystery spinner **Abrar Ahmed** then dismantled the middle order with a devastating spell, taking **4-27** in 10 overs—his career-best figures. He dismissed **Rubin Hermann, Donovan Ferreira, and Corbin Bosch** in quick succession before removing skipper **Matthew Breetzke**. South Africa eventually folded for **143 in 37.5 overs**, with **Shaheen Afridi (2-18)** finishing off the tail.

Chasing a modest target, Pakistan's young opener **Saim Ayub** showcased his growing maturity with a fluent **77 off 70 balls**, featuring 11 fours and a six. He built key partnerships of **64 runs** with **Babar Azam (27 off 32)** and **65 runs** with **Mohammad Rizwan (32 not out off 45)** to guide Pakistan home in just **25.1 overs**.

For South Africa, **Nandre Burger (1-29)** and **Bjorn Fortuin (1-34)** were the only wicket-takers in an otherwise challenging outing.

Abrar Ahmed was named *Player of the Match* for his match-winning spell, while **Quinton de Kock** claimed the *Player of the Series* award for his consistent batting performances across the three games.

The emphatic win not only secured the series for Pakistan but also highlighted the team's renewed balance under Shaheen's leadership—marked by disciplined bowling, aggressive fielding, and confident batting from the top order.