

Cricket: New Zealand fans hail team for winning Test championship

New Zealand cricket fans on Thursday hailed a "brilliant and gutsy" win over India in the inaugural World Test Championship, praising Kane Williamson's role in ending the heartache of recent big-match failures.

The Black Caps were also lauded for how they earned the victory, with pundits noting their springing attack through during a deserved victory in Southampton.

This was a masterful performance from a team at the top of their game and on top of the world," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said.

Kane Williamson and the team leadership have built a ball-tail and batting squad who have become an inspiration to many New Zealanders.

The final was screened through the eyes of New Zealand and history-eyed viewers were treated to the Black Caps' return in the past two one-day World Cup editions.

New Zealand rugby's three-time world champions all Blacks said these results, devastating at the time, could now be regarded



as "just warm-ups for the main event".

"Congratulations @BLACKCAPS on taking out the grandest prize ever on offer in the history of cricket, the World Test Championship. The team's official Twitter had said: "We returned big and made us all proud."

Mary Poppins in the highest disparity in financial and playing records in the world.

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"NZ bowlers were terrific, Williamson and Taylor brought their experience to finish the job," said former New Zealand player Mark Richardson, highlighting the convincing display around "the bounce and desperate nature Australia played in when they were at their most dominant".

"They play hard and they get stuck in but I think they're trying to bring back that whole gentleman's game side of it that cricket used to have a long time ago," he said.

News website Stuff.co.nz cricket writer Mark Gentry included the New Zealand team "granted credit" for their victory.

Indian cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar said New Zealand deserved their victory.

"Congrats @BLACKCAPS on winning the #WTC21. You wrote on Twitter.

"Former India batting coach VVS Laxman agreed.

"Congratulations @BLACKCAPS on being deserving champions," he tweeted.

Jadon Sancho transfer: Manchester United close to agreeing deal with Borussia Dortmund to sign England winger

Dortmund's transfer department has been pushing for more of the fee to be paid up front, and are now willing to lower their asking price if United agree to front-load the payment.

It is understood Dortmund's asking price for the 21-year-old is not expected to pose any issues, although it is unlikely to happen while he was representing

this summer as negotiations progress over a transfer to Borussia Dortmund, a £70m fee would be more than £10m less than the £100m valuation. Dortmund placed on Sancho last summer.

The agreement of personal terms between United and Sancho is not expected to pose any issues, although it is unlikely to happen while he was representing

at club with England at Euro 2020.

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Vitality Superleague 2021: Tamsin Greenway picks out the key battles on semi-final Saturday

Saturday promises to be a dramatic day of Vitality Superleague 2021, as four teams take aim at a place in the Grand Final on Sunday at Cooper Row Arena 24 hours later.

Defending champions Northamptonshire and Lancashire will be the main contenders, with Lancashire looking to bounce back from their semi-final exit in the first round.

Both teams have created culture, style and a way of playing and it's the delivery from their Greenways and Rhys Davies for Leach Rhys and how that matches

up against Ben Cohen and Jon Ogburn.

They are both new partnerships, but both have never been this consistently good, while Ben Cohen has been injured and

has forced his way in.

Ben Cohen has been named on the ball and they have played out of their skins this season, they have topped up, they have got English all-rounder and their creativity on court has been amazing, however they are playing against one of the toughest third line defenses I have seen this year.

Both Cohen has come back to the firm, the new pre-season and he has earned her spot in the goal defense position. It is clear where Loughborough win ball, where they like to pressure and where they like to attack.

Ben and Rhys have almost been given the win in the confidence they play with. Meanwhile, Ben and Rhys are very much in the way they want to play, but it is a paid they are bringing out the very best in each other.

Lighting have improved in their patience, and it showed against Bath that it has finally come together. They have a strategy and it's natural when you have someone like Mary Chubb

you go into them, it's almost selfless, you go in for them.

However, what I have seen against Bath, for the first time is a team that have got in some serious, not forcing things and opening up the court for them.

If they can stick to the task it can be a success, but against that pressure is the competitiveness from Rhys because her defensive line will go to you for the duration and

can lightning deal with that? It's a full-on, tracking, arms out, Australian style, mock that Leach play.

Lighting have been forced into some things, they lost Hannah Joseph, Ben Cohen took a while to get going and Ella Clark.

They have performed and they found a comfortable line-up with impact players that can come on, but they also look a certain happy group - they know what they are doing.

I felt they could sneak into the final, and finishing in top spot has given them that chance. I think they will have the edge over Rhys, who have had everything

up against them.

So we expected Daniel Walton to be this good and they will miss her now she is back in Australia, but the biggest issue is that they still have not beaten one of the top teams.

If it doesn't happen they can be best anybody and that attack line-up can cover both ends and they see this as a success, or can they take it up a gear? They will have

Bath have got the best defensive record, but they have one of the worst attacking records and a big reason for that is they do not have a single shooter.

Players like Mary Chubb, Daniel Walton, Joanne Mervin - they can save you when the ball goes in there and while Kim Bergin has been absolutely brilliant all year, the problem with a consistent circle is every single player has to be on that game.

That has not happened in the last couple of weeks, they have not had any time to get the right player under pressure because every team has seen it, I was sceptical and is going for the jugular.

At the other end, I was sceptical of Ella Cardwell and Mervin, but they have produced a system that is really working for them - Carl well in particular is playing out of her skin and has created her own way of playing her position.

Carl Bath, with their defense which at the moment is looking unstoppable.

The last couple of weeks Anna Jennings has been quite frustrated and we have seen one of the best players in the world.

Thunder have found a seven that really works and they understand the pressure against top teams.

Ben has a top Sophie Dwyer, Carl Lewis and Kim Bergin, plus Leah's circuit, to work through the situation because I do not think she can afford to make the changes she has been making over the last couple of weeks in her semi final.

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Mo Farah misses out on qualification for Tokyo Olympics

Four-time Olympic champion Mo Farah has missed out on qualification for the Tokyo Olympics after failing to make the final in the 5,000m.

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