Kenya scored an ardent 167-run victory over Lesotho, as the race for the two qualifying slots in the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup Sub Regional Africa A Qualifier heated up in Kigali, Rwanda.

Batting first, Kenya smashed 237 for five, with Rushabhvardhan Patel (63 off 34 balls), Nelson Odhiambo (67 off 29 balls) and Sachin Bhudia (38 off 16 balls) being especially destructive.

Lesotho had an uphill battle to try and reach that target, and they were eventually bundled out for 70, in 15.2 overs. Openers Waseem Yaqoob (27) and Mpiti Lerotholi (22) made a decent start, but Shem Ngoche (three for 16) and two wickets apiece from Peter Langat, Vraj Patel and Rakep Patel put paid to any chance of an unlikely victory.

Malawi also won on Monday morning, as they overwhelmed Mali by 74 runs. Gift Kansonkho’s 52 was the cornerstone for Malawi’s total of 165 for four, with help from the in-form Sami Sohail (39) and skipper Moazzam Baig (31).

Mali’s response started terribly, as they lost their first two wickets for a single run. Baig, enjoying a fine all-round day, kept the pressure up as he bagged three for 14. Eventually, Mali toiled their way to 91 for nine after 20 overs. Reaching the end of their innings was a mental victory, but the points went to Malawi.



Rushabhvardhan Patel plays a cover drive against Lesotho on Day 4. He scored 63 off 34 balls to guide Kenya to a huge total of 237.

The afternoon saw some thrilling cricket, not least by St Helena in their clash against the Seychelles. Stephen Madusanka’s valiant 50 not out very nearly snatched victory for Seychelles, but they ultimately fell two runs shy of the St Helena total.

Andrew Yon (23) and Scott Fagan-Crowie (28) had again been the glue in the St Helena ship, as they battled their way to 125 for six. While it wasn’t a massive total, it gave their disciplined attack something to defend.

And that they did, by the barest of margins. Jordi Henry (three for 28) kept striking, while Fagan-Crowie wrapped up a fine day with three for 21, including bowling the final, crucial over. The two wickets to close the match were nerveless, with Shanmugam smartly stumped, before Samarathunga was run out desperately trying to give the stranded Madusanka a chance to face the final ball.

The day’s final game saw hosts Rwanda defy the weather as well as Malawi, to keep their qualification hopes alive. Batting first, the hosts fought their way to 159 all out, with the top-order all contributing to the cause.

Wilson Niyitanga (46 off 32 balls) looked on his way to something significant before he was run out at the beginning of the 17th over. He was one of seven batsmen who were run out in the Rwandan innings -surely some sort of record!

The Malawi chase was affected by afternoon showers, and the number of wickets they lost upfront was always going to count against them. Eventually, they closed on 97 for eight, after 16.5 overs.

That gave Rwanda a 41-run victory and kept them firmly in the hunt for a qualifying slot.

St Helena and Mali both have double headers today. The islanders battle Lesotho in the morning before both face off at IPRC in the afternoon.

Mali take on Botswana at Gahanga this morning while Malawi will look to bounce back from their defeat yesterday, against Seychelles this afternoon.

After 5 games, Kenya won 3 and, leads the Group A by 8 points. Rwanda follows in the 2 position with 6 points after winning three games in four games; Malawi has 5 points in third position followed by Lesotho, Botswana, St Helena, Seychelles respectively. Malie is at the bottom with just a point in 4 games.

Scores in brief:

Kenya v Lesotho

Kenya 237 for five in 20 overs (N Odhiambo 67, R Patel 63, S Bhudia 38)

Lesotho 70 all out in 15.2 overs (S Ngoche three for 16, R Patel two for 2)

Lesotho won by 167 runs

Mali v Malawi

Malawi 165 for four in 20 overs (G Kansonkho 52, S Sohail 39, M Baig 31)

Mali 91 for nine in 20 overs (M Baig three for 14)

Malawi won by 74 runs

St Helena v Seychelles

St Helena 125 for six in 20 overs (S Fagan-Crowie 28, A Yon 23)

Seychelles 123 all out in 19.5 overs (S Madusanka 50 not out, S Fagan-Crowie three for 21, J Henry three for 28)

St Helena won by two runs

Rwanda v Malawi

Rwanda 159 all out in 20 overs (W Niyitanga 46, O Tuyisenge 33)

Malawi 97 for eight after 16.5 overs (M Baig 32, C Rubagumya two for 11)

Rwanda won by 41 runs (DLS method)