

Indian cricket on a high

By Sunil Sarpal



Image: meravote

Indian Cricket is on a high these days. Winning one tournament after another has now become a routine feature for India. Bringing in just the bench strength to take on the likes of New Zealand team is a milestone that the world is watching with total disbelief. The just concluded 3-match series in 50-over format against New Zealand has left them shaken and outclassed.

The highlight of the Indian Team is that we have discovered one Surya Kumar Yadav whose range of shots takes the game to a altogether different level. As if he just descended from

MARS. The short form of his name too is SKY. He hits good balls disdainly and one can imagine the treatment meted out to bad balls. He plays all over with straight bat, horizontal bat, scoop, lap shot and what not. It is just amazing to see the range of shots he has in his arsenal. Bowlers are often left in a mad like situation when up against SKY.

We consider the other legends too, but he is the greatest, head and shoulders above them. His heroics are unparalleled and the whole cricket fraternity is singing his songs.

Opposition too is applauding his batting feat and some kind of relief rends the air when he departs. Then the contest between bat and ball starts anew.

The 'rotation policy' has brought in all the bench strength into play, particularly bowlers.

India's fast bowling strength is unbelievably amazing. We have Bhuvn, Arshdeep, Siraj, Bumrah, Shami, Pandya. They certainly have an edge over Umran Malik and many more.

In batting, the resurgence of Virat Kohli has given new dimension to batting as well. With the likes of Rohit, Ishan Kishan, Surya, Gill, Rahul, Iyer are all in-form batters and rarin-to-go.

Amongst allrounders, Hardik, Ravinder Jadeja, Ashwin, Shardul Thakur, Axar Patel, to name a few.

Among spinners, Kuldeep Yadav, Ashwin, Chahal and many more.

Indian fielding standard is second to none. With the intro of T20 test as pre-requisite, every player has to maintain high-class fitness so as to survive and establish his position in the side.

We, in cricket, has reached a stage when others look up to us to emulate the feat and plan their own cricket strategy.

Ravindra Jadeja – All Rounder Top to Toe

Ravinder Jadeja – an asset to Indian Team by Sunil Sarpal





Ravinder Jadeja is considered as the most under-rated performer in Team India. In fact, he is a 3-dimensional

cricketer – a good batsman, a wicket taking left arm spinner and most importantly a sharp and agile fielder. His throwing arm has done havoc in opposition camp and batsmen are always under a 'fear psychosis' whether or not to steal a single if the ball is hit in their direction.

He is such a talented cricketer but creates an impression of being ordinary only because of not possessing good oratory skills.

As a bowler, his slow left arm bowling is quiet effective and he creates lot of impact on helpful pitches. His bowling style is restrictive type because he does not give much air to the ball. His line and length do not allow batters to freeze arm and smash him for biggies. He even spins the ball where no other bowler gets any purchase from the wicket.

As a batsman, he is slotted down the order and invariably bats with lower down batsmen or bowlers. Even while playing in English conditions where the ball swings viciously, and other batsmen are struggling to cope with swing, his approach to batting is as solid as a rock. In such conditions, his contribution with the bat was significant to India total. His batting technique may not be from the 'cricketing book' but his adjustment and leg side play is of proven quality.

He is a very sharp fielder whether it is out-field or within 30-yard circle. He has extra-ordinary diving skills and produce improbable catches. His ability of stopping the ball and throwing in one action has made him a very dangerous fielder. He sets such high benchmark in fielding which is hard to emulate.

MS Dhoni had rightly given him the status of Sir Jadeja.

Jadeja may not fall in the league of a Kohli or Rohit as batsman but his overall contribution to India's cause should not be under-mined. He has already played International cricket with distinction and does not throw away his wicket in

a rush of blood, as was the case earlier.

India needs the services of such cricketer for a long-long time to come as he is young and fit.

In the commentary box, people like Sanjay Manjrekar called him bits-and-pieces cricketer. This is cheap commentary to distract the enthusiasm of a 3-dimensional cricketer. His graph in terms of both batting and bowling is on the rise and eye-awakening. There is a hint of 'carelessness' in his approach to the game but actually it is not the case. He is as serious and studious as anybody else in the team.

Legendary Australian fast-bowler Brett Lee makes a prediction about an Indian player

by Sunil Sarpal



Brett Lee: Yep! He's the one, SKY!

Legendary Australia fast-bowler Brett Lee believes an Indian in-form batsman will someday be a major factor in winning a World Cup for the Indian team. 2022 has been a year in which, through his 360-degree play and astonishing shots, became the toast of T20I cricket.

He is currently the highest run-getter in T20Is this year with 1,164 runs in 31 matches, averaging 46.56 and at a strike-rate of 187.43. He also lit up the Men's T20 World Cup in Australia, the first time he's played competitive cricket in the country. **Surya Kumar Yadav** amassed 239 runs in six innings at a strike rate of 189.68, often changing the tempo of the innings for India.



Surya Kumar Yadav: Where SKY is the limit

"SKY was one of the highlights for me at the T20 World Cup. He continues to bat with the same attitude. Not only will he score big runs but he will also someday win a World Cup for Team India. I love watching him play. My advice to SKY would be no advice. Keep doing what you are doing, don't change, don't complicate things, back yourself," said Lee on his YouTube channel.

Just after T20 World Cup, Suryakumar enthralled cricket fans yet again when he smashed 111 not out off 51 balls against New Zealand at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui. In that match, the rest of the visitors' batters made 69 runs off as many balls and Suryakumar's knock was called by Virat Kohli on Twitter as a "video game innings."

"India did not win the T20 World Cup but the SKY rose. Of course, I am talking about **Surya Kumar Yadav**. He is the new global T20 superstar. What a sensational 12-15 months he has had on the big stage."

"He has shown here on Australian grassy wickets where the ball skids through. His fearlessness and his shot selection are like that of a chess grandmaster. His execution is awe-

inspiring and the smile on his face when he played it, is priceless,” added an impressed Lee.

On Yadav’s technique of playing shots which has made him stand out from other players, Lee stated that his basics of the game are sorted and wants Rahul Dravid and Rohit Sharma to let him shine in the coming years for India.

“I like the way he executes the impossible shots because his basics are in place. He doesn’t go out there and just tries to hit the ball that isn’t there to hit. He has a wonderful technique and he is definitely a player for the future.”

“You can trust Rahul Dravid and Rohit Sharma to just let him be the person he needs to be. SKY would rise and this could lead to many more peaks for India in years to come.”

Last day for receiving applications for a new Cricket Selection Committee

By **Sunil Sarpal**

After the ignominious exit from ICC T-20 tournament at the hands of England, Indian Cricket Team’s prestige was at stake. In order to save it’s face, BCCI had no other option but to sack the Selection Committee, led by Chetan Sharma. Even the BCCI President Saurav Ganguly was earlier shown the exit door.

The new BCCI President is Roger Binny, a former cricketer. And the process of forming the new Selection Committee has been under-way. It has become a norm in India that whenever Indian Team is defeated in a big tournament, changes and chopping of

heads takes place.

The deadline to submit applications for the post of new selectors ends today, november 28th. According to InsideSports, BCCI is reported to have already received over 80 applications for vacancy of five selectors. The board will scrutinise the applications and will make announcement of the new selection committee in December 2022.

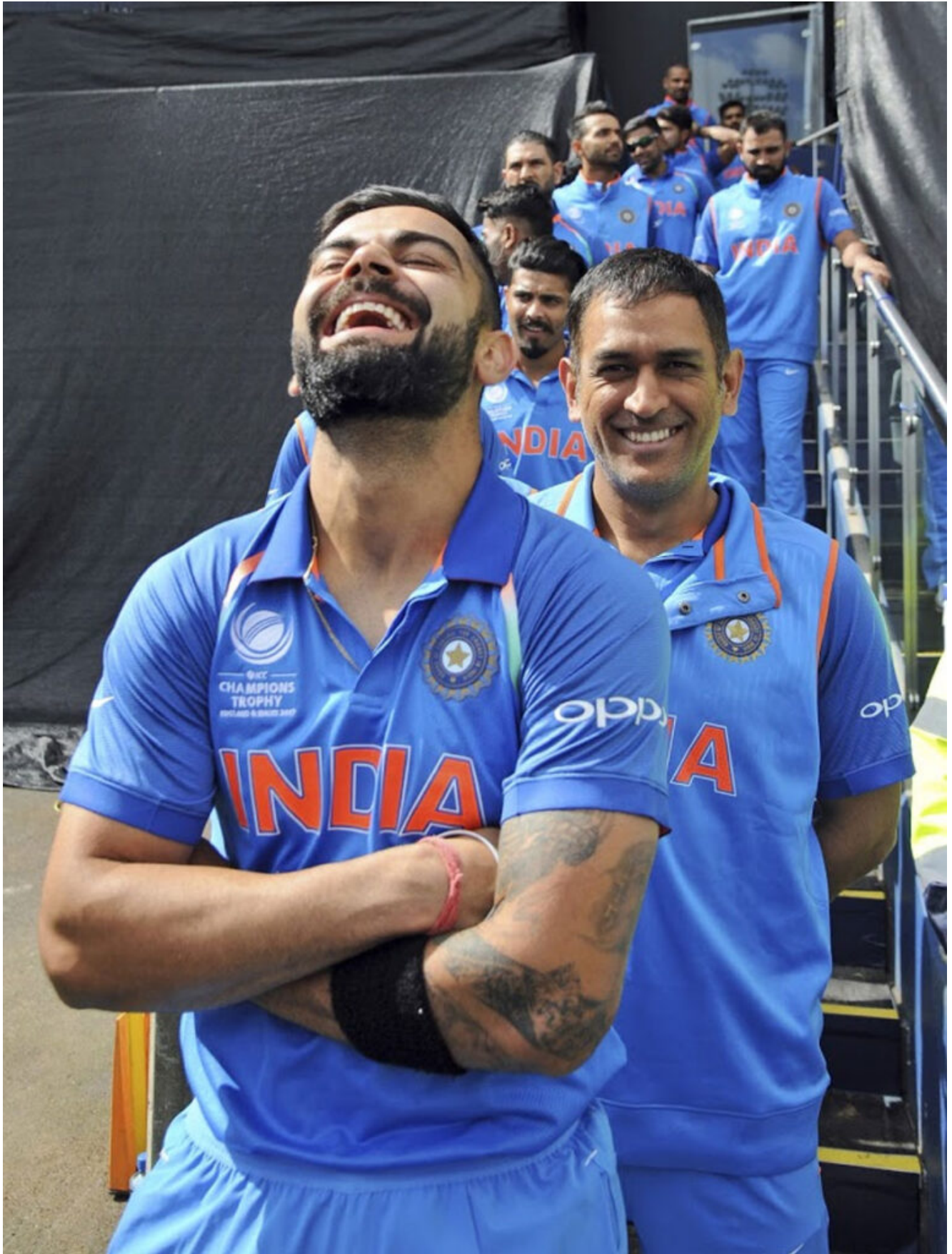
It is speculated that, some of the new faces such as, Shubham Gill, Prithvi Shah, Sanju Samson and Hooda may get the nod. In the bowling department too the return of Jasprit Bumrah will boost the already formidable bowling attack.



Ravi Shastri down the memory lane

If we talk about going down the memory lane, when Ravi Shastri was removed from the position of a Director, Team India, after his 2- term tenure, the team was performing very well except for out of form Virat Kohli. Ravi possesses the right

ingredients and knowledge, about how to deal with the boys, which is a rare quality to lift the spirit of the game. Therefore, there are voices demanding for his return as Director, Team India. Whereas, Rahul Dravid's tenure as Coach has not brought the positive results because coaching Team India is a different ball game. Whereas, Ravi's invaluable inputs to India captain, time to time intervention in matter of significance and foresight were some of the qualities rarely found in a person.



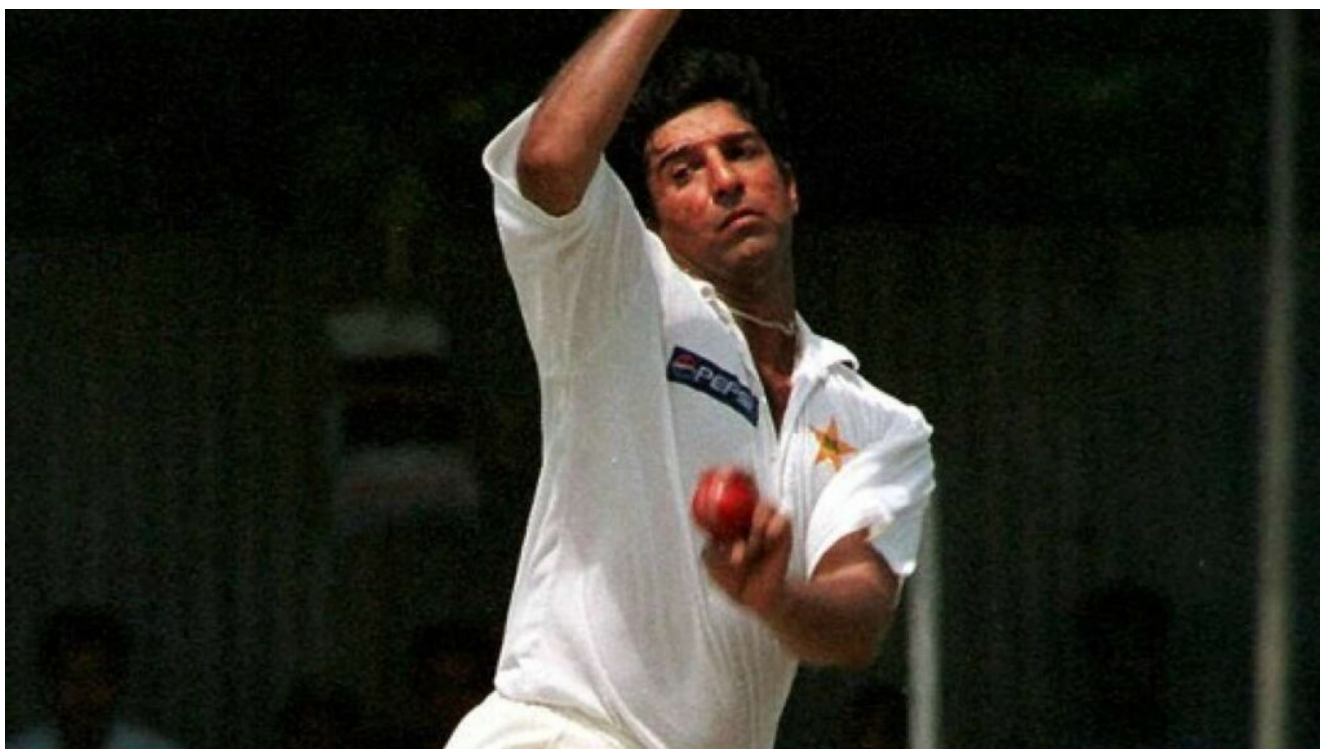
Rahul Dravid and MS Dhoni

With the induction of Roger Binny as new BCCI President, it is reported that his first call was to include MS Dhoni as Head Coach or Director, Team India T20. MS Dhoni is immensely

talented, cool as a cucumber and his skills for man-management are extra-ordinary. It is hoped that MS Dhoni, if appointed, as Director, in coordination with Rahul Dravid as coach will do the best for the team, which takes Team India forward.

Time is ripe to include new legs because the demand of the game is to be fast and ferocious. Surya Kumar Yadav has proved time and again that the shorter version of the game's demand is 360 degree. It is therefore absolutely necessary on the part of New Selection Committee to re-build the side and to not go by past reputation of the players.

What is reverse swing in fast bowling and ... what is...?



What is reverse swing in fast bowling by Sunil Sarpal

Ans. When there is dew in the air, because of which, the

outfield becomes wet and the ball tends to get wet too. The seam in the middle of the ball separates the ball on two sides. One side of the ball is kept shiny by rubbing and the other side kept wet or as it is. When delivered, the ball tends to drift towards the wet side even though the seam movement is kept in the opposite direction. Thus the movement of the ball becomes the undoing for the batters.

Here are a few more questions answered with what is a...

YORKER

Yorker is a very difficult delivery to pick. It is bowled by fast bowler with such precision that it lands under the toe of the batsman's bat. Those fast bowlers they swing the ball in the air, bowl swinging Yorkers. Waqar Yunis of Pakistan was one such player who exhibits this art to perfection. He was called toe crusher. Because of providing late in-swing in the air, the batsman is bamboozled and in the process lose direction of the ball. Instead of hitting the bat, the ball hits the toe of the foot and inflicts damage.

BEAMER

Beamer is an illegal delivery. When a fast-bowler bowls a delivery which lands above waist height of the batsman, it is called Beamer. Firstly, umpire rules out such a ball as no-ball. Since such delivery can inflict damage to the batsman, the umpire warns the bowler for repeating such a delivery. If the bowler still persist with such a delivery, then he can be banned from playing and penalised with a fine too.

BOUNCER

To bowl a bouncer, the fast-bowler keeps the length of the delivery short, using his shoulder strength and digs the ball hard on the pitch. Generally, bouncer after pitching jumps above shoulder height and becomes unplayable unless the batsman is equipped to hook or pull the ball. Bouncers is

also delivered with varying speed of the ball to dodge the batsman so that he mis-times the shot.

OFF-SPIN AND LEG-SPIN

Both off-spin and leg-spin can be bowled with the help of either fingers or wrist. When the slow-bowler gives more air to the ball, it automatically spins more. And if the trajectory of the delivery is kept low, the ball spins less.

Now-a-days, the slow bowlers have learned the art of spinning wrong ones. The off-spinner can bowl leg-spin by the magic of his fingers and vice-versa.

Why India lost the World Cup semi-final to England

Sunil Sarpal analyses the 2022 ICC T20 World Cup – semi-final between England and India



Jos Buttler leads England to victory

England beat India comprehensively in the semis. England won the toss and decided to make first use of the ball.

After the match, Kapil Dev very rightly pointed out that Indians are chokers. (Although this tag was originally awarded to the South African team in 1991)

Before the start of the match, Sunil Gavaskar made a valid point – that Indians chase better than setting a target.

I personally attributed India's defeat to 'Law of Averages' over any other pointer. One bad day in office and India is out of the ICC World Cup.

There are some valid questions on the selection of the side.

1) What is the utility of Axar Patel in the side? Does he fit into T-20 side, if yes, then on what basis – batting or bowling or in the category of being a bits and pieces player? He is neither a free flowing batsman, nor does he spin the ball judiciously.

2) What is Ashwin's contribution in the side? Batsmen hit him for sixers at will. He is effective only on turning tracks.

3) Rohit Sharma being the captain of the side, performed little in terms of batting. How can a non-performing captain lead from the front?

4) In this match, both Bhuvni and Arshdeep were not disciplined in line and length and gave room invariably to batsmen to play freely.

England Captain Buttler, once settled, scored heaps of runs and India did not have the arsenal to get his scalp.

Indians batted poorly during first 6 overs and scored only 36 runs for the loss of KL Rahul. Another noticeable fact is, that Kohli does not score as quickly as Hardik or Surya K Yadav.

Making a mockery of Kartik vs Pant selection does not leave a good taste and is not a healthy sign for their confidence. As if this is a musical chairs game for them.

One more selection error, if not made, could have strengthened Indian batting. It was the non-inclusion of specialist batsman

Hooda in place of bits and pieces Axar Patel.

In a nut-shell, India lost the match because of its own selection errors.

Karun Nair- a brilliant cricketer who deserves better

By Sunil Sarpal



Karun Nair, only the second Indian batsman who scored a triple ton

India unearthed a batting talent approx.. three years ago, including him in the playing 11 to represent India in a test match against West Indies held in India. He scored a mammoth 300 runs in an innings. His name was Karun Kaladharan Nair.

Since then his name never figured in contention to represent India. This must be a case of dipping form. Hitting 300 runs in a match against West Indies in itself is an achievement beyond imagination and comparison with his contemporaries.

He is definitely an exceptional talent and should not be over-

looked.

BCCI should nurture such talent so that he gets acclimatised to play in different conditions and evolves his batting.

There are other cricketers also with lot of talent but due to meagre resources cannot compete at higher level.

Luckily in India, BCCI is one of the richest cricket bodies in the world. It can nurture such extra-ordinary talent, providing stipend or free facilities.

County Cricket in England is one such platform where young and up-coming players can blossom if given a chance to play alongside International stars.

It is the duty of the new BCCI President Roger Binny to form a committee whose primary task should be to unearth such talent and provide all facilities free of charge for their exposure so that they become tomorrow's stars.

What is your view in this matter. Please post your opinion in the comment box below.

Kohli's Resurgence in Indian Cricket

By **Sunil Sarpal**



Image courtesy [Insidesport.in](https://www.insidesport.in)

Virat Kohli leading India to victory against Pakistan in T20 world cup in Australia this October takes us back to the Asia Cup match played against Afghanistan just a little over a month ago when he broke a jinx and his resurgence began.

Indian Cricket is not spared from dirty politics and jealousies. In Kohli's words, when he gave up captaincy, only one man showed concern and called upon him. That was MS Dhoni. Others also had his number, he complained, but were probably jealous of his record tumbling feat.

Kohli's dipping form for over 3 years has been a cause of concern in cricket fraternity. Had he been in the Australian team, he would have been shown the exit door. But a better sense prevailed upon BCCI that he had been persisted with.

It took Kohli three years to score 71st International ton. During his dry period, Indian legend Kapil Dev talked in terms of writing him off and spoke in favour of better bench strength and in-form players.

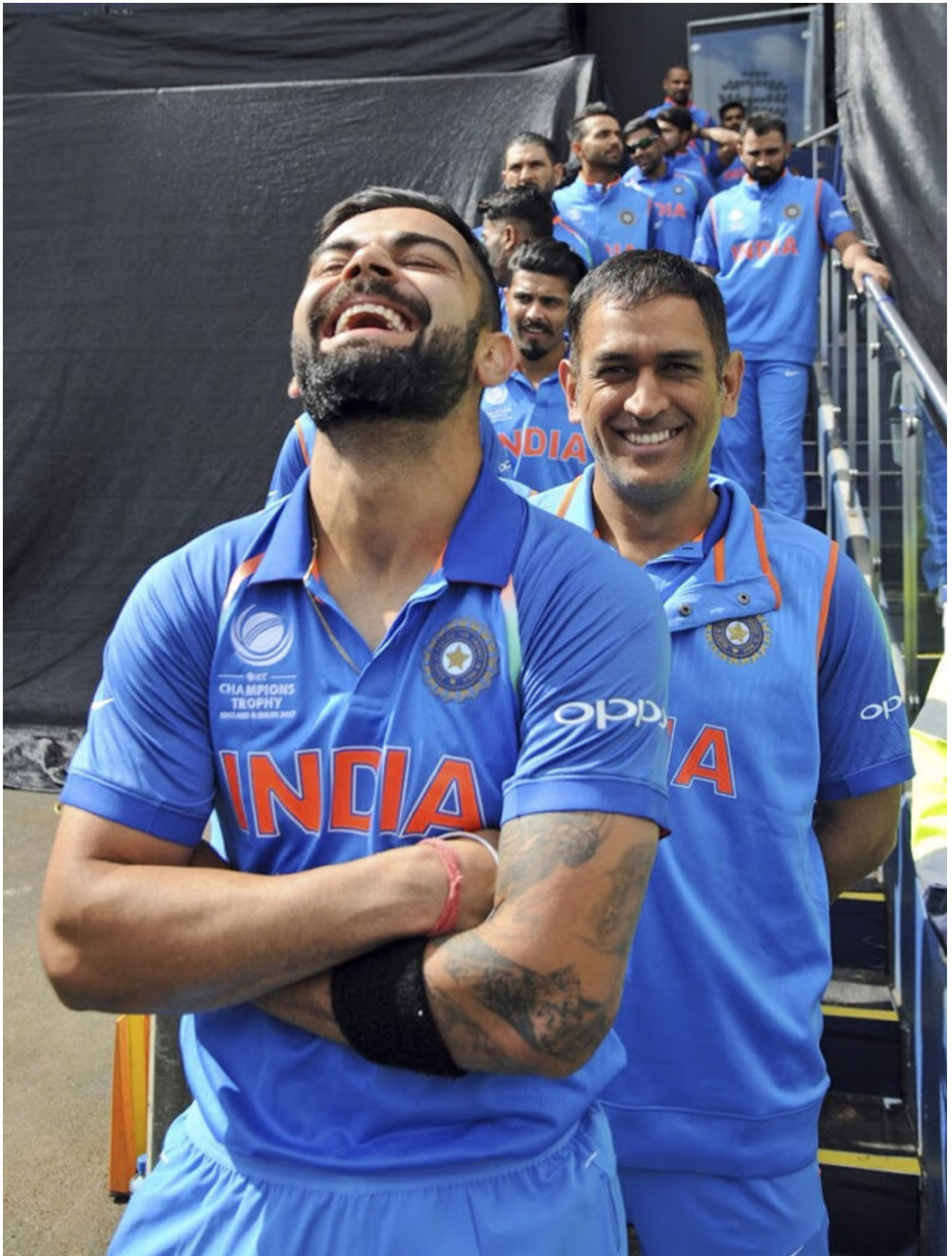
Now, those critical of his inclusion in the side, will twist their statement, saying it was their way of motivating Virat so that he starts delivering yet again. That is why it is a well known fact that our society is riddled with hypocrisy.

Now that Kohli has finally scored 71st ton, he shall be the most relieved man.

It is not imperative on part of past legends such as Kapil Dev and Gavaskar to make irresponsible statements. It's unbecoming of their status. It is only their way to keep their name afloat and remain in the public eye. They do not want somebody else joining them in greatness. They are apparently ego-centric and biased.

Kohli, in an interview, said that till the time God wills, he will keep on playing. In fact, past legends outbursts do not bother him much. On the other hand, cricketers from abroad spoke highly of Kohli and wished him success.

Definitely, his blade will keep on accumulating runs till the time God so desires. God always stand by those who have a clean and unbiased heart, like Kohli.



Kohli and Dhoni Sportsmanship

India vs Pakistan – The October'22 Cliff Hanger in Australia



Virat Kohli – Snatching Victory from the Jaws of Defeat
India vs Pak match is always a cliff-hanger. The T20 match which was played on Sunday in Australia reminds us of the Sharjah match when Javed Miandad hit a six on the last ball off Chetan Sharma. In this match, Kohli stood his ground like a rock under trying circumstances and snatched the game from the jaws of defeat. This knock is being rated by the purists of the game, as the best ever played by him. He was cool as a cucumber when the match was headed down to the wire. Kohli's innings teaches a few invaluable lessons too that one needs to build his innings brick-by-brick and not throw away his wicket

in a jiffy.

When the going gets tough and the new ball bowlers are wrecking-havoc, patience and perseverance are the virtues which need to be applied. In doing so, one gets settled down and visibility of the ball becomes easy.

The early advantage did rest with India when they won the toss and rightly chose to bowl first on a wicket which assisted seamers. Both Bhuvn and Arshdeep bowled in the right areas, making the ball move both ways and presenting umpteen problems for Pak openers – Babbar and Rizwan. They were clueless against the quality attack. The early 'impressive' spell set the tone of the match and from the beginning itself Pakistan was under a lot of pressure, and in the process, lost both openers cheaply.

Pakistan's batting never settled down till the time Iftikhar hit four magnificent sixes to take the team to a respectable score of 159. Indian opening combination of KL Rahul and Rohit was patchy and tumbled early on, handing over the gauntlet to Kohli and Pandya to build the innings. Of the two, Kohli looked more fluid and played a gem of a knock. Some of Kohli's sixes left Pakistan awe-struck. The game went down to the wire and the last ball chip by Ashwin sealed the deal for India.



The MCG ground was sold out like all India-Pak matches the world over

The Curious Case of Ravi Shastri



Many Avatars: As a commentator

Ravi Shastri's career graph in Cricket and related fields is quite interesting and variable in nature. When he entered cricket arena, he was a left-handed leg spinner. Interestingly, he used to bat right-handed.

Ravi took his cricket very seriously and because of his learning curve, from No. 10 or 11, he was elevated to open the batting for India. Facing the new ball at an International level, by any stretch of imagination, is not a joke. It calls for a lot of grit and determination, which Ravi had in plenty. Transition from a left-arm slow bowler to a genuine all-rounder was in itself an achievement.

During his cricketing career, he won 'man-of-the-series' award in a triangular 50-over tournament between India Australia & New Zealand, winning an Audi car as prize money.

Once Shastri's cricket career came to an end, he took to

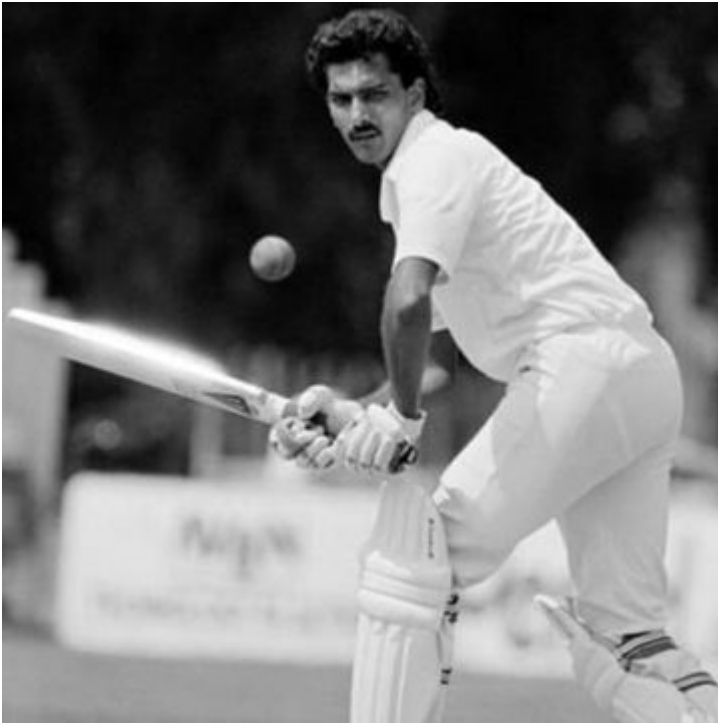
cricket commentary alongside the likes of Richie Benaud, Bill Lowery, Tony Gregg and Ian Chappel – all legends of the game. His comments were always commendable and commentary noteworthy. He possesses the right 'oratory skills' to speak precisely on air.

Later on, when BCCI wanted his services to be utilised as a Manager of Indian Team, he performed that responsibility to perfection. As a Manager, he displayed an exemplary equation with the then India captain MS Dhoni and later on with Virat Kohli to take Indian Cricket forward.

Again he was elevated to the position of Director of Team India. He coached Team India admirably for two successively tenures. He literally became the backbone of Team India and took the team to dizzy heights. He successfully introduced Yo Yo test as a compulsory yardstick without which entry into Indian side was not possible. Clearing the Yo Yo test enables a player to prove that he is fit enough to represent Team India.

Now, that Shastri is no more India Coach, and he has been replaced with Rahul Dravid, Ravi is back to his stint as a commentator.

The amount of exposure and experience that Shastri has secured, in different capacities, during his cricketing career, it is perhaps a good idea for BCCI to utilize his services for a more responsible assignment such as being the BCCI President.



Many Avatars: As a cricketer