

# Indian Batsmen with a Midas Touch

By Sunil Sarpal



India has the distinction of producing batsmen with a magical touch and they conquered the most difficult of bowlers. From **Gavaskar** to **Tendulkar** and now **Virat Kohli**. They have been diamonds with a midas touch. By merely watching them play, one can learn the art of batting because they are simply a school unto themselves.

Gavaskar's technique for batting was derived from the Cricketing Text Book. His temperament and concentration was second to none. His shot selection was simply spot on. His technique was fool proof that he would not leave any room between bat and pad.

Sachin Tendulkar was more adventurous and his intent was aggressive in nature. He was considered the God of Cricket by none other than Mathew Hayden of Australia. Tendulkar was born to play cricket and touched the height which no other batsman did. Tendulkar played his game in two phases. When

he came into test cricket, he was very aggressive and could hit even four boundaries in one over on a regular basis. A lot of people and even cricketers idolised him and studied his game to learn the art of batting. Sachin notched up a 100 tons in all formats of the game which is a very formidable task to accomplish.

Now Virat Kohli has picked up the gauntlet. He is beating one record after another at regular intervals. Virat's game is stylised in such a manner that he has become much more stable and assured. His cover drive is perfection personified. The longevity of a career largely depends upon how one adjusts with the given conditions and matches the situation. Perhaps Virat Kohli knows the art of adjustment more than anybody else. Virat is supremely fit and agile even at the age of 36 yrs. His running between the wickets is just like a 20 years old player. He gives a lot of time to exercise and to remain match fit. Virat is inching towards the 100 tons milestone set by Sachin and in all likelihood Virat will surpass this record in style and set new numbers for the next generation.

India's legacy of producing one batsman after another to conquer the world is unique. Who is going to be the next class act is a million dollar question ?

---

## **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 Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Arshdeep Singh 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.

---

# **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.

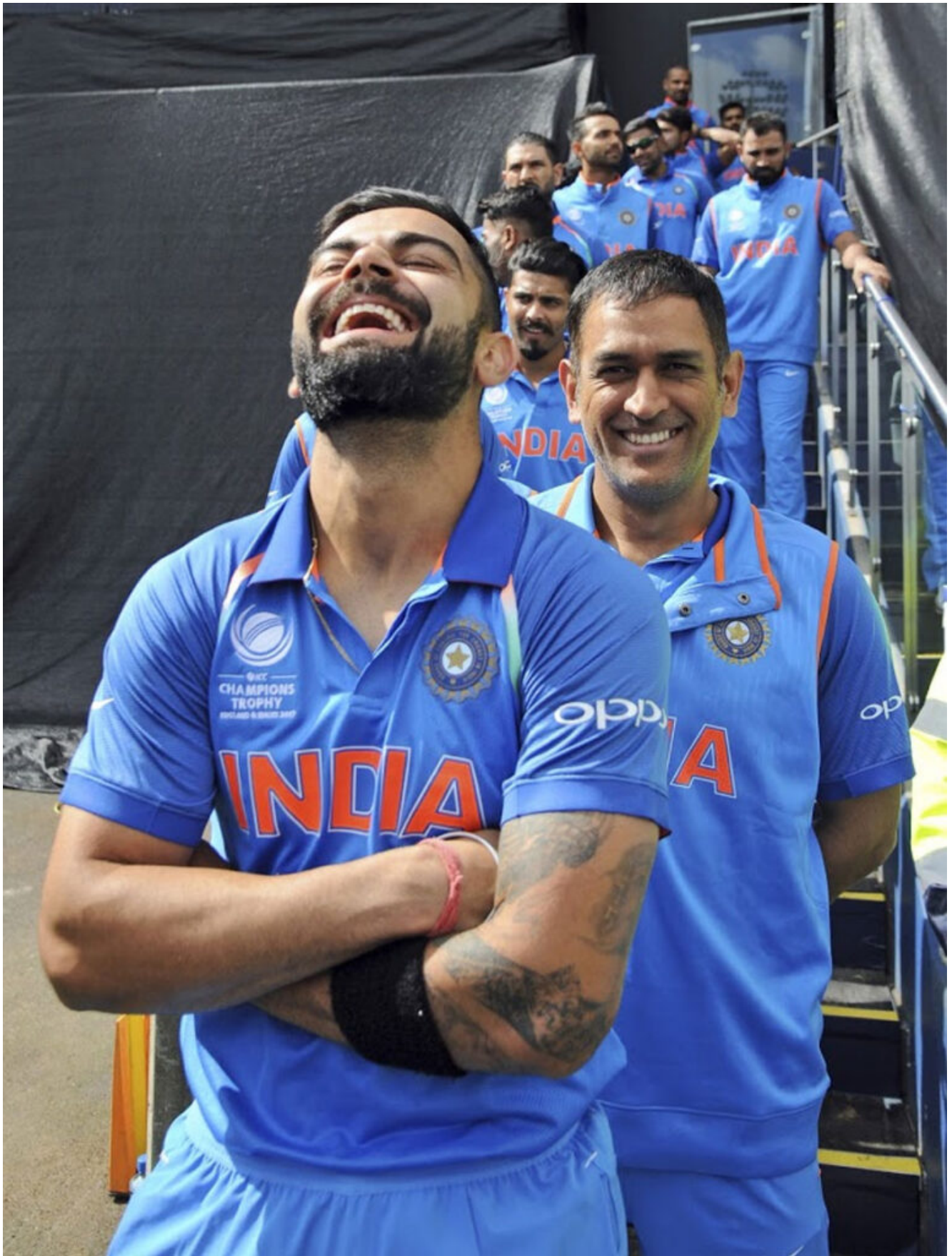
Now that Kohli has finally scored 71st ton, he shall be the most relieved man.

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

---

# Is Cricket really a game of glorious uncertainties?



Can you recognise each of these iconic cricketers?

Cricket is a funny sport. Common belief is – it is a game of glorious uncertainties. If it is so then how come Sachin scored 100 International tons? He must have reached the pinnacle so as to deal with any bowler and topple him.

People always talk of Sachin because of his enormous achievements. They do not talk of Kamble who was more gifted but unlucky not to have ticked the right boxes. Poor chap could not linger his career. People do not talk of Martin



Crow, who was perhaps the best, but abandoned his career because of cancer. People talk of Viv Richards who blossomed because of army of fast bowlers and batsmen in his support and an astute leader in Clive Lloyd.

But the lone warrior from India in 70s was none other than Sunil Gavaskar. He single-handedly dealt with enormous challenges all over the world. Virat Kohli was once hailed as Sachin's successor. Sachin scored 100 International tons in all formats of the game as against 70 by Virat. Nobody has the right to question Virat's talent and inconsistency. He has already established himself as a talent beyond imagination. At 33, he can still reinvent his batting. Dry period happened even in Sachin's career but a phone call from Sir Viv Richards enthused a self-belief in him when Sachin was considering retirement from the game. Virat too needs motivational counselling and not criticism. It is Virat and only Virat who will salvage his position in the side.

Brian Lara, another legend of the game, opinionated that do not write off Virat. He will come back with much better player. There have been instances when players just fade away and come back becomes next to impossible. Because failure for a longer period of time leaves the person hapless and shaken. Lot of debate and criticism dent the self- belief. Media these days write stories which are 'reader savvy' without considering its ill-effects. He needs support from all quarters so that his blade shines once again.

Cricket has become a '*junoon*' among the enthusiasts. Every now and then some class act appears from no-where and the show goes on and on.