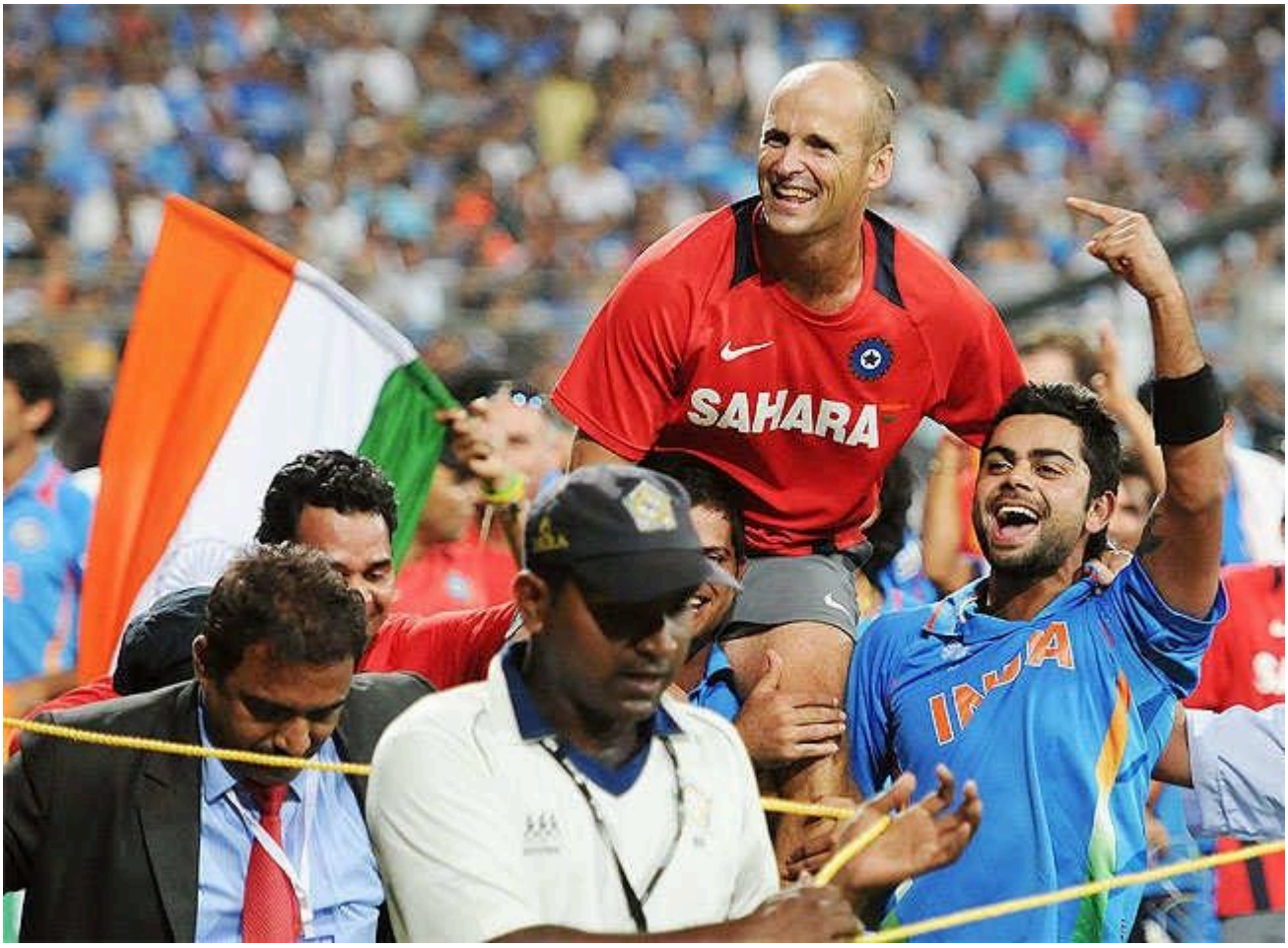
BCCI in the hunt for Team India Cricket Coach



The most successful coaching stint was from Gary Kirsten
By **Sunil Sarpal**

Coaching Team India is an onerous task for BCCI. The tenure of Rahul Dravid, Team India Coach, is coming to an end. BCCI is looking for his replacement. In the past, some notable contributions as Team India Coach have come from Gary Kirsten, John Wright, and Ravi Shastri. The most successful coaching stint was from Gary Kirsten. But for his family commitments, he left Team India even though both BCCI and Indian side did not want to part company. John Wright was also a success story so was Ravi Shastri. The credentials of a coach should have man-management skills and recognizing zinks in players and finding solutions to it.

At the moment, India has in its ranks the world class Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli. Both of them are at the twilight of their illustrious careers. Coaching such stalwarts is a difficult task for a coach.

When Anil Kumble was entrusted with the task of coaching Team India, he had differences with Virat Kohli. This resulted in Kumble's withdrawal from the coaching job. There came a phase in India Cricket when Greg Chappel was appointed as India Coach. During his tenure, Team India's performance nose-dived because he had differences with the then India Captain Saurav Ganguly. BCCI had to remove Greg Chappel to save the team from the ignominy of dismissal performance.

BCCI therefore has to keep all pros and cons in mind for this appointment.

The names that are making round for this job are Tom Moody and VVS Laxman. Tom Moody carries advantage over Laxman because of his previous coaching stint.

First and foremost, BCCI has to ensure that Team India's harmony and unity is not affected with the arrival of a new incumbent for this job. Will the new incumbent prove to be a worthy successor of Rahul Dravid? Because Team India is blended with both youth and experienced players. Indian Team is rich with both pace and spin. India has the batters who can shine in any situation and condition.

BCCI has to ensure that the coach will take the team forward and not indulge in any ego-related problem. The coach should be competent enough to understand the requirements of both experienced pro and new and budding cricketers.

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 ?

ALSO RAN: VIRAT KOHLI – IN THE PINK OF FORM

by **Sunil Sarpal**



Virat Kohli

As we approach the final today, in the on-going IPL season, Virat Kohli belted out back to back centuries for his franchisee RCB. Virat stole the show but unfortunately his team RCB could not even find a place in the play-offs. Kohli leaves a solid impact on his followers with the kind of flourish seen in his knocks. He plays conventional cricketing shots all over the park in a commanding fashion that bowlers are left clueless where to pitch the ball and where not.

The behaviour of the pitch on which match is played plays a pivotal role in batting performance.

Indian pitches generally are spin friendly.

In Australia the bounce is waist high.

In England, the conditions provide more swing.

In New Zealand, there is more lift from the surface and

swing too.

In West Indies, the pitches provide low bounce and are on the slow side.

A batsman needs to adjust to conditions first and plan which shot should be played and which not.

Kohli with 76 International tons in his pocket in all formats has enormous experience and exposure to any given condition. He therefore is the backbone of Indian batting and other just revolve around him. Dislodging him therefore becomes next to impossible. He stands tall among his contemporaries.

People and his die-hard foes becomes so critical about his inclusion in the side when he goes thru patchy and lean periods. They immediately write him off but Kohli has in him to bounce back with vengeance.

Kohli proclaims; “As long as God so desires, I shall keep on playing for India.

He is a modern-day iconic figure and others just want to emulate his work ethics.

He stands tall among the legendary figures India has produced so far.

If he remains fit and rarin-to-go, he will set such high benchmarks that he will be hard to dislodge.



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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 Bhuvi, Arshdweep, Siraj, Bumrah, Shami, Pandya. They certainly have an edge over Umran Mallik and many more.

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

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

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

Indian fielding standard is second to none. With the intro of YOYO 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.

Kohli’s Resurgence in Indian Cricket

By **Sunil Sarpal**



Image courtesy 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 hypocracy.

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 Kambli 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.