

Kapil's masterpiece — a tipping point in India's sporting history

The legendary cricketer's unbeaten 175 against Zimbabwe in the 1983 World Cup has a touch of mythical allure to it



K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR
TUNBRIDGE WELLS

A bright Thursday morning, with clear skies and the chirping of birds, was the perfect setting for embarking on a cricketing pilgrimage. Tunbridge Wells is a familiar name to cricket lovers and it was time to head there. Before V.V.S. Laxman and Rahul Dravid engineered that engrossing turnaround against Steve Waugh's Aussies at Kolkata's Eden Gardens in 2001, the Indian version of rising from the ashes harked back to a glorious June 18 in 1983 at Tunbridge Wells.

Kapil Dev's unbeaten 175 (138b, 16x4, 6x6), miraculous in its conception, resuscitated India from a precarious 17 for five in a World Cup match against Zimbabwe. The skipper's dare-devilry and partnerships with Roger Binny and Syed Kirmani ensured that his men scored 266 for eight and subsequently the opposition was bowled out for 235. It was a tipping point in India's sporting history and Kapil's Devils eventually won the World Cup in a David-quelling-Goliath moment against the West Indies at Lord's.

The 36th anniversary of Kapil's supreme effort passed by just recently and it was time to snuggle into nostalgia's warmth. Strangely, on that epochal day, the BBC



Commanding show: Kapil Dev hits a trademark shot during the epic knock. Right: The great allrounder is lauded by teammates after the scintillating effort. • THE HINDU ARCHIVES



crew had a strike and there is no footage of an innings for the ages. A member of the 1983 Indian squad once told this correspondent: "I think the strike was an excuse, the BBC perhaps presumed that there was no value in reporting a game involving India and Zimbabwe." The only lingering references are photographs of Kapil launching his sixes and shards of memory fixated to a few anecdotes and R. Mohan's despatches in *The Hindu*.

Cut to the present, trains

had to be switched: Southampton Central to London's Waterloo; and Waterloo East to Tunbridge Wells. And as the rail-lines snaked past London's high-rises, rolling greens, slumbering sheep, and through tunnels burrowing into hills, a slice of history was to be relived.

Quaint town

Tunbridge Wells is a quaint town and the venue — Nevill Ground — that witnessed Kapil's masterpiece is fringed by country homes and the

woods laced with flowering shrubs. The guard whispers: "Kapil Dev, 175!" In the middle, a county skirmish was in progress involving Kent and Nottinghamshire. A wicket falls, Samit Patel departs, there is measured applause from an audience munching cucumber sandwiches, pork pies and imbibing ale or wine. The thud of the red cherry in a pastoral setting, surely picture-postcards are made of these moments.

Paul Downton, former England wicketkeeper and the

director of Kent County Cricket Club extends a firm handshake. "I missed that match but it changed Indian cricket, didn't it? Till then India only cared for Tests and then this match and the World Cup win shifted attention to ODIs," he says before seeking out the regulars, who were present when Kapil made a mockery of the odds with his rousing big-hits and toothy grin.

Two gentlemen, nursing their beers on the grassbanks, raise their hands



Epochal venue: A view of the scoreboard above the pavilion. Bottom: Bruce Standing, a cricket fan, and Carl Openshaw, president, Tunbridge Wells CC, snapped on Thursday. • K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR

when asked about that distant magical day. Carl Openshaw, president of the Tunbridge Wells Cricket Club, remembers: "India was in trouble, losing wickets, first two and then another three and it looked like the match would be over by lunch. It wasn't meant to be that way, imagine India was playing against little Zimbabwe and then Kapil Dev steps in and soon he is hitting sixes and fours all over. It was incredible to be here. It has been our only ODI so far. This ground

has limited facilities and it is difficult to accommodate so many modern-day television cameras. We have the stands here and the woods there and you are in time for our annual Kent game too. We prefer it this way."

Carl's friend and fellow old-timer Bruce Standing was at the arena with his then little daughter and he recalls: "It was jaw-dropping, first there were the wickets and then Kapil Dev strikes those sixes. There were not many Indian fans back then and we

were all just catching a game of cricket but it was special." But is there anything related to the fortune-flipping joust? A scoreboard, may be an old picture, any remembrance of things past? Downton does the rounds in the pavilion, the members' bar and the club's office but there are no physical clues to Kapil's incandescent moment under the sun. All that remain are the 'I-was-there' tales passed across generations, adding a mythical allure to a stupendous knock.

Another injury scare!

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Vijay Shankar. • AP

All-rounder Vijay Shankar is the latest to suffer an injury scare in the Indian camp after being hit on the toe during a rain-hit training session on Wednesday.

During training, a Jasprit Bumrah yorker hit Shankar flush on his toes and he was apparently in pain.

However a team source informed that there's nothing to worry as of now. "Yes, Vijay (Shankar) was in pain but it subsided by the evening. Hopefully, there's nothing scary," the source said.

Shankar is one of the designated No. 4 batsmen in this Indian line-up although he is being used

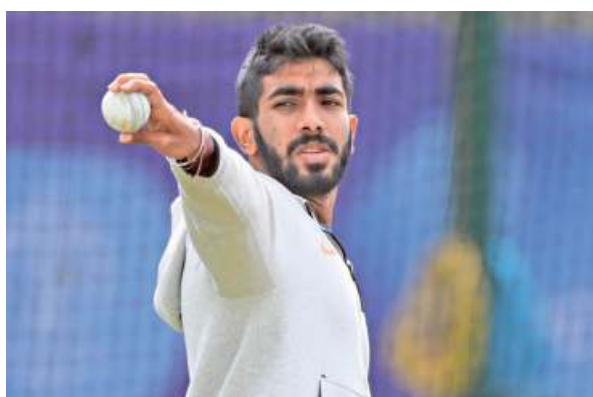
as a floater. He is also a handy medium-pacer.

With Shikhar Dhawan already ruled out of the tournament due to thumb fracture and Bhuvneshwar Kumar out for two games due to hamstring strain, Shankar's injury will only increase tension for the team management.

The pitches in England are the flattest in the world: Bumrah

Though there is cloud cover, there is neither seam movement nor swing, says the India speedster

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SOUTHAMPTON



Matter of fact: Bumrah says it is a bonus if the surfaces for the World Cup games offer some help to the speedsters. • AP

World's premier fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah on Thursday said the pitches in England used for white ball cricket are the "flattest tracks" he has ever bowled on as there is rarely any movement in the air or off the pitch.

Bumrah busted the myth about English conditions and tracks during an interaction with the media here.

"Whatever white ball cricket I have played so far, I felt the flattest wickets are those in England. There's no help for the bowlers on these tracks," he said.

"You see cloud cover and feel that the ball will swing but there is neither seam movement nor swing," said Bumrah.

Bumrah said when playing in England the Indian bowling unit is always ready for the worst-case scenario and if some help is available, it treats it as bonus.

"You have to rely a lot on

your accuracy and clarity. So that's what we try to do. We know that the wickets are flat in England and we take that into consideration as the worst possible scenario. So if there is a bit of help, then ad-

justment becomes easy." Normally fast bowlers don't go full tilt at the nets especially when they are playing matches regularly, but it's different for Bumrah who had K.L. Rahul and Virat Kohli in all sorts of trouble during Thursday's net session.

Rattling Rahul, Kohli

A perfect yorker pegged back. When Kohli batted, Bumrah got one to shoot up from short of good length, leaving the skipper ducking for cover. The ball hit the top of the bat and flew!

Then there was a delivery that pitched on length and beat Kohli's bat. "With Bumrah, he exactly bowls in the nets as he bowls in the

match," the Indian captain had said earlier.

Ask Bumrah about that and he echoes his captain's observation. "Sometimes you want to try something different in the match and

you want to try that in the nets as well. You want to execute everything in the nets. In the match, it's just repetitions. Be it a death-bowling session or with new ball, I do it in the nets."

Where they stand

Team	Mat	Won	Lost	NR	PTS	NRR
Australia	6	5	1	0	10	0.849
New Zealand	5	4	0	1	9	1.591
England	5	4	1	0	8	1.862
India	4	3	0	1	7	1.029
Bangladesh	6	2	3	1	5	-0.407
Sri Lanka	5	1	2	2	4	-1.778
West Indies	5	1	3	1	3	0.272
South Africa	6	1	4	1	3	-0.193
Pakistan	5	1	3	1	3	-1.933
Afghanistan	5	0	5	0	0	-2.089

* till the Australia-Bangladesh match on June 20

Warner's big hundred highlights Australia's consummate win

Mushfiqur Rahim's determined century to no avail as a combative Bangladesh comes up 48 runs short

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NOTTINGHAM

Australia moved closer to the semifinals after David Warner, with his second century of the tournament, inspired the defending champion to a comfortable 48-run win over a combative Bangladesh here on Thursday.

The left-handed opener contained his natural aggressive self before swinging his arms freely to score 166, which steered Australia to a mammoth 381 for five, its second highest in the World Cup.

Warner, who had hit a

hundred against Pakistan, added 121 with his skipper Aaron Finch (53) in a risk-free opening partnership and then raised a 192-run stand with Usman Khawaja (89).

His 16th ODI hundred, which was also his sixth 150-plus knock, came off 147 balls and had 14 hits to fence and five over the ropes.

The stage was set to go after the bowlers and Glenn Maxwell produced a 10-ball 32, which had three sixes and two fours. Maxwell was run out after a mix-up with Khawaja, who sent his part-

er back sensing a risk, and the latter was caught behind 11 short of a hundred.

Faced with a daunting task of chasing down a massive target, the 'Tigers', as expected, took the fight to the rival camp but ended up with 333 for eight in the stipulated overs.

Good cameos

Mushfiqur Rahim (102 not out), Mahmudullah (69), Tamim Iqbal (62) and the in-form Shakib Al Hasan (41) gave it their all in the chase but the effort still proved insufficient though the total was the Asian nation's best ever in one-dayers.

It was Mushfiqur's first hundred in a World Cup game and seventh overall. Paceman Mitchell Starc and Nathan Coulter-Nile shared four wickets between them.

The win took Australia to the top with 10 points.



Flying high: David Warner celebrates in inimitable style after notching up his 16th ODI century. • AP

STAT SPHERE

1 The match aggregate of 714 is the highest in the World Cup, surpassing the 688 between Aus (376/9) and SL (312) in Sydney, 2015

1 Warner's 166 is the highest score of this edition, and his sixth score of over-150 in ODIs

MOST 150-PLUS SCORES IN ODIs

- 7 (Rohit)
- 6 (Warner)
- 5 (Tendulkar, Gayle)

• 4 (Amla, Jayasuriya and Kohli)

1 Shakib has become the first player from Bangladesh to score 400 runs in a series/tournament in any format

2 Number of 150-plus scores by Warner in the WC, the first player to do so. He had scored 178 against Afghanistan (Perth, 2015).

5 Number of 50-run partnerships between Finch and Warner in this WC, the highest so far

7 Number of centuries scored by Mushfiqur in ODIs. This is his first in the WC

FEWEST INNINGS TO 16 ODI HUNDREDS

- 94 - Amla
- 110 - Kohli & Warner
- 126 - Dhawan
- 128 - Root

SCOREBOARD AUSTRALIA VS BANGLADESH

AUSTRALIA
David Warner c Rubel b Sarkar 166 (147b, 14x4, 5x6), Aaron Finch c Rubel b Sarkar 53 (57b, 5x4, 2x6), Usman Khawaja c Mushfiqur b Sarkar 89 (72b, 10x4), Glenn Maxwell run out 32 (10b, 2x4, 3x6), Marcus Stoinis (not out) 17 (11b, 2x4), Steve Smith lbw b Mustafizur 1 (2b), Alex Carey (not out) 11 (8b, 1x4), Extras (b-1, lb-5, nb-1, w-5): 12; Total (for five wickets in 50 overs): 381.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-121 (Finch, 20.5 overs), 2-313 (Warner, 44.2), 3-352 (Maxwell, 46.2), 4-353 (Khawaja, 46.5), 5-

354 (Smith, 47.1).

BANGLADESH BOWLING
Mortaza 8-0-56-0, Mustafizur 9-0-69-1, Shakib 6-0-50-0, Rubel 9-0-83-0, Mehidy 10-0-59-0, Sarkar 8-0-58-3.

BANGLADESH
Tamim Iqbal b Starc 62 (74b, 6x4), Soumya Sarkar run out 10 (8b, 2x4), Shakib Al Hasan c Warner b Stoinis 41 (41b, 4x4), Mushfiqur Rahim (not out) 102 (97b, 9x4, 1x6), Liton Das lbw b Zampa 20 (17b, 3x4), Mahmudullah c Cummins b Coulter-Nile 69 (50b, 5x4, 3x6), Sabbir Rahman b Coulter-Nile 0 (1b), Mehidy Hasan c Warner b Starc 6

(7b), Mashrafe Mortaza c Maxwell b Stoinis 6 (5b, 1x4); Extras (b-4, lb-4, w-9): 17; Total (for eight wickets in 50 overs): 333.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-23 (Sarkar, 3.5), 2-102 (Shakib, 18.1), 3-144 (Tamim, 24.1), 4-175 (Liton, 29.2), 5-302 (Mahmudullah, 45.3), 6-302 (Sabbir, 45.4), 7-323 (Mehidy, 48.2), 8-333 (Mortaza, 49.6).

AUSTRALIA BOWLING
Starc 10-0-55-2, Cummins 10-1-65-0, Maxwell 3-0-25-0, Coulter-Nile 10-0-58-2, Stoinis 8-0-54-2, Zampa 9-0-68-1.

Toss: Australia; **MoM:** Warner. Australia won by 48 runs.

INNINGS SCAN			PROGRESSION		
AUS	BAN		AUS	BAN	
0	Maidens	1	53/0	10 overs	53/1
34	Fours	30	117/0	20 overs	112/2
10	Sixes	4	168/1	30 overs	177/4
192	Best stand	127 (5th)	250/1	40 overs	245/4
7.62	RR	6.66	381/5	50 overs	333/8

TOP SHOWS		
For	Batting	Bowling
Australia	Warner 166 (147b, 14x4, 5x6)	Stoinis 2/54 (8), Starc 2/55 (10)
Bangladesh	Mushfiqur 102* (97b, 9x4, 1x6)	Sarkar 3/58 (8)

