

GAUTAM GAMBHIR

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Cricket leagues around the world tick a few vital boxes but miss a few obvious ones. They are fun for existing cricket fans, provide employment to the cricketers besides creating content for a broadcaster. But I am not sure it is as exciting for a franchisee owner as that presentation/excel promised him. The equation is simple. Most cricket properties are designed keeping in mind an Indian fan. That is where the ratings for a broadcaster and eyeballs for a sponsor are. All of this translates into revenue for various stakeholders.

With BCCI not allowing current Indian cricketers to play in any league, except IPL, other such tournaments have almost nothing for an Indian fan. Except for maybe a couple of tournaments, the other such properties are not in good shape and so are their franchisee owners. A franchisee owner is a businessman who is looking for a return on his investment. Forget about the return, I can tell you with some confidence that even his investment is not secure. So what does he do? Either he makes an exit feeling cheated. Or, as the grapevine says, he ends up bringing in an alleged 'bookie' into the ownership of his franchisee to raise some revenue albeit from corrupt practices. That is where we have incidents like the one we had with former Bangladesh captain Shakib-Al Hassan.

One way or other other, Bangladesh are already a wicket down and India are 40 without loss as that is what Shakib is worth. He was my KKR team-mate and I know what he can do on his day. Before this news came in I was quite certain that this will be a much closer series than the last one against South Africa was. Cricket is a funny game and this incident could end up galvanising the visiting team. Let us see. I'd also like to congratulate Bangladesh for not making too much fuss about the pollution in the Capital. These are not ideal conditions to venture outdoors forget about playing competitive sport. So well done Tigers!

I think we are slowly slipping into times when cricket will have an impact of weather beyond rain. This is one of those situations. Indian cricket badly needs its first indoor cricketing arena. Budgets were never an issue and now with SouravGanguly in the driver's seat, even intent is taken care of. Don't be surprised if you see India's first ever such indoor cricket or multi-purpose arena in about 4-5 years time. I think more than One-dayers or T20s, Test cricket needs an indoor arena.

I am reading that India are keen on experimenting with new names. I think we have a decent pool of cricketers and besides experimenting we also need to identify the core of the team. The selectors and the team-management should give security to the core besides defining their roles which will lead them into next year's T20 World Cup. For me a secured dressing room is a successful and happy dressing room.

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There is a lot of talk about ways and means being discussed to extend the tenure of newly-elected BCCI office-bearers. The agenda circulated for the December 1 AGM of the board clearly suggests that we haven't heard the last on this matter. The voice from the Lodha camp is that this will be "ridiculing Supreme Court". This is understandable considering the efforts that the RM Lodha Committee had put in to suggest reforms for BCCI constitution. I hope we are not heading for another episode of court-room deliberations.

Personally speaking I am not a big fan of cooling-off period for office-bearers. I have said this before and I will say it again that Indian cricket needs individuals like Sourav Ganguly. They not only have minds of their own but they also have vision and ability to lead inclusive growth. Besides, he knows his weaknesses better than his strengths and know how to work on them. It will be a shame if Dada has to leave after 10 months. At the same time I am not suggesting to undo the fantastic work done by Lodha Committee. A middle path is what will save the day.

Talking about knowing one's weaknesses, Deepak Chahar is not too far from that trait. In the last T20 game in Nagpur he was quick to assess conditions and changed his gameplan. Instead of bowling full to get swing he bowled back of the length or short. He used the largeness of the VCA ground to good effect. Bangladesh let themselves and their fans down yet again. Being 1-0 up in the series and then losing next two will not and should not go down well with them and their fans. With slow bowlers and a few hustling batsmen in their ranks, this format should have worked well for them. I am afraid but Test series will be no different. Although I hope that it is a bit more closely fought contest.

They will miss Shakib-Al Hassan even more. A quality left-arm spinner is gold in the second innings of a Test match with rough playing a part. Besides, Shakib's batting ability when second new ball is due and carrying the lower-order with him are two other aspects that Bangladesh will miss. The pitch in Indore is a good one for batting but I am not a fan of shorter boundaries at this venue. While six-hitting draws in crowds but we can't negate a bowler completely. A classically driven boundary through a well-set field still has place in cricket.

Before I sign off I want to suggest that Indian team management should look at Wriddhiman Saha as an all-rounder. He is a proper batsman with immense abilities. In my humble opinion he should bat up the order and this could just be the series to make that change.

GAUTAM GAMBHIR

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The World Cup in 1992 was a huge event for me. I was 10 when the tournament took place in Australia and New Zealand. Cricket played in coloured clothing and white ball had been happening but a World Cup was a novelty. Coloured TV was in its 10th year in India - Channel 9 broadcast, seagulls, Richie Benaud and Co behind the mike, Aussie grounds and cricketers in coloured clothing chasing white ball...all this combined to create quite a spectacle. I remember, around that time, I desperately wanted to have a white cricket ball myself. Either it was not available or it was too expensive. I had to settle for a six-rupee white cork ball. Cricket was suddenly more glamorous and aspiring.

I hope pink cricket ball does to Indian cricket what white did. For starters, it is a fantastic marketing initiative. Fans, players, administrators and media are all discussing pink cricket ball. Cricket after office hours has always worked and I see no reason why Test matches should not. I am a purist and wouldn't have embraced this idea with ease. But then, the pace and immediacy of T20s has refreshed the temperament of the viewing public. I think a millennial is keen on a ball dominated passage of a Test match but he wants it better packaged. Even as a part of a broadcasting team, I keep thinking what more can I give? What more can I add? Is it an anecdote? Is it something analytical? In the times of instant cashback, instant food sports and entertainment needs constant innovation. Hence, this change needs to be embraced.

As a batsman, I had good experience with pink cricket ball. I got some decent runs while playing Duleep Trophy back in 2016. We played with the pink Kookaburra cricket balls back then. They behaved differently during day time and under lights. I am glad that we have maintained consistency by deciding to use SG brand of cricket balls which are normally used in India. I'd like to see how much of an impact dew has on the game. I understand all due precautions are being taken but nature may still have the last laugh as this is winter time in India. I also read somewhere that some Indian cricketers feel pink cricket ball may not help spinners or reverse swing. It seems to be the case but then as I said earlier this change is necessary and we will have to give it sometime.

Bangladesh should be proud of the fact that they will be a part of a historical moment. I am not sure if their fortunes will improve but their standing in world cricket will surely improve. Normally such momentous occasions involve teams like Australia, England etc. but Bangladesh getting to play the first Day-Night Test match in India means that they have earned respect in world cricket.