

## MASTER CLASS

### Ganguly's IPL snub was disappointing

Sunil Gavaskar 16<sup>th</sup> January 2011

THE Tests maybe over in Australia and South Africa, but Pakistan are playing New Zealand in a Test series even as their former skipper and two outstanding new ball bowlers are being examined by the ICC for bringing the game into disrepute by their actions last year in England. The decision on them has now been postponed which is a bit hard since not just the players under the scanner but also everybody in world cricket wants the issue to be decided and not dragged on as the World Cup gets nearer. Nobody wants the World Cup to be under any doubt and hence it's important that a decision should be arrived at quickly.

In India, the auction for the IPL generated much surprise with some big name players going unsold. While it is understandable that Brian Lara who has been retired for a few years was not picked by anybody, it was a huge surprise that Chris Gayle, the devastating batsman from West Indies, wasn't grabbed by any team.



He is the kind of batsman who can change the game in a matter of overs so it was a shocker that nobody thought it fit to pick him. There is, of course, the Test schedule of all teams to be considered so that players picked are available for as many matches as possible and maybe that's why Gayle found himself on the sidelines.

What was even more disappointing was that nobody went for Sourav Ganguly either. Here is a player who has brought glory to India as skipper as also with his batting and sometimes with his bowling too and nobody bids for him even at his base price!! Yes, Ganguly can evoke contrasting emotions in people but surely at his base price he was a bargain. What it tells you is that in Indian cricket you are wanted only as long as you are useful to somebody but if not, then all your earlier performances don't matter. The other option is to be a bootlicker of those who matter and Ganguly, thank God, will never be that.

Back to the cricket, and New Zealand's performance goes from bad to terrible. They have always been a team that has been overrated by its media and former players, who even while they are pointing fingers at other countries forget that three fingers are pointing back.

Pakistan team kept its cool and with Abdur Rehman getting the ball to turn appreciably, they were able to spin out New Zealand in both innings and get a good win.

The Australians continue their bad patch with a last-ball loss in the T20 game to England and South Africa have walloped India in the first One-dayer. It all points out to an exciting week ahead as those teams that have lost try to come back in the series but for this week, it is Abdur

Rehman, the left-handed spinner from Pakistan, who is the CEAT International Cricketer of the Week.  
PMG.