

## Time Dhawan made his selection count

Sunil Gavaskar

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WAY back when the Indian team used to tour overseas there used to be a joke in the team that it is better to fail at the start of the tour and then have reasonable success at the end so that the greater failure at the start would be forgotten. So any player who did well at the start of the tour was a bit concerned that his form should not dry up towards the end because then his success would be forgotten and only the failure in the last couple of Tests remembered.



Public memory is pretty short indeed and that's why it is crucial to get runs or wickets just before the selection of a team than earlier which would be forgotten when the selectors sat to pick the team. Shikhar Dhawan who got a brilliant 95 that put paid to any hopes that the Kings XI Punjab had of sneaking into the play-offs has to thank that innings for his selection as a replacement to Gautam Gambhir for prior to that innings he had done little to remember in this year's IPL.

He had been selected for the Indian team earlier in the season against the Australians but the game got rained off and after that

with both Sehwag and Gambhir being, fit he had no chance of getting in. Hopefully, he will grab the chance that he has got and show that in case the injury to Sehwag takes longer to heal then he is a good replacement for him.

Not all the players retained by the franchises from the last IPL have lived up to the expectations, but Shane Watson is not among them. He joined the team a bit after the IPL started since he was busy in Bangladesh smashing some big sixes and helping Australia win the short One-day series. Strangely it was only towards the end of the campaign that the Rajasthan Royals used him as the opener and he immediately made an impact hammering even the hard to be smashed Malinga for sixes and fours.

Malinga had surprised him in the first over with a skidding short ball that hit Watson just under the grille and it looked that the Aussie was determined to show that he wasn't hurt and wanted to hurt the bowler instead. Malinga has not been hit like that for a long time and Rajasthan Royals went on to win the match by ten wickets which is a huge margin in the T20 format.

The pitches for the last week have been excellent with the ball coming on nicely and so batsmen have flourished be it in Dharmshala, Bengaluru, Mumbai or Chennai. That's why we have seen some power batting from the likes of Gayle, Dhoni, Raina, Kohli and of course Watson. They have all entertained the crowd as well as helped their teams to good defendable totals.

Gayle may have taken the IPL by storm but it is Shane Watson with his batting and bowling and fielding who is the CEAT International Cricketer of the Week. PMG