

Pollard's hitting has been awesome

Sunil Gavaskar

If bowlers thought that the limited overs format was tough on them they must think that the T20 format is like torture and slow torture at that. What makes it even worse for them is unlike in Test matches where the boundaries are the full distance, for the T20 format they are brought in a bit and thus what would be catches at Test matches are sixes in the ultra short format of the game. Sometimes even a mishit makes the ball go for a six and with the heavy thick modern bats that happens quite regularly. Then the physical conditioning regime is such that players have become stronger and more powerful and thus can hit the ball a fair distance too. The T20 format also gives batsmen the license to launch into the big shots sooner than they would in Test matches and so many a top bowler finds his economy rate is spoilt by the format. No wonder bowlers feel that cricket is a batsman's game and the laws of the game tilted in favour of the batsmen.

The batsmen certainly are dominating the Champions League in South Africa and despite the pitches being more bouncy than in last year's Champions League in India, the bowlers haven't quite had it their way. What the true pitches have done is to give the batsmen the confidence of playing through the line and hitting the ball and taking their chances hoping that the ball won't deviate or spin too much. Kieron Pollard has been awesome in his big hitting and is by far the top six-hitter so far in the tournament. His pulled six of a Shaun Tait bouncer bowled at over 90 miles per hour was an incredible shot and it went over 120 meters which means that it would have been a six on any ground in the world. He had got badly hit in the T20 finals in England where the ball sneaked through the gap between the helmet and the face grille and his right eye was closed. He has recovered nicely after that and that six should end all the loose talk that he cannot handle short bowling. His bowling hasn't quite clicked for the Mumbai Indians and that has added to the problems that they are having.



Sachin Tendulkar has batted splendidly too but it is quite evident that unless he gets going the Mumbai Indians aren't going to put up a big total even with Pollard's big hitting towards the end.

The South Australian Redbacks are playing some excellent cricket and they are well led by Michael Klinger who has got half-centuries in both the games played so far. They have won both the matches and look well placed to top their group. They have a good all-round side and Shaun Tait makes it hard for batsmen to take many runs off him especially in the final overs.

The batsmen unsurprisingly have dominated the tournament so far and among the top contenders for this award this week are Raina and Finch along with the above mentioned names. It is the South Australian skipper Michael Klinger with his match winning half-centuries who is the CEAT International Cricketer of the Week.