

Pak batsmen lack temperament

Sunil Gavaskar

PAKISTAN'S win over Australia in the second and final Test of their home series in England will have given them just the pep-up that it needed after continuously losing to Australia over the last few years. It looked for a time as if they would mess up this opportunity too but they managed to sneak home with the tail enders at the crease.

In Mohammad Ammer and Mohmmad Asif Pakistan have a real potent attack capable of troubling the best on any pitch in the world. They had the Aussies dismissed for only 88 in the first innings and that was just what the doctor ordered. In the 1960s to 1990s the West Indians were the most natural players in the world but Pakistan has taken over that mantle now and some of their players have incredible talent.

However talent needs to be happily married to temperament for the whole package to be successful and it is in the temperament side that the Pakistani batsmen are being found short. Far too many of them look mixed-up about how they should be approaching the task at hand and most of them seem to think that the only way to succeed is to attack. Cricket, especially Test cricket has shown us over the years that there is always a place for just being a bit patient and wait for the chance to get on the attack mode. Maybe the young Pakistani batsmen were falling for the old Aussie trick of being taunted into playing shots that were not right for the occasion and thus getting dismissed.

This is where temperament counts and the Aussies are pretty good at making opposition play in a manner that they are not used to. They almost succeeded in the second Test too and if the Pakistanis had to chase another 30 runs or so they may have succumbed again.

Shane Watson did not have a great time with the bat with Ammer giving him plenty of trouble with his late swing and so the Aussies did not always get off to the blazing start that he provides

with the solid Simon Katich at the other end. That put pressure on the others too and the Australian batsmen did look a bit rusty in England.



The seaming conditions helped the bowlers alright and the first innings was a tough one but once the pitch settled down it was a lot easier to bat on. Even if Watson did not succeed with the bat he picked wickets with the ball. He is one of those bowlers who like to act as if every delivery should get him a wicket.

That can sometimes get under the skin of batsmen who then want to hammer him instead of just playing normally. After all a ball hit at million miles an hour or one that barely slides over the rope is still only four runs but in trying to hammer the ball the timing can go astray and that is how plenty of inside edges get on to the stumps. Watson picked up five in the first Test and added another six in the next and it is for this effort that he is the CEAT International Cricketer of the Week.