

Cricket 107

Chapter 107

The sun was shining brightly over Lauderhill, and the atmosphere was electric. The crowd had gathered in large numbers, their excitement buzzing through the stadium as India prepared to take on West Indies once again. The Indian captain had won the toss and, without hesitation, elected to bat first. Confidence was high after their dominant victory in the first match, and the team had decided to go in with the same playing eleven.

Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan strode onto the field, their bats in hand, their faces focused yet relaxed. The West Indies players took their positions, spreading across the field as Keemo Paul marked his run-up. The young pacer had the ball in hand, his eyes scanning the pitch, calculating his first move.

The umpire signaled the start of play, and Keemo came charging in. The first delivery was a good-length ball outside off, shaping away slightly. Rohit let it go with a watchful eye.

Shikhar, at the non-striker's end, tapped his bat impatiently. He wanted to get going, to make an impact after his disappointing performance in the first match. When the second ball came, fuller and angling in, he flicked it towards square leg for a comfortable single. It wasn't a boundary, but it was enough to get him off the mark.

As the innings progressed, both openers started finding their rhythm. Rohit's signature pull shots and Shikhar's elegant cuts sent the ball racing towards the boundary repeatedly. The West Indies bowlers tried to contain them, but their experience and skill were unmatched.

Boundaries flowed, and the crowd roared with each exquisite stroke. Rohit was looking solid, threading gaps effortlessly, while Dhawan, after a few cautious strokes, was starting to free his arms. Keemo Paul and Sheldon Cottrell were trying to apply pressure, but India's openers were in no mood to slow down.

Then, in the fifth over, just as things were settling in India's favor, West Indies got the breakthrough they desperately needed. Shikhar, attempting a lofted shot over extra cover, mistimed his stroke. The ball didn't travel as he expected, and it was caught easily near the boundary. He cursed under his breath, shaking his head in frustration as he walked back to the pavilion. It was another early exit, another missed opportunity.

The stadium erupted as Virat Kohli made his way to the crease. There was always an extra level of energy when Kohli was on the field, whether he was batting or leading the team. His intensity was contagious, and today, he had that determined look in his eyes. He greeted Rohit with a brief nod and took his stance, tapping his bat against the ground as he studied the field placements.

Both Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli had been batting with sheer elegance, steadily building the innings. The partnership was looking rock-solid, and Rohit, in particular, was in sublime touch, effortlessly finding the gaps and punishing the bowlers whenever they erred in length.

But in the 11th over, just as he was eyeing a big finish, his innings came to an unfortunate end. It was a short-pitched delivery outside off, and Rohit, trying to pull it in front of square, had to reach for it. The connection wasn't clean, and the ball sliced high into the air. The cover fielder, Shimron Hetmyer, back-pedaled, positioning himself under the swirling ball. For a moment, it seemed like the height and the wind might make things tricky, but Hetmyer remained composed, judged it perfectly, and held on.

Rohit looked up at the sky in frustration but acknowledged the applause from the crowd. He had played a fine knock—67 runs off 51 balls, filled with glorious strokes and impeccable timing. As he walked off, the Indian dressing room stood up to applaud his effort, while Kohli tapped his bat against his pad, preparing for the next phase of the innings. The scoreboard read 115/2 in 13th over.

And then, Aarav Pathak walked in.

Jogging towards the crease with a calm yet determined look, Aarav adjusted his gloves and tapped the pitch a couple of times, checking the surface. His eyes met Kohli's, and the captain gave him a slight nod, an unspoken message of trust and confidence. Taking his stance, he exhaled deeply and focused on the bowler.

On the other end, Oshane Thomas was brimming with confidence after getting the prized wicket of Rohit Sharma. His pace had troubled the batters earlier, and now, with the adrenaline pumping, he was eager to make another breakthrough.

As Thomas ran in, his eyes locked on the young batter, Aarav stood firm. It was the fifth ball of the over—pitched up, straight down the ground. Aarav reacted instantly, bringing his bat down with precision. The timing was exquisite, and the ball raced past the bowler, skimming the surface as it sped to the boundary. The sound off the bat was crisp, and even before the ball reached the ropes, the crowd erupted.

Thomas took a deep breath, adjusting his grip as he prepared for the final delivery of the over. This time, he went short, angling it into the body. Aarav adjusted, opened the face of his bat, and sliced it towards the fielder at point. A dot ball.

It was just the beginning, but already, there was a sense of anticipation in the air. Aarav Pathak had arrived at the crease, and everyone knew—something special was about to unfold.

In front of me stood one of the trickiest spinners in the game, Sunil Narine.

Virat bhaiya was on strike for the first ball. He tapped it gently towards mid-wicket and ran a quick single. Now, it was my turn.

Narine adjusted his grip, eyes locked onto me. I took a deep breath, settled into my stance, and waited.

The second ball—slightly full, angling in. Instinct took over. I bent down and swept it hard, sending it racing past square leg for a four! The crack of the bat echoed through the stadium, and I felt a surge of energy. Virat bhaiya walked up to me, punching my gloves. "Good shot, kid," he said with a nod.

The next ball was a wide—perhaps Narine was feeling the pressure? I smiled to myself.

The real third ball came. This time, I decided to do something different. I got into position early and reverse-swept it over deep point for a six! The crowd erupted, and I could feel my confidence soaring.

Then came the fourth ball. I stepped out, dancing down the track, got to the pitch of the ball, and lofted it beautifully over long-off. Another six! The Indian dugout was on its feet! The sound of the ball meeting the bat was pure music.

"The confidence, the footwork, the execution—this young man is here to make a statement!

Narine adjusted his fielders, trying to figure out a way to stop the onslaught. Fifth ball now—I stepped out once again, but this time played it safe, punching it down the ground for a single.

Virat bhaiya was back on strike for the last ball. He defended it.

The commentators continued, their voices filled with admiration.

"This has been breathtaking batting! The youngster is showing no fear, taking on one of the best spinners in the world with absolute dominance!"

"The Indian dugout is loving every bit of this! And why wouldn't they? This is a superstar in the making!"

I stood at the non-striker's end, rolling my shoulders and tapping my bat against the pitch.

West Indies captain, Carlos Brathwaite handed the ball to Khary Pierre, a slow left-arm orthodox bowler. A part-timer, but I knew better than to underestimate anyone at this level. They were looking for a breakthrough, trying to break our rhythm.

First ball—Pierre floated it up, trying to tempt me into a rash shot. I waited, watched it carefully, and leaned in to find the perfect gap through the covers. Four runs. Elegant, effortless, and exactly how I wanted to start this over.

Second ball—I played it smart, just tapped it for a single, letting Kohli take charge.

Third ball—Pierre tossed it up to Kohli, slightly on the pads. And the next second? Boom! A monstrous six over deep midwicket! The sound of the bat meeting the ball was pure music. Virat bhai just stood there, admiring his own shot. I couldn't help but smile.

Fourth ball— Virat Bhaiya stepped out of the crease, looking to attack, but the ball held its line. Adjusting at the last moment, he played it safely for a quick single.

Fifth ball—Pierre switched things up, pushing one into my pads. I decided to hold back, just defended it, gauging his length and pace.

Sixth ball—This was the one. I saw it coming, a little flight, outside off. My instincts kicked in. I stepped into it, opened the face of the bat, and went inside-out over extra cover! A flat six, racing like a bullet into the stands! The crowd erupted, and I could feel the adrenaline surging through me.

I turned to Kohli, and he just grinned, and gave me a thumbs up.

Aarav scored total 59 runs in 22 balls, and team total was 208 runs after 20th over! This was amazing total and our team was eager to defend this and win the T20I series! We were given the break of around 30 minutes to rest and plan for the next innings.

Full team was ready after the 30 minutes rest to move further, and we were in our team circle discussing our strategies and all.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar started the match of our team. he gave only 3 runs in the first over to the openers Sunil Narine and Evin Lewis. Second over was given to me. Sunil Narine was on strike, well he was an unorthodox opener, technically he was just a slogger who was becoming a professional with time. Ball one, I did my run up, first ball, bouncer, ducked directly to wicket keeper Rishabh Pant Behind the wickets!

Next ball, i remained silent for a moment, turned my Super gun on and went for a full length at upper end, and Narine slogged the bat very Fastly, Aarav thought it would go for a six, but Dhawan had something different in plan.

he jumped in the ball direction and raised in the air for the catch. it was taken, a successful catch taken, and here we have it famous gabbar celebration.

It was win for India. i took 2 wickets for 22 runs and best bowler for India was Navdeep Saini who took 4 wickets in 3 overs in just by giving only 7 runs. this was total destruction for the West Indies.

after the match we went to hotel for sleep.