

Cricket 37

Chapter 37

As the clock ticked closer to the match, the team gathered in a huddle in the locker room. Coach Rahul Dravid walked in, his calm demeanor radiating reassurance. "Alright, boys," he began, scanning the room with a small smile, "here's the playing eleven for today." He paused dramatically, letting the suspense build. "Opening: Ishaan and Anmolpreet. One-down..." he looked directly at me, "...is you." My heart skipped a beat, and a thrill coursed through me as the room erupted in cheers.

Just as the noise settled, I felt a vibration in my pocket.

Ding!

Congratulations, Master! You've fulfilled the conditions for debuting in U19 cricket under the stipulated time.

The system's voice echoed in my head, smooth and encouraging.

Host, you have unlocked 28% completion of Dale Steyn's bowling technique. Upon reaching 50%, you'll gain his pace and speed. At 80%, his bowling acumen will be yours.

A smile tugged at my lips. I couldn't have asked for a better start to the day.

The sun beat down on the lush green pitch as Ishaan Kishan, our captain, strode out to the middle for the toss alongside South Africa's captain, Aiden Markram. The coin spun in the air, shimmering under the sunlight, and landed in the Proteas' favor.

"We'll bowl first," Markram announced confidently.

The openers, Ishaan and Anmolpreet, padded up and walked to the middle amidst a raucous cheer from the crowd.

Commentary Box:

"Welcome, folks, to this electrifying contest between the U19 teams of India and South Africa! The stage is set here at Cape Town. India batting first after losing the toss, and here come the openers. Ishaan Kishan looks calm, while Anmolpreet seems ready to face the fire. Let's see how this unfolds!"

The first over passed uneventfully, with Ishaan taking his time to settle in. But in the second over, disaster struck.

"Oh, he's nicked it! Anmolpreet is out for a duck! A golden duck to start his innings, and the South Africans are elated!"

As Anmolpreet trudged back to the pavilion, I tightened my gloves. My turn had come. Taking a deep breath, I strode onto the pitch, my bat feeling heavier than usual.

Commentary Box:

"And here comes the young debutant! A lot of promise in this lad, but the nerves will be real. Facing Andile Phehlukwayo first up—this won't be easy!"

I took my stance as Phehlukwayo steamed in. The first ball was pitched just outside off-stump.

"Short and wide! The debutant leans into it, and oh, what a shot! Pierced the gap beautifully for four. That's confidence for you!"

I allowed myself a small smile as the ball raced to the boundary. Ishaan walked over, patting me on the shoulder. "Good one," he said. "Let's build this."

The partnership grew steadily. Ishaan played with his usual flair, cutting and pulling with precision. I, on the other hand, focused on timing and placement.

By the 15th over, Ishaan was nearing his fifty. He pulled a short ball towards midwicket but mistimed it slightly.

"Oh no, is this out? Yes, it is! Caught at midwicket, and Ishaan Kishan falls for 49. Heartbreak for the skipper!"

He gave me a nod as he walked back. "Your turn to take the lead now," he said.

The score read 115/2 as Sarfaraz Khan joined me at the crease.

"Fresh batsmen Sarfaraz at the crease now. India will need to rebuild carefully."

Sarfaraz and I started cautiously, but the runs began to flow again. By the 25th over, we had established a solid partnership. But just as things were looking good, Sarfaraz went for a big shot and holed out to deep extra cover.

"That's a soft dismissal! Sarfaraz Khan departs for 32, and India loses another wicket."

As Rishabh Pant walked in, I bumped fists with him. "Let's take this to the end," I said.

The next phase of the innings was an absolute blitz.

"Oh, that's a cracking shot! Straight down the ground for six! The young debutant is on fire here!"

Rishabh's aggressive stroke play combined with my steady accumulation had the South African bowlers reeling. When I reached 99, the crowd held its breath.

Phehlukwayo came charging in again, delivering a full toss on the pads.

"Flicked away... and there it is! The debutant brings up his century! What a moment for the young lad. Helmet off, raises his bat, and acknowledges the applause. This is special!"

Rishabh ran up to me, enveloping me in a bear hug. "Well done, champ!" he exclaimed.

By the 36th over, I was on 156 when disaster struck.

"Up in the air... and caught! That's the end of a fantastic innings. The young man departs, but not before putting India in a commanding position."

I walked back to the dugout amidst a standing ovation. My teammates clapped me on the back as I took my seat, exhausted but ecstatic.

India finished their innings at 325, a formidable total.

The second half of the game was all about our bowlers.

"Here we go, folks! India has put up a mammoth target of 325. Can South Africa chase it down?"

I was handed the ball in the 12th over. The first delivery swung sharply, beating the batsman completely.

"What a beauty! The young pacer is making the ball talk!"

On the very next delivery, I pitched it short, drawing a top edge that flew straight to midwicket.

"And gone! That's the first wicket for the debutant. South Africa is in trouble now!"

By the end of my spell, I had scalped four wickets, dismantling their top order.

"The Proteas' top order has been obliterated! What a performance from the young bowler!"

South Africa eventually folded for 240, handing India a comfortable victory.

"And that's it! India wins by 85 runs! What a performance from the young guns. A century, four wickets, and a dream debut—this will be a day to remember!"

As we celebrated on the field, Coach Dravid walked up to me. "Well done," he said, his eyes filled with pride.

{

Ok so after Long Vote, there are 4 case and one person only one vote allowed: -

case 1: - Sara Tendulkar => Profession: Doctor/Nutritionist

They could meet in a cricket Event or like a cricket charity about Fitness in youth and Sara could be as the chief speaker there and to promote fitness among youth.

Case 2: - Freya Allan

Profession: Actress (British, lowkey)

How They Met: Aarav and Freya could meet during Aarav's cricket tour to England. One evening, Aarav and some teammates visit a quiet café in London, where Freya is also dining with a friend. Aarav, not recognizing her immediately, accidentally takes her table (a mix-up due to a reservation issue). Apologies turn into a casual conversation. Freya, who finds cricket fascinating because of England's history with the sport, bonds with Aarav over the game and their cultural differences.

Case 3: - Shradha Kapoor (My Favourite) => Actress

They could meet any where and her bubbly personality would be very lovely and they could form a fun-loving relationship with a deep emotional connection.

Case 4: - Sara Tendulkar with Freya Allen Face and Shradha Kapoor Personality

ok No disrespect to Sara, but she is not as beautiful as others, but her connection to cricket makes her strong contender and i personally don't like her. so I think this is the best . And yeah, she would be a Doctor/Nutritionist.