

Flashback

Sri Lanka won the World Cup in 1996

awarded both games on forfeit. Three teams made their World Cup debuts in 1996: the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands and Kenya. The Netherlands lost each of their five matches while the U.A.E. only beat the Dutch. Kenya, however, recorded a surprise victory over the West Indies in Pune.

The Sri Lankans, used Man of the Series Sanath Jayasuriya[1] and Romesh Kaluwitharana as opening batsmen to take advantage of the fielding restrictions during the first 15 overs of each innings.

At a time when 50 or 60 runs in the first 15 overs was considered adequate, Sri Lanka scored 117 runs in those overs against India, 123 against Kenya, 121 against England in the quarter-final and 86 against India in the semi-final. Against Kenya, Sri Lanka made 398 for 5, a new record for the highest team score in a one-day international that stood until April 2006.

Sri Lanka won the first semi-final over India at Eden Gardens, Kolkata in front of a crowd unofficially estimated at 110 000. Chasing Sri Lanka's innings of 251 for 8, India had slumped to 120 for 8 in the 35th over when sections of crowd began to throw fruit and plastic bottles onto the field. The

players left the field for 20 minutes in an attempt to quieten the crowd. When the players returned for play, more bottles were thrown onto the field and fires were lit in the stand. Match referee Clive Lloyd awarded the match to Sri Lanka, the first default ever in a Test or One Day International.

In the second semi-final in Mohali, Australia recovered from 15 for 4 to reach 207 for 8 from their 50 overs. The West Indians had reached 165 for 2 in the 42nd over before losing their last 8 wickets for 37 runs in 50 balls.

Sri Lanka won the toss in the final and sent Australia in to bat despite the team batting first having won all five previous World Cup finals. Mark Taylor top scored with 74 in Australia's total of 241 for 7. After Australia had put down no fewer than five catches, Sri Lanka won the match in the 47th over with Aravinda de Silva following his 3 for 42 with an unbeaten 107 to win the Player of the Match award. It was the first time a tournament host or co-host had won the cricket World Cup.

The 1996 Cricket World Cup (aka Wills World Cup) was won by Sri Lanka who beat Australia by 7 wickets at the final in Lahore.

The 1996 World Cup was played in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Controversy dogged the tournament before any games were played, however, when Australia and the West Indies refused to send their teams to Sri Lanka following the Central Bank Bombing by the Tamil Tigers in January, citing security concerns. Sri Lanka, in addition to offering maximum security to the teams, questioned the validity of citing security concerns when the International Cricket Council had determined it was safe. After extensive negotiations ICC ruled that Sri Lanka would be

Asanka Gurusinha's 65 in Sri Lanka's 1996 win - still remembered

by Ranjan Anandappa

Schoolboy Cricketer 1985: The Sunday Observer Schoolboy Cricketer Of The Year Contests which has gone from strength to strength has no doubt provided the stepping stone for the national cricket team as almost 90 percent of the winners have gone on to represent the country at the highest level.

The contest, has not only given recognition, but also the motivation and the encouragement needed for the players. One such player is the former Sri Lanka Test and ODI player Asanka Gurusinha the Observer Schoolboy Cricketer 1985. He played a prominent role in the 1996 World Cup which Sri

Lanka won under Arjuna Ranatunga.

Gurusinha laid the foundation for a Sri Lankan win while chasing a victory target when the side lost two early wickets of openers Romesh Kaluwitharana and Sanath Jayasuriya early for 23 runs. Then Gurusinha (65) and Aravinda de Silva brought the score to 148. De Silva went on to make a grand unbeaten century (107) which eventually sealed the final in Sri Lanka's favour.

Gurusinha, blossomed as a talented left-hand batsman on the Sri Lanka Under 19 cricket tour of Australia under team-mate Aravinda de Silva. Gurusinha on that tour of Australia, scored a fine 154 in the opening match at Brisbane against Queensland that included Craig McDermott, who was a contemporary of Gurusinha.

In 1985, Gurusinha captained Nalanda and scored a cen-

tury in the 'big' match against Ananda and he went on to another milestone - 1000 runs for the season. Subsequently, he struck a century against the touring Indian team for the Board President's XI, that eventually paved the way for his Test place.

Asanka Gurusinha made his Test debut against Pakistan in 1986 in the third Test match in Karachi and soon established his place as a reliable number three batsman.

In his international cricket career spanning over eleven years, Gurusinha has played 41 Test matches and 147 ODIs for Sri Lanka. He has scored 2,452 Test runs including seven centuries and eight half centuries with an average of 38.92.

In the 147 One-day Internationals, Gurusinha has

scored almost 4000 runs with an average of 28.27 with two centuries and 22 half centuries. He considers the 1996 World Cup win, defeating Australia in Pakistan as the most monumental moment in his cricketing career. That memorable win will never be erased from his mind wherever he lives.

Aravinda's century paves the way for World Cup win

A champion at school cricket, a maestro in inter-club cricket and Sri Lanka representative cricket and to cap it all, a skilful allrounder par excellence in international cricket and now a responsible administrator of cricket - that is Aravinda de Silva - the present Chairman of the Cricket Board Selection Committee.

Cricket came to Aravinda de Silva in a flash and he grabbed all the opportunities and made good progress in the game. Many were the performances when he was playing for his school - D. S. Senanayake College and from there he graduated into club cricket and finally to international cricket.

It is said that one has to learn the rudiments of any game at school level and Aravinda de Silva picked up all the finer points in the world of batting while at D. S. Senanayake College and made gradual progress in the final points of batsmanship as he grew up and really blossomed out to be a crackerjack batsman once he came to the big fold.

The year 1996 will be a year that will never be forgotten by Aravinda de Silva and all Sri Lanka cricketers and fans alike as that year the Lankan flag flew really high at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore, Pakistan when we laid our hands on the World Cup, becoming champions that year in the much talked of tournament.

Aravinda de Silva is now the Chairman of cricket selectors and he richly deserves the honour of picking various Sri Lanka teams as he has the makings of a good selector. In his own words he said, "When we won the world Cup we had a fine batting side and to back up the batting, we also had a good fielding side. Our bowling was capable of containing any team. The day was March 17, 1996 - the venue Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore, Pakistan.

Sri Lanka won the toss and sent Australia to bat and this decision by skipper Arjuna Ranatunga turned out to be correct as the Sri Lankan bowlers didn't give the Australian batsmen the freedom that they liked to play free flowing strokes to collect their runs.

The Australians on that occasion opened the batting with Mark Taylor and M. Waugh. The first wicket that of Waugh at 36 and then Ricky Ponting who joined Taylor built up a partnership of 101 runs for the second wicket.

Taylor was off with his free scoring strokes and he made 74 off 83 deliveries and his knock included a six and eight fours. Ricky ponting made 45, Michael Bevan 36 not out and Stuart Law 22 and the Australians were tied down later and when 50 overs were finished the Aussies had made 241 runs for the loss

of 7 wickets. The early Sri Lankan bowlers had not made much impression on the Australian batsmen, but when Aravinda de Silva came on to bowl, he had the Australian batsmen somewhat quite and tied the batsmen down.

He was the last bowler to be tried by skipper Arjuna Ranatunga and he did wonderfully well to restrict the scoring of the Australians. So, Aravinda de Silva did not disappoint the faith that Ranatunga placed on him and he captured 3 for 42 to put the brakes on the Australian batsmen.

When it was time for the Australian team to stop - they were 241 for 7 wickets and their quota of overs were exhausted.

The score by the Aussies was not a huge one, but it was quite a moderate total.

Came Sri Lanka's turn at the wicket, but it was not a elegant start and two quick wickets fell - Sanath Jayasuriya was run out for 9 with the score at 12 and then the fourth wicket unbeaten partnership realised 97 runs and it paved the way for victory to be achieved by the Sri Lankans.

Both Sri Lankan batsmen were severe on the Aussie bowlers. With both Ranatunga and Aravinda de Silva scoring freely, the Aussie bowlers somewhat suffered. With only three wickets down, only Flemming (1 for 43) and P Reiffel (1 for 49) were among the wickets. The third wicket to fall in the Sri Lanka innings was that of Sanath Jayasuriya who was run out. So, Sri Lanka had a good win in this final, thanks mainly to the fine allround performance of Aravinda de Silva.

which included the likes of Gordon Greenidge, Desmond Haynes, Vivian Richards, Clive Lloyd and Larry Gomes could complete a hat-trick of wins without expending too much time.

But the West Indian batsmen soon found the boot on the other foot when the Indian medium pace attack comprising skipper Kapil Dev, Balwinder Singh Sandu, Madan Lal and Mohinder Amarnath denting the West Indian early batting. Sandu and Madan Lal got rid of the most feared openers at that time Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes with 50 runs on the board and there after none of the West Indian batsmen really dominated the bowling as they usually did.

After the dismissal of one drop batsman Vivian Richards who was the top scorer with 33 caught by Kapil Dev to a superb running catch, the rest of the Caribbean batsmen succumbed to the immensopressure inserted by the Indian bowlers.

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Played at Lord's in London on 23rd June 1983.



India's 1983 World Cup Victory

by Ranjan Anandappa

After dominating the first two World Cup cricket championships in 1975 and 1979 the West Indian side was broken by India, when they beat the West Indies by 43 runs in the final at the Lord's Cricket grounds on June 23rd 1983.

After 28 long years, India who could not make much of an impact in the last 2007 World Cup held in the West Indies, and were eliminated in the initial stages of the tournament became the proud recipients of the coveted World Cup in their own soil this year, the Wankede Stadium in Mumbai where they won the final will no doubt linger in the cricket crazy Indian public minds.

The 1983final was a low scoring affair, when the West Indian captain Clive Lloyd won the toss and asked

the Indians to bat and were dismissed for 183 in 54.4 overs in a 60 overs per side competition. In that era there were no field restrictions, power plays, thirty yard circles etc. and a bowler was allowed to bowl a stipulated number of 12 overs.

India were soon in trouble losing Sunil Gavaskar for 2 with only two runs on the board. But hard hitting Krish Srikanth batted aggressively to score 38 and with Mohinder Amarnath brought the score upto 59. With a useful 27 by Sandeep Patil, India managed to reach a disappointing 183 runs, leaving the powerful West Indian batting machinery to get only 184 runs to win.

The West Indian vaunted pace attack of the fastest bowlers in the world at that time, Andy Roberts, Joel Garner, Malcolm Marshall and Michael Holding gave no respite to the Indian batsmen Sunil Gavaskar, Krish Srikanth.

However, SriKanth remained the top scorer with 38 facing 57 deliveries with seven fours. Andy Roberts was the pick of the bowlers taking 3 for 32 in 10 overs. Marshall, Holding and Gomes took 2 wickets a piece.

Taking into account, the paltry total of 183 scored by India, it was a foregone conclusion that the might of the West Indian batting

which included the likes of Gordon Greenidge, Desmond Haynes, Vivian Richards, Clive Lloyd and Larry Gomes could complete a hat-trick of wins without expending too much time.

But the West Indian batsmen soon found the boot on the other foot when the Indian medium pace attack comprising skipper Kapil Dev, Balwinder Singh Sandu, Madan Lal and Mohinder Amarnath denting the West Indian early batting. Sandu and Madan Lal got rid of the most feared openers at that time Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes with 50 runs on the board and there after none of the West Indian batsmen really dominated the bowling as they usually did.

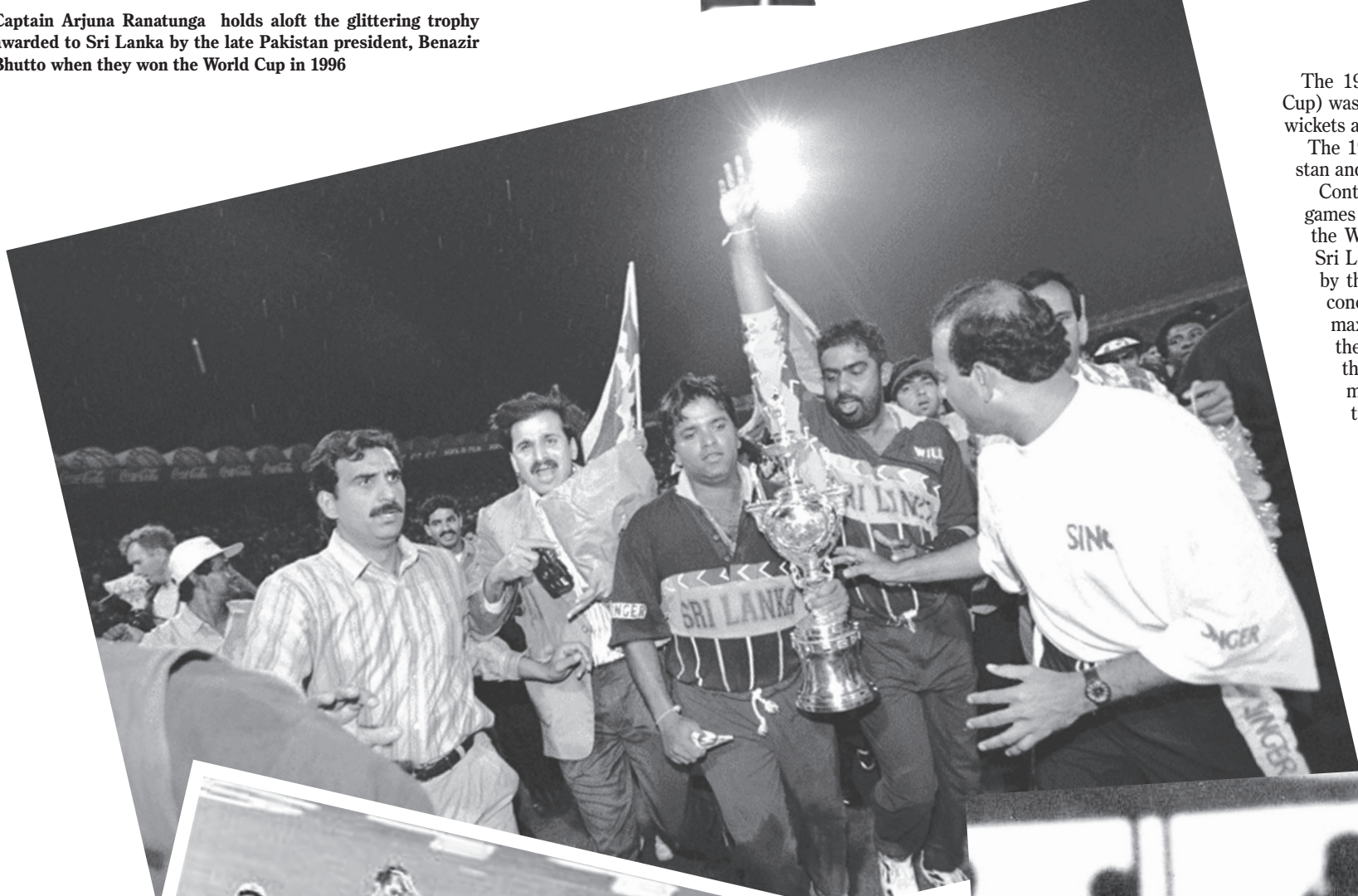
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Captain Arjuna Ranatunga holds aloft the glittering trophy awarded to Sri Lanka by the late Pakistan president, Benazir Bhutto when they won the World Cup in 1996



Jubilation all round



Sanath Jayasuriya being congratulated when he was selected as the 'Most valuable player of the series'



Asanka Gurusinha and Aravinda de Silva in conversation at the World Cup finals in 1996 in Lahore, Pakistan

