



The rain may have helped Kumar Sangakkara hide his tears, as he walks off the pitch after being dismissed for 45 against South Africa in the quarterfinals in what happened to be his last ODI.

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 1st batsman to score 4 consecutive centuries in all ODIs and World Cups
- Leading wicketkeeper (54 dismissals) in World Cup history
- 1st wicketkeeper to 500 ODI dismissals
- 2011: ICC ODI Player of the Year, LG People's Choice Award
- 2012: Wisden Cricketer of the Year, Wisden Leading Cricketer, LG People's Choice Award, ICC Cricketer of the Year
- 2013: ICC ODI Cricketer of the Year

**MATCHES:** 404 **Runs:** 14234, 25 100s, 93 50s, avg: 41.98, S/R: 78.86  
**1st wicketkeeper to 500 ODI dismissals, 402 catches, 99 stumpings**  
 31 MoM awards, 5 Man of the Series awards  
**All W/C:** Matches: 37 **Runs:** 1532 **HS:** 124 **Avg:** 56.74 **100s:** 5  
**THIS W/C:** Matches: 7 **Runs:** 541 **HS:** 124 **Avg:** 108.20 **100s:** 4

When asked how he would like to be remembered, Sanga replied, "If anyone can say they've enjoyed playing against me and playing with me, I'll be more than happy."

# No regrets, says Kumar

AFP, Sydney  
Sri Lanka great Kumar Sangakkara said he was confident about the future of the side after he bowed out of one-day internationals with a World Cup quarterfinal defeat by South Africa.  
Sangakkara, who will continue in Test cricket, had always planned to bring down the curtain on his one-day career after the World Cup.  
But there was no fairytale finish for either Sangakkara or fellow batsman Mahela Jayawardene, for whom this was a last Sri Lanka match in any format, as the two veterans -- both runners-up at the 2007 and 2011 World Cups -- were denied the chance to play in a third straight final.  
"I think the team is in great hands. Angelo Mathews has been such an impressive leader right throughout," said Sangakkara.  
"I think Tillakaratne Dilshan might be playing a few more seasons for Sri Lanka, and we've had Lahiru Thirimanne, who's really made great strides.  
"Every single time he plays he looks more and more impressive. We've had a few injuries this tour, but if you look at the players we have, you can't but be positive about the future.  
"I think if you take some of the younger players, if I can compare myself to them at the same age, I think these guys are quite a way ahead of where I was, and that's quite exciting when you really look at it because that means they've got so much more left to learn and a lot more to give to Sri Lanka," Sangakkara, who made his ODI debut in 2000, said.  
"I have no fear about the future of Sri Lankan cricket."  
Reflecting on Wednesday's match, he said: "It's disappointing to lose, especially in a quarterfinal, but to win against a side like South Africa we have to do really well.  
"We were expecting, as much as anyone, of ourselves. But we weren't good enough today."  
The wicketkeeper-batsman's overall ODI figures are outstanding too, with 14,234 runs in 404 matches, including 38 hundreds, at an average of 41.98, as well as 501 dismissals comprising 402 catches and 99 stumpings.  
Paying tribute to his longstanding teammate, Sangakkara said: "I think Mahela has been an exceptional player for Sri Lanka...I'm sure he's going to be thoroughly disappointed today, but also, sometimes there is a bit of relief, as well, when your career ends."  
And Sangakkara said he had no regrets about bowing out now.  
"The tape holding my fingers together, there's a lot more holding my body together.  
"I'm sure I can play maybe a year or two more, but I feel that the time is now.  
"I'm pretty happy with the decision I've made. I've tried to give everything when I've played the game.  
"But you know, the game goes on. You can't hold onto it and people shouldn't be too sentimental.  
"At the end of the day, I think a lot better players and greater players have gone, and the game has gone on and there are new players who take the mantle, and in my case it won't be any different."  
Asked how he would like to be remembered, Sangakkara said: "If anyone can say that they've enjoyed playing against me and playing with me, I'll be more than happy."

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# Sangakkara's Last Supper

MALCOLM KNOX

Kumar Sangakkara batted at the SCG on Wednesday as if this would be his last innings; increasingly, as Sri Lankan wickets fell, it looked like it would be.

The retiring great had seen dozens of teammates come and go in his 15-year international career, and from the non-striker's end he saw a few more as South Africa took control of the first World Cup quarterfinal. Sangakkara came in at 1-3 and went out at 9-127, a boy on a burning deck, now as so often in the past.

Sri Lanka had made two World Cup finals on Sangakkara's watch, but there would not be a third. They are going home. Meanwhile, if the semifinal-bound South Africans had been told their day would be this easy, they might have choked on their

breakfast cereal.

For much of the afternoon, circumstances forced Sangakkara to play an old-school one-day innings. A sporting wicket made to order for South Africa's fast bowlers revived memories of the SCG in its pacy 70s. Bounce accounted for both of Sri Lanka's openers. One delivery from Morne Morkel to Sangakkara steeped so suddenly that it flew over wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock's vertical leap for four byes. Kyle Abbott and Dale Steyn found enough seam and bounce to trouble any batsmen, let alone the Sri Lankans who must have been wondering what had transpired last week's sleepy surface into this rager.

Sangakkara adapted. From his first 23 balls, he took two singles to fine leg and no risks running between wickets; no chance was his international career going to end on the SCG like Mike Hussey's. From his first 42 balls,

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When great players struggle, the game becomes harder for all players. But this would turn out to be wishful thinking when Sri Lanka's bowlers proved as incapable of exploiting the conditions as their batsmen.

JP Duminy then took over, dismissing three batsmen off successive balls spread across two overs. Something was contagious in the Sri Lankan batting, and it wasn't greatness. Sangakkara could do nothing except swap his bat for

ation for the difficulty of the task. His authority alone was recalibrating notions of a par score, from 300 down to 200 and perhaps even less, as rapidly as a storm front blowing from the North Sea onto the Old Course.

Nuwan Kulasekara's and hope he could put it to better use. The Duminy hat-trick prompted Sangakkara to switch from first gear straight into fifth, and he slogged his second and third boundaries off Abbott's next over with Kulasekara's bat.

A gentleman from the erstwhile SCG hill then took the field, dropped his trousers, and proceeded to do to the turf what South Africa was doing to Sri Lanka's batting. The delay might have been critical: two balls later, Sangakkara sliced a cut shot high to third man and his innings, his most wonderful career, was over. Right on cue, a curtain of rain was lowered over his exit; a poignant farewell to this fine cricketer.

The author is a sports columnist and wrote this article for the Sydney Morning Herald

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**IMRAN TAHIR**  
The South Africa cricket team have always been full of firepower when it comes to fast bowling, but it was their lack of a quality spinner that has made them look inadequate on the biggest stage. Finally, in Imran Tahir, South Africa seems to have found the missing piece of the jigsaw puzzle. Already potent with the best pace attack in the world, South Africa showed in this World Cup that they can turn games on its head even with spin bowling. On an SCG deck yesterday, the Pakistan-born leg-spinner claimed four scalps as the Proteas tamed the vaunted Sri Lankan batting. His feat was largely responsible for the Lankans' capitulation and the first-ever knock-out win in the World Cup for the Proteas. The 35-year-old has 15 wickets in seven matches, at an average of 18.86 and an economy rate of 4.2.

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## WORLD CUP COCKTAIL

Bangladesh's run machine Mohammad Mahmudullah is a deep thinker and like Matthew Hayden he has worked out what's the best way to pile on the big scores.

Like Queensland and Test great Hayden, he has performance psychologist Dr Phil Jauncey to thank for helping him see the way forward.

Mahmudullah, a 29-year-old veteran of over 115 one-day internationals, has thrust himself into the spotlight through his performances in the World Cup.

His two consecutive hundreds to end the pool stage of the tournament have been superb and have come after a crucial switch to No. 4 in the batting order.

### Anushka helps Kohli unwind

Star batsman Virat Kohli decided to unwind before the cricket World Cup quarterfinal against Bangladesh by watching Bollywood's latest suspense-thriller NH 10, which features his girlfriend Anushka Sharma in lead role.

"Just watched #NH10 and I am blown away. What a brilliant film and specially an outstanding performance by my love Anushka Sharma. SO PROUD," Kohli wrote on his twitter today.

Kohli, India's new Test captain, was in the news recently for all the wrong reasons as once again he lost his cool and hurled expletives at a journalist who he thought had written about his relationship with Sharma. He apologised to the scribe through another journalist after verbally abusing him following a training session ahead of their league match against the West Indies.

The Indian team management tried to play down the incident, calling it a case of mistaken identity. The BCCI later warned the 'player in question to maintain the dignity of the Indian team'.

### Irked Bangladeshis hacked Indian site

A group of hackers based in Bangladesh defaced former Union Minister of India

Shashi Tharoor's website, in a move that was apparently inspired by the upcoming ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 quarter-final between India and Bangladesh at Melbourne on March 19, rather than political reasons.

According to Daily News and Analysis, the hackers, known by the name 'Bangla-



desh Black Hat Hackers', warned the Indian cricket team against taking on the Bangladesh team, after hacking the website shashitharoor.in. They warned of further attacks on Indian websites if the media did not stop themselves from 'downplaying' the Bangladesh cricket team. The hackers went on to post a full list of the hacked websites on their Facebook page.

### Saeed Ajmal option available

PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan said that the option of flying out off-spinner Saeed Ajmal to Australia for the cricket World Cup was available if Pakistan reached the semi-finals of the tournament.

Khan said that Ajmal could replace the injured pacer Muhammad Irfan, who was ruled out of the World Cup on Tuesday with a stress fracture of the pelvic. Pakistan take on co-hosts Australia at the Adelaide Oval on Friday.

"We are sending no replacement for Irfan for the quarter finals because we don't have time as by the time the replacement reaches Adelaide it will be too late for him to take part in the quarter final," Khan said.

"But yes if we reach the semi finals than a replacement will be sent and it could be Saeed Ajmal," he added.

--COMPILED