



PHOTOS: FIROZ AHMED

Types of Spectators at a BPL Match

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It's that time of the year again: BPL has gripped the nation. The promise of great cricket combined with performances from various celebrities and a festive atmosphere draws quite a large crowd to the stadium each year. Having watched quite a few BPL matches from the stands, I've had the chance to notice certain types of spectators who are always present at these games.

The Camera Hoggers: I'd like to start off with the group almost everyone is familiar with. There are always a few people at the stadium who seem to have arrived with only one intention in mind—their faces must make it onto the big screen. To achieve this goal, they employ a number of methods. Large, hand-painted signs, outrageous costumes, and huge banners usually do the trick. Some people also bring their babies and toddlers dressed in too-large jerseys and their faces painted with chemicals which could be incredibly harmful for their skin. There's a chance the child will start howling or proclaiming its need to go potty within 10 overs of the game, but who cares about that when camera time is at stake? Although, to be completely honest, chances for all other camera hoppers fly out the window if well-dressed ladies with flawless makeup are present nearby (Not that I'm jealous, or anything. Pfft.)

The Foodies: There are always some people in the gallery who will start eating before the toss takes place and only end after the presentation ceremony is over. Their seats will be surrounded by wrappers and plastic cups. When their hands are not carrying packets of chips or ice cream or cups of coffee, they'll be flailing

in the air, anxiously beckoning to the vendors located many rows away.

The Screamers: The hype at a cricket stadium is infectious, and it's natural to take part in the loud cheers and chants. What's the point of watching a match from the stands if you don't jump around and yell from time to time? However, the screamers are people who take the yelling part and apply it to everything, whether it be a chant for the Khulna Titans or a casual remark on the weather. This shouldn't bother other spectators too



much, unless you make unnecessarily loud comments about highly personal matters. In fact, the people who suffer most for this are the screamers themselves, as they must spend some of the following days with hoarse throats. I'm not ashamed to admit that I've suffered from post-match sore throat on numerous occasions.

The "Marry Me Taskin" Girls: This one's pretty self-explanatory.

The Cricket Nerds: The average spectator at events like the BPL is usually there for a fun night out with friends or family. However, you might end up sitting close to a cricket fanatic. Now, it would be alright if these people kept their superior knowledge to themselves and let everyone have a good time, but no. The cricket nerds must get super aggressive over a simple T20 game, and must also go on and on about every player on the field,

their strike rates, their bowling figures, etc. I can only imagine how annoying this can get, since I'm usually the one doing the ranting. And in our defense, we cricket nerds only flaunt our knowledge to feel better about never attracting camera men's attentions.

The Unfortunately Seated Ones: Due to pure bad luck, supporters of one team

sometimes end up in seats surrounded by a crowd of supporters of the opponent team. More often than not, said crowd turns out to be incredibly loud and aggressive. As a result, the supporter of Team A must either run away fast enough to secure seats in a friendlier part of the gallery or sit meekly and watch while the supporters of Team B stomp and clap and celebrate each of Team A's failures. In these situations, it is natural to feel the urge to hide one's banners and jerseys, and also to feel regret at the waste of what would have been a rather enjoyable night.

The Overly Serene Ones: These are the people who sit through incredibly competitive T20 matches with the air of someone watching a test match at Lords. I feel both envy and exasperation towards these people. I am jealous of their ability to keep their emotions under control when umpires make questionable decisions, but I'm also amazed at their total indifference when everyone around them is on their feet and yelling at the top of their lungs. How? Just how?

These are only a handful of examples. I've encountered people who spent almost the entire time on social media, people who were unsure about which team to support and swung from one to the other every five overs, and much more. However, all these different types of supporters are what make watching BPL matches live truly special. We supporters and our (slightly crazy) antics are what fuel this country's cricket, both on the international and domestic levels.

Despite being a hopeless fangirl, Marisha Aziz lives under delusions of awesomeness. Contact her at marisha.aziz@gmail.com to give her another excuse to ignore her teetering pile of life problems.

