

Cricket mania goes online

The ICC Cricket World Cup has begun, and the entire cricketing world is gearing up for what promises to be a showdown between the finest gentlemen of the game this month, in the land where it all began, England and Wales.

Bangladesh, like other South Asian cricketing nations, has been remarked to take cricket "religiously," just like its counterparts, India and Pakistan.

Engaging in the sport for us fans does not only take place as spectators in the stadium, or in the family/office rooms where we all band together to watch the finest battle of the bat and ball. Sometimes, we all relish in playing some entertaining cricket games, check out the latest information on particular websites, and watch the live streamed cricketing match when devoid of a television set.

Here are a few online gaming and live streaming apps you might want to check out to recreate your own favourite and exciting cricketing moments:

CWC19 app: The must-have official app for this year's beguilingly wholesome cricketing extravaganza, and not only does it offer news in both English and Bangla, it provides live scores, analysed match blogs and information of the teams and the players themselves. The app is available for both the Play store and App store.

World Cricket Championship 2: Cricketing games have made less noise in the gaming world after the release of Cricket'07 by EA Sports. Despite the glitches and bad commentary, it was still deemed entertaining. If Cricket'07 had a more updated and entertaining sequel, this would be it. World Cricket Championship 2 is one of the most dynamic and best graphic cricket game for your phone, and available in iOS and Android. The game can be played in all three formats — Test, ODI or T20 — across 32 world class stadiums with your favourite national and league team.

The app also offers customisation options and multiple modes to play with. Maximise your shot selections, following in the steps of your favourite cricketers.

Rabbit hole: Let's face it, we are always busy doing something when the cricketing matches takes place and for a brief moment, we all use the power of the internet to take a peek at the ensuing battles raging on. Rabbit hole, which was previously touted as the first YouTube live streaming media, launched an app a few years back to give viewers the good ol' experience of watching a live cricket match on the phone, as though it were on TV.

ESPN Cricinfo: ESPN Cricinfo is every die-hard cricket fan's favourite friend on the internet, showcasing information from the start to the very end.

Allowing coverage of not only the ICC matches in general, but also the thumping local and international premier leagues, it represents commentary, news, live game coverage and graphs to keep the fans in loop with whatever is taking place on the field.

Real Cricket 18: The game is as close to real-life cricket as you can get. Each game starts with a small pre-match presentation, followed by a toss, and then the game itself.

Nautilus, the Indian developer, seems to have tried to make Real Cricket 18 look and feel a lot like a live TV broadcast of a cricket match, allowing much better cricketing spots with improved animation of the entire match itself.

A challenging game in itself, real cricket keeps the player enthralled and addicted, enhancing the experience in a more competitive and volatile mode of multi-player, sending the heart racing for a victory by any means necessary. Available on the iOS and Android, this is one game no fan should turn down.

Bioscope: Grameenphone's video streaming service, Bioscope, is well known for streaming well-crafted dramas. It will also be broadcasting the upcoming ICC World Cup 2019 live online with Bangla commentary.

Just like other major video streaming services, it showcases entertaining music and different sports channels and more, along with original contents produced under Bioscope Originals. Fans and paid subscribers of Bioscope Prime will be glad to have the Cricket World Cup 2019 broadcasted on their favourite Deshi streaming service.

For the love of the game

It's on. And we are in the thick of it! And while most of us are rooting for our heroes from thousands of miles away, we at home are also caught up in the whirlwind of ICC Cricket World Cup 2019. Simply stating that we are a cricket-loving nation doesn't do justice to our passion for the

sport. From the gentleman's game being played out in the street to the cricket field being brought into mobile phones in the form of apps and games, our relationship with the sport runs deep.

It's all about the love of the game!



SPECIAL FEATURE

My cricket, my rules!

Living in a claustrophobically concrete jungle does not stop us from enjoying our favourite sport. Be it a patch of the alley, a garage, corridor, or even the rooftop, we make it our glorious cricket 'field'. Our field has its own set of rules. These radical laws of street cricket have emerged out of sheer practicality and the interesting dynamics of the cricketers in the street — and hence, the unwritten rules of the 'Code of Street Cricket'.

HIT TOO HARD - AND YOU'RE OUT!

The makeshift cricket field is small, often surrounded by buildings. And not everyone in those buildings is a sport, cheering the batsman or rooting for a whopper.

The batsman, therefore, has to be very calculative with his/her stroke. All players verbally agree at the beginning of the game that if a batsman lands the ball in certain areas from where it cannot be recouped from, or hits a glass window, he is out.

This golden rule often comes with a sub-clause; landing the ball in areas recognised only as 'moderately dangerous' involves a batman being 'half-out'; so, two 'half-outs' and you're gone.

ON MATTERS OF SKIRMISHES

They say cricket is a gentleman's game. They should look into street cricket.

Players sometimes break into heated arguments: "Wasn't that a no-ball? It was a run-out for sure! How can this be wide?" And so on...

While many conflicts do not have set solutions and require lawyer-level skills from both teams, certain problems are resolved easily.

For starters, there's no such thing as LBW (for obvious reasons). Another conflict is based on the impatience for batting first. You don't want to wait and field for a long time. You want to bat! But so does every other player.

A solution involves the batting order being decided by lottery. A player goes to a corner away from others, writes numbers (one to five if there are five players, for example), draws out a line corresponding to each number, and then hides those numbers with the bat.

The rest of the players are then called to randomly choose. The bat is then removed, and the cricketers are

bound to agree on the sequence!

This approach is often accompanied by a distinctive format of the game. Each team is a one-man army and gets to bat for a certain number of overs (if he remains not-out), and the winner is the one who scores the highest runs.

THE CASE OF THE 'COMMON MAN'

At least one umpire is desirable. But strange as it may sound, the umpire in street cricket is a temporary role filled in by one of the players who is done with batting or is still waiting for his/her turn.

It is a role that can best be described as symbolic, as his/her authority can be questioned by the bowling team at the slightest case of suspicion.

Meanwhile, what if the total sum of players is an odd number? To resolve this dilemma, one player may be employed to play for both teams!

This odd player, who evens out the both sides — let's call him the 'common man' — may be a junior chap or a novice player deemed as a liability.

He is yet to prove himself; becoming a game-changer in one match is what he needs!

DIY CRAFTS

The replacement of the wooden ball with a tennis ball is commonplace. If that gets too boring, just get a tape and wrap around the ball for a better substitute.

When the concrete field doesn't allow you to affix the wicket, get a brick, make three holes in it, and then place the stumps. No proper wicket? No problem. Get a pile of bricks or any other object with similar dimensions. Not available? Just draw a set on the wall.

For a team sadly without the affordability to buy a bat, wooden planks are still shaped out to work as a makeshift one.

Be it lack of money or of space, nothing stops the cricket fans to play their sport, innovating rules and making up formats and coming up with alternative equipment and gear.

Such is our love for cricket!

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Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed