

How not to be a predictable commentator

WASIQUE HASAN

Cricket is a difficult sport to play but commenting on it must be even more difficult. Can you imagine coming into work and having to talk about the same collection of shots, the same types of dismissals day in and day out? In that situation, finding new things to say must be a chore, but there are still a few steps commentators could take to make their words a bit more palatable and a little less repetitive.

TAKE OFF THE JERSEY, PLEASE

It is to be expected that commentators, being former players, will have a soft spot for their own country. No one will fault them for praising their own team when they do well. The problems start when they reveal themselves to be completely incapable of objectivity. Many commentators are blind to the successes and performances of players on the opposing team, while overplaying every tiny achievement of their own players. This comes to the fore when they blame wickets fallen on the batsmen's mistakes instead of crediting the bowler's skills.

Some commentators have taken it so far that they misconstrue events such as Virat Kohli being fined for his excessive appealing as an exhibit of Kohli being a passionate cricketer. Not of him behaving in a disrespectful and unprofessional manner. Maybe if these ultra-patriotic ex-players took off their jerseys every now and then, they could provide some nuanced analysis.

STOP LIVING IN THE PAST

Sometimes past performances come up in the context of a game. Other times, however, someone could be talking about how there is no chance of rain when a commentator butts in with "Mahmudullah Riyad scored back-to-back hundreds in the 2015 World Cup". As nice as that memory

is, you can't keep bringing it up fourteen times in one game. It's the equivalent of playing "Wonderwall" every time you see a guitar. Yes, it's nice that you know how to play the song, but maybe your cousin's wedding isn't the best time to bust it out.

Learn new songs, and start talking about different things. Maybe you could talk about the time Mustafizur got five wickets against India, or the time Sabbir scored a century against New Zealand. With so many other past glories to bring up, my question is why would you want to bring up something like that?

CATCH YOUR BREATH

This is a qualm I have with a few commentators who seem to have severe lung problems. Or at least, I'm assuming they have severe lung problems. That is the impression I get when they stop to catch their breath after speeding through every sentence.

They start speaking all out of the blue in a deafening tone, rush through their words as if someone is about to snatch their mic away, and end by loudly inhaling right in front of the microphone. When every other sentence is punctuated by loud wheezing, not only does it start to get repetitive, but it also starts getting on your nerves a little bit. Everyone would benefit from these commentators taking a few extra seconds to pace their words and not blow out the eardrums of everyone listening. If even one commentator can take some of these suggestions to heart, the World Cup commentary would become much more entertaining for everyone involved.

Wasique Hasan came back to Bangladesh to eat mangoes and get heat-stroke, and he hasn't found any mangoes yet. Send him information that will lead to the acquisition of mangoes at [fb.com/hasique.wasan](https://www.facebook.com/hasique.wasan)



THE CRICKET CRITIQUE

MUSHFIQUR RAHMAN SHANTO

The countries of the Indian subcontinent live and breathe cricket. The extent to which we, the cricket fans of this region will go to show our love for the sport doesn't know any bounds. So naturally, there are a lot of emotions involved when the chosen eleven go on to the world stage to represent our motherland. And as an educated audience, it is completely fair to make comments and state opinions on what goes on in the field. However, there is a fine line between making observations or calling out potential mistakes, and dishing out unjustified insults. I, my friend, have crossed that line.

I never had much going for me which would make me somewhat knowledgeable in cricket. I mean, I used to play street cricket in a narrow road beside my house where I used to swing at every ball trying to hit a six, but that's about it. Before becoming an obnoxious cricket critique, I discovered this secret technique of gaining attention on social media, which is called "being edgy". So whenever Bangladesh performs poorly in any match, I unleash all the savage lines I could think off in an effort to show off my edginess so that people would think I'm funny, cool and know a lot about cricket. But that's not always the case. Sometimes I throw ridiculous insults at our cricketers out of habit since my emotional investment in a sport fuelled by my lack of fulfilling activities in my own life distorts my ability to think logically and make rational judgments. At the end of the day, I do

know that our cricketers are doing their best and have already contributed a lot to our progress. But it doesn't matter, everything is justified because we just love this sport so much.

Okay so, what do I do when Bangladesh does play well? I'll tell you what. Whenever cricket season comes around and everyone's talking about it, I'm especially active in the comment sections of various international sports bodies and sports related meme pages. It is there I wage keyboard wars with my fellow cricket fans from other countries of the sub-continent. For countries I consider our rivals, I bring my top tier insults and dish out burns left and right with my exceptional play on words. And for the countries I consider our allies or the enemy of our enemies, I show my support by making random positive comments about their players and ending all my comments with "Respect from Bangladesh". See? I can be wholesome too.

But seriously guys, cricket is, after all, something that is very close to our hearts and our team has brought us both moments of joy and moments of heartbreaks. Still, we have to remember cricket is just another sport at the end of the day and is simply meant to be entertainment. As long as we don't get hooked on our emotions too much, it'll be a more enjoyable experience for everyone. Respect from Bangladesh.

Mushfiqur Rahman Shanto is a lost and confused soul going through his early twenties' crisis. Send him life advice at mushfiqshanto1234@gmail.com

