Twitter Thread by Ricky talks cricket

Ricky talks cricket
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So ICC declared Virat Kohli as the Captain of their test team of the decade.

I have made an attempt to go through his series wise journey as the test captain and have attempted to do a critical analysis of his achievements, failures and challenges for the future.

Please enjoy



Indian test team was going through a very rough patch during 13-14, having lost successive series to SA, NZ, Eng, Aus. It was during the Aus series that MSD decided to hang his boots and handover the very young test team to his then deputy Virat Kohli.



The only veteran in the team was Ishant Sharma who had around 60 matches of experience by then, Virat Kohli being the 2nd one with 30 matches to his name. The Average experience of batting unit was 18 and bowling unit was 21, with overall squad average experience being 20 matches

Excluding the 2014 Australia tour, here is a thread of every test series that India played under Virat. I will discuss the results and the highlights of the tour and would give some remarks as per my memory.
The numbers are approximately because I am a B grade stats digger ■

1. June 15 - Tour of BD - 1 match

The only match resulted in a draw because of rain. Indian Openers Vijay and Dhawan piled 150+ each to make India reach 462-6. India bowled out BD at a low score and made them follow-on. Ashwin claimed a fifer and started his era of dominance.



2. Aug 15 - Tour of SL - 3 matches

India won the series 2-1. It was first series win in SL after a gap of 22 years. While it may seem to be an easy series, it was a story of dominant comeback after losing the 1st match.
Ashwin was given MOS for his 21 wickets.



3. Nov 15 - SA tours IN - 4 matches

India won the series 3-0 denying any victory to the visiting south African team. It was a top notch SA team captained by Ab de Villiers joined by Amla, Faf, Duminy, Styen, Morkel, Imran Tahir etc.
Ashwin was given MOS for his 31 wickets.



4. July 16 - Tour of WI - 4 matches

India won the series 2-0 with the scoreline of WDWD. India got an opener in KL Rahul who scored impressive runs for the 2 matches he got as an opener. Virat scored his first double century and ofcourse Ashwin was MOS for his 17 wickets.



5. Sept 16 - NZ tours IN - 3 matches

India whitewashed NZ by 3-0. Virat scored double hundred number 2 while Pujara, Rahane, Rohit found them among runs. Ashwin was the MOS for his 27 wickets in 3 matches. Virat received the ICC test championship mace and India got the Rank 1 ■



6. Nov 16 - Eng tours IN - 5 matches

India won 4-0 by DWWWW scoreline. This humiliation was the damage control of 2011 series when Eng whitewashed us on ours by 4-0.

MOS Virat scored 655 runs with another 200, Ashwin took 28 wickets, Nair scored a 300 and Rahul got out at 199.



7. Feb 17 - BD tours IN - 1 match

This was first test series of Virat as an all format captain. Madman Virat scored his 4th double hundred in the 4th consecutive series. India scored a mammoth 687 runs and had a thumping victory. Captain bagged his Man of the Match Award.



8. Feb 17 - Aus tours IN - 4 matches

India lost the first match but then displayed great character by winning the series 2-1 with scoreline of LWDW.

KL Rahul dominated by series by scoring 6 50s in 7 innings. Ravi was the MOS for his 25 wickets, not Ravi Ashwin but Ravi Jadeja.



9. July 17 - Tour of SL - 3 matches

It was a thumping whitewash where India won two matches by innings margin and one by 300 runs.

It was Hardik Pandya's test debut where he scored his century too. Dhawan, who came in for injured KL Rahul, won the Man of Series.



10. Nov 17 - SL tours IN - 3 matches

The rain stuck series ended in 1-0 in favour of India. Virat scored mammoth 610 runs with 2 double centuries and a 100 for which he got Man of Series. India made a world record of most successive series win equalling Australia's record of 9.



Before we move forward to the next SA trip, I will stop you for a moment to talk about something. While it's true that most of the bowlers debuted during MSD's era, when Virat took over he has clear plans and goals of what to do with Ishant, Umesh, Shami, Bhuvaneshvar.

Virat, with the support of MSK Prasad, personally looked after the transition plans of Bumrah and Hardik Pandya from a limited overs player to test players. The team management specially looked after the rotation, workload management, fitness regime and training of fast bowlers.

The story of Indian cricket used to be the batsmen carrying the team mostly. But by end of 2017, India developed a pack of wolves in Ishant, Bumrah, Shami, Umesh, Bhubaneswar, Hardik added with spinners Ashwin, Jadeja and Kuldeep. It was time to unleash them and go for the hunt!



11. Jan 18 - Tour of SA - 3 matches

India lose the series 2-1, but what the scoreline wouldn't show is that it was one hell of a top fight. India lost by narrow margins due to the batsmen not able to chase well in the 4th innings. We couldn't achieve the target of 207 and 286.



Only a few remember that the VC Ajinkya Rahane was dropped to make way for Rohit Sharma at number 5. Rohit didn't return well in the 2 matches that he played.

The wolf pack took all 60 wickets of SA, where 50 wickets were taken by fast bowlers. Bumrah took 14 in his debut tour.



12. Aug 18 - Tour of Eng - 5 matches

India lost the series 4-1, only winning the last dead rubber. Yet the series was very closely fought in 2 matches that India lost by 31 & 60 runs only.

The wolf pack took 85 wickets in 9 innings with the Pacers taking 61 of them.



Apart from Captain Kohli, this series was very important to the batsmen Kohli too. Having failed badly in 2014 on Eng tour, he had a lot to prove. And boy, he rose to the occasion by scoring 593 runs like a line warrior.

Rishabh Pant scored 100 in his debut series along with KL.



13. Oct 18 - WI tours IN - 2 matches

India won both the matches hands down. Highlight of the tour was the young debutant opener, Prithvi Shaw. Kid scored a century on his debut and ammased 237 runs in 3 innings at an average of 118 and thus winning Man of the Series award.



14. Dec 18 - Tour of Aus - 4 matches

Ah! No words can do justice to the joy of winning 2-1 against Aus in Aus. This happened for the first time in the 71 years history of both teams playing. Gavaskar had tears in his eyes, Shastri said it's no less than winning a world cup.



While a lot is said about Aus not having Smith & Warner. However in my opinion Harris, Marsh, Khwaja seemed more capable than what the current line up seems.

The Australian bowling was exactly the same to what it is now. Nothing can reduce the significance of the special win.



Pujara lifted himself to the occasion and scored 521 runs through the tournament and won the MOS award. Pant and Virat scored a century each.

The wolf pack took all 70 wickets in the 7 innings with the fast bowlers taking 50. Remembering the scenes still gives goosebumps.



15. Aug 19 - Tour of WI - 2 matches

Visiting WI, just after the World Cup heart break, India easily won both the test matches in WI. It was a first ever clean sweep done by India in West Indies. Vihari scored a good hundred and so did Rahane

Pacers took 33 out of all 40 wickets



16. Oct 19 - SA tours IN - 3 matches

At this point it starts to sound absolutely ridiculous the way India has become invincible at home. They thrash SA by a 30 margin while Mayank, Rohit and Virat scoring 200+ each.

The 60 wickets were shared by spinners and pacers equally ■



17. Nov 19 - BD tours IN - 2 matches

Winning both the tests by the margin of innings, India became the first team to do so in 4 continuous matches.

Mayank scored yet another 200 and Virat scored a 100 in the pink ball test.

The pacers were found to be picking 33/40 wickets.



18. Feb 2020 - Tour of NZ - 2 matches

As 2020 has been for most of the people, India got cleen sweeped for the first time under Virat Kohli.

Rohit couldn't turn up for what was supposed to be his real test, due to an injury. All other batsmen fell short of performance too.



Here's a little data thing in the story

Series - Played 18, Won 14
Home - Played 9, Won 9
Away - Played 9, Won 5

With almost 58 % wins, he stands just marginally behind Waugh, Ponting and Bradman only.

Maybe now it's time to see what's the story behind these numbers. Jump in!

Achievements

- Bringing in the 20 wickets mentality
- Forming a lethal pace attack
- Becoming invincible at home
- Making WI & SL equal to home
- Putting great fights in SENA
- Induction of Bumrah & Pandya
- Developing a pool of bowlers
- Setting up leadership template

Failures

- Not finding stable opening pair

• Non success of KL Rahul
• Being stuck at Saha who can't bat
• Being very weak in 4th innings
• Poor ability to clean up the tails
• Not having enouh batting reserves
• Not taking a firm decision on Rohit

Challenges for future to make him the greatest ever

• To win in SA, Eng & Nz
• To win the World test championship
• To oversee the transition of next team
• Backing up these players - Mayank, Shaw, Gill, Vihari, Pant, Kuldeep, Siraj, Saini and induction of other young guys

Wrapping up, by a clear margin Virat remains one of the greatest test Captains ever and he has full potential to become the greatest ever.

World cricket shall ever remain indebted to you for bringin the excitement back to the test Cricket. Go well cap, get them all.
■❤■

End|

