Twitter Thread by Ricky talks cricket

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It's 16th of December, 2020. India is standing at the back of an ODI series loss and a momentum shifting win in the t20i series. It's time for the marquee Border Gavaskar trophy. The pink ball test, the boxing day, new year's test and the Gabba Challenge. Are we up for it?



Join me on a special thread where I take you through the series with the journey of the series. We shall look at the playing 11s, the game progressions, special strategies, important moments, standout performances.

Fasten your seat belt or don't, hop on anyway for 46 tweets ■■

Match 1: Adelaide

Jadeja is injured so Ashwin becomes an easy answer for the tough question of the lone spinner. There are other tough questions as to who should be the 2nd opener, Gill who had good practice game or Shaw who scored a 50 in the last test he

played? Pant or Saha?

India is going into the pink ball test with Pace trio Bumrah Shami Umesh. Shaw is opening and Saha keeping. A decision probably taken with the Wicketkeeping ability as the priority

Virat has one the toss and decided to bat. He has never lost a test match after winning the toss

Second ball of the first over and the nightmares turn true as Starc runs through Shaw. Mayank gets out after getting a start and then Virat stitches two gritty partnerships with Pujara and Rahane. Things turn bad only when Virat gets run out on an unfortunate wrong call by Rahane

It's evident that Rahane is carrying a huge guilt of getting Virat out at 188-4(77). He also holes in and the team bundles for 244 playing just 14 more overs.

Aus comes out to bat and the openers are giving a nervous start to their team until Bumrah gets both of them.

Ashwin gets the big show Smith and Umesh clears up the tails thus restricting Aus at 191 with a lead of 53. Getting 10 wickets in 72 overs in their first overseas pink ball test, our bowlers are amazing, aren't they?

Shaw goes cheaply again, Bumrah comes as a night watchman.

India starts the new day at a comfortable position. Bumrah gets out quickly, followed by Mayank and then Pujara gets out for a duck and so does Rahane.

The captain stands at one side of the crease in shock while Cummins and Hazelwood are now showing who is the boss.

Virat goes on for a drive, the balls doesn't connect and goes to the gully where Green takes an amazing catch. I wonder if this Green guy would do anything else significant in the series going further. ■

The team is at 36-9 and what makes it worst is that Shami gets a fracture

This is a horror beyond imagination. Aus gets a target of 90 which they achieve with 8 wickets in hand.

One bad session turns the match towards the Aussies. I wonder how India would look at this, as a horrific loss or as a match where we dominated multiple sessions?

Before we move to the 2nd match, we should reflect back at the selection committee meeting for deciding the test squad. Virat would have discussed about his leave and the selectors would have recieved the fitness report of Ishant Sharma & Rohit Sharma Tat the same time.

Some experts like Irfan Pathan have publicly said that if Rohit is fit then he should Captain but the committee seems to be clear on Rahane being the Captain for remaining 3 matches. Afterall, he has been a part of the leadership group for long and knows how to move a test match.

Match 2: Melbourne

India are now without their best batsman that too after a batting collapse but Rahane decides to strengthen the bowling instead and goes in with 5 bowlers including Jadeja. He is clearly not deviating from the template that bowlers win you the matches

Md. Siraj gets a debut at the place of injured Shami and he has got big shoes of India's best test bowler to fill. Let's see how well he does.

Gill gets a chance to debut after warming the benches for 2 years and Rishabh Pant makes a comeback in the place of Saha.

India is asked to bowl and just as another day in office, they take 10 out for mere 195 runs. It's time for another Indian opener to go at 0 as Mayank gets out on the last ball of perfect setup my Starc. Meanwhile Gill has already made his mark with a flamebouyant 45 on debut.

Pressure makes or breaks people and it does the making for Captain Rahane as the batsman Rahane steps up after a long time, scoring a magnificent ■. Jadeja is also well set in one end and then a Deja Vu happens. The Captain gets Run out due to the non strikers wrong call.

Having burnt himself in the guilty in the 1st match, Rahane tells Jadeja to not mind the runout and play freely. Team reaches 326 with a comfy lead of 131.

India starts the second innings attack only to lose Umesh to injury. Siraj stands up as a champion and we get them for 200.

We get a target of 70 which we easily reach with decent contributions from Gill & Rahane. This is not just a normal win. This is an announcement that you can't rule out the champion team just because they did bad in 1 out of 8 seasons played in Match 1. The series stands level.

Match 3: Sydney

Looks who is back, it's Rohit! He gets back into the team as the vice captain. Harsh on Pujara to be removed as the VC and for Mayank to be dropped but then this is what the management thinks is the best for the balance with Rohit being experienced player.

The team seems to be in a soup though. They are trying to remain unaffected of the bio Bubble controversy and they are trying to get over the loss of Shami and Umesh. This means that Saini has to make his debut now at one of the toughest places to bowl. The Sydney Highways.

Aus comes to bat with Warner back in the team. The original Hyderabadi Siraj gets the imposter Hyderabadi Warner for cheap. Ashwin doesn't click but the pack steps up to get them for 338. Concerns are raised about how Rahane rotated the bowlers but decent performance in the end

Gill and Pujara score a good 50 to make India reach 244. Then comes the second innings where the pitch really did no help to Indian bowlers, specially due to the loss of Jadeja who got his thumb dislocated during batting. Aus declares at 312-6 and

gives India a target of 407.

With more than a day's play yet to happen, we fans are nervous as all 4 results seem possible on the last day of play. Senior player Rohit gets a good 50 in this innings but gets out on boundry and thus India's chance to win gets lowered. Pujara has started playing a blockathon.

Pujara is getting criticized on Twitter dot com for being too slow but then he is the only one who has to keep the option of not losing on the table, when everyone else is looking to win.

He goes on showing his grit and determination to everyone while holding an end tight.

Pant, meanwhile, seems in another mood as he goes on bundling runs through wisdom and power. A win suddenly starts looking like a possibility. Unfortunately he gets out at 97. Everyone applauds as he walks back with heavy feet, but for Shastri who wanted him to finish the match.

Pujara then tries to accelerate the run rate but falls in quick succession. And suddenly from an achievable win, we start to look at impending loss. Hanuma Vihari gets his hamstring issue while taking a run and Ashwin has not looked comfortable through the match.

The physios are on the ground. You would think wheather they aren't doing there job well or they are doing double the job. They give pain killers to Hanuma Vihari who can now barely walk. Meanwhile Jadeja is sitting padded up and Saini is peeling a Banana for him to eat.

Ravichandran Ashwin, a senior player, activates his cunning cricketing brain. Looks like he has advised Vihari to stand to the pacers whereas he will see off Nathon Lyon. Ah the way Ashwin is playing Lyon, it will put even the regular batsmen to shame. A lot to learn from him!

They start trying it out, it seems to be working. These guys are literally not taking any singles and seeing everything off. The Aussies and their Captain look visibly frustrated, THEY START THE BANTER. It's abnormal only because it's happening for the first time in this tour.

Painy boy asks Ashwin to come to Gabba where Australia has not lost a match since 32 years. Lol but Ashwin is the wittiest guy around, he ends Paine with one comeback. Paine drops his banter and oh drops a catch of Vihari too. He looks everything that he wasn't meant to be.

The battled and bruised guys take it till the end. Look at the scorecard, it's telling a draw, but is it one, you would wonder? Ofcourse not, a hospital 11 standing in front of the best attack of the world, sees through the day putting their bodies on line. It's a capital W!

Match 4: Gabba

Finally India reach Gabba. One thing easy for Rahane is to select the team. It is like saying "all of you, in the team", because of 3 injuries we got in Vihari, Ashwin & Bumrah. Mayank comes in a new role in middle order and Kuldeep gets his match, or does he?

Since Gabba is also a batting friendly pitch, India wants to have depth in batting and thus a net bowler Sundar makes it into the playing 11 over Kuldeep. Picasso's father Natarajan makes his debut and Shardul too gets a match. Rohit is the most experienced bowler in the 11 ■

The real Hyderabadi triumphs again over the pretentious one. Thakur and Sundar are bowling really well and they restrict Aus to 369 despite a ■ from Steve Smith Lite. Rohit starts riding the bounce before getting trapped by Lyon. India are in trouble at 186-6.

And then starts a new era. Sundar & Saini make us past 300 with a ■+ partnership. Why I call it a new era? Because Indian tail has not performed in a long time now. 188 is where we lost Virat in Adelaide but this time we didn't bottle because of these 2 guys, who belonged there.

Shardul shines in the 2nd innings with the ball in hand while Miya has spread his magic getting his first five for. The rookie bowling attack took all 20 wickets and restricted Aus to 294, which essentially mean an seemingly impossible target of 328. Can we draw this?

In between 16th December, 2020 and 19th Jan, 2021 - a lot of water has flown through the rivers. We lost our best players, we had a disappointing loss, we had a great comeback win, we had a battling draw and now today, all of that, everything hinges on one last day.

It's definitely not a good start as we lose Rohit to a low score. And that's when Gill seem to be taking a bigger responsibility. Boy, for God sake, he is Mitchell Starc, what are you doing to him. 19 in an over! But then perhaps that's what Gabba is, it rewards for bravery.

Talking of bravery, there is Pujara again holding an end with a decision to not leave. Criticize him all you can, he will not get impacted because rocks can't listen, or can they? Because he seem to join the party sometimes with his elegant upper cuts. Can we draw this?

Rahane says no we can't draw, hits it for a four and then says that we can't draw because we will win. The Captain goes out early but he has given the license to kill to Pant who follows him on the pitch. Pant though, looks in a mood to out do Pujara in defending the ball.

He knows that Ravi Shastri has been unhappy with him 97 in the 3rd match and he knows what to do. The guy is taking it deep. Sundar is walking on to the pitch after Mayank's little quick fire. Both the lefties change gear and here we are looking to infiltrate the fort Gabba.

10 runs short Sundar gets out. He stands on the pitch devasted and broken and drags himself out of the ground. Pant hits a boundary and with that he clocks the impossible. He looks up to his coach and the captain and tells them that he has done it. He has won a match for the team

Look at them holding the Indian Flag. Pant, Siraj, Sundar, Saini, Natarajan, Gill, Shardul, Shaw all of them take the victory lap and wonder if it is an India B team. But don't say them that because they have done something that most of the A teams around the world would dream of

The back to back series win in Australia seem to be like winning the t20 world cup in 2007 and then winning the world cup in 2011. One to show that we have arrived and one to show that we are here to dominate. India the most dominant test team at home, India the best touring team

As a fan, my sincere thanks to Virat Kohli for making the team what it is with the able guidance of Shastri, B Arun, MSK Prasad and support staff.

Thanks to Ajinkya Rahane for being such an able Sailor through such high tides, and sailing the team to the Paradise Island.

The Journey started in 2015 has one more stop at home after which it reaches the zenith at the Lord's for the World Test Championship.

Big thanks to all the players who have been or who are a part of it.

There is something in my eye, see y'all in a bit. Goodbye till then. ❤■