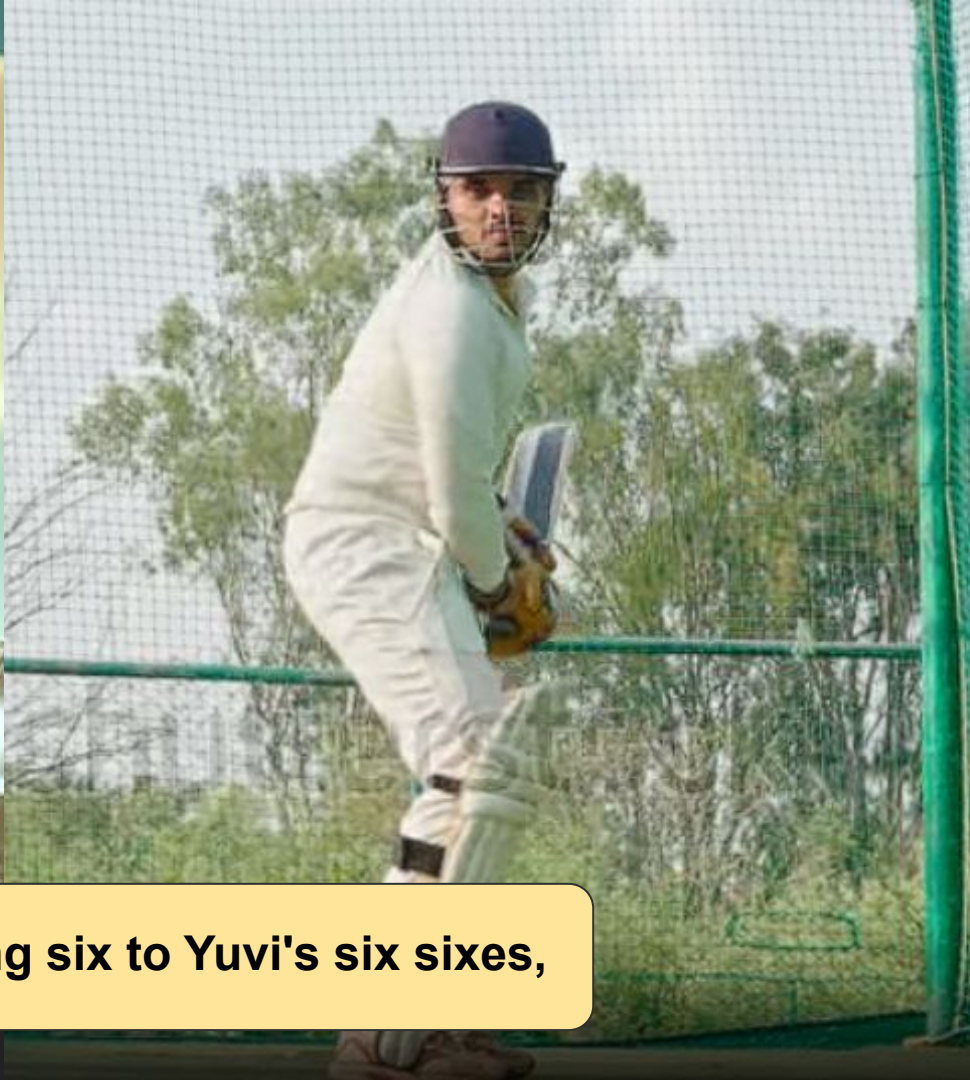
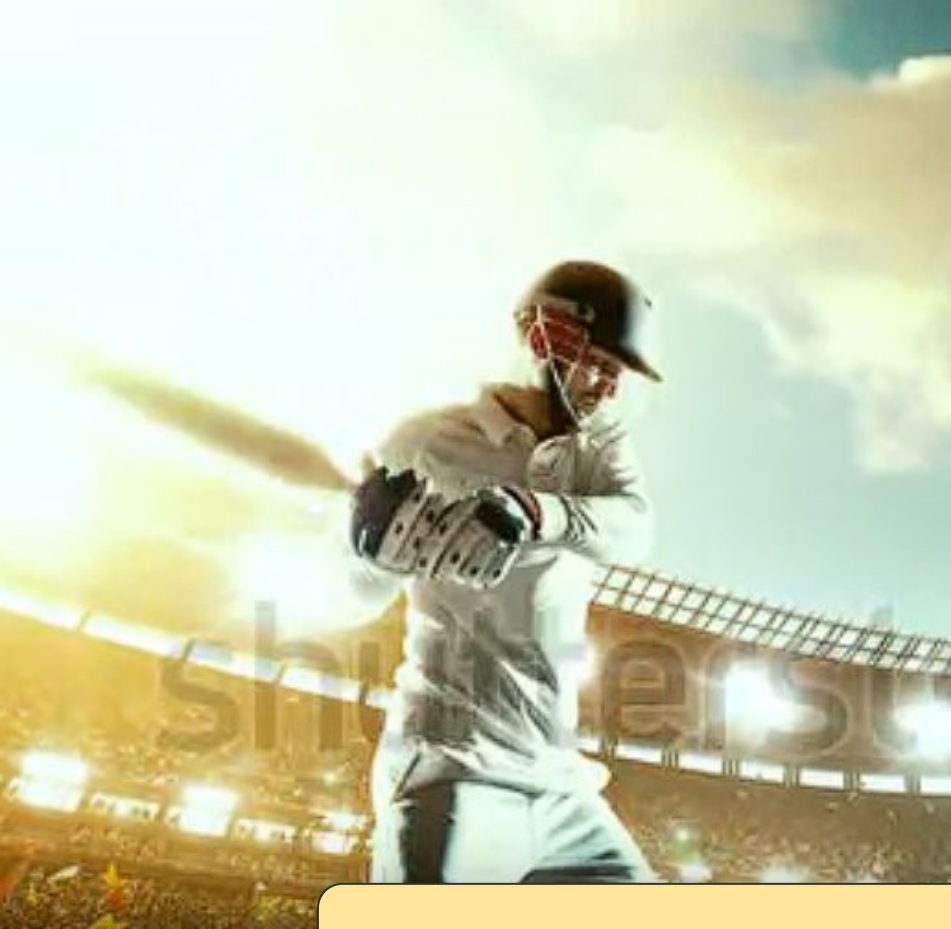
A silhouette of a cricketer in a batting stance on a field at sunset. The player is wearing a white t-shirt and dark shorts, holding a cricket bat. The background shows a clear sky with a warm sunset glow, some trees, and a building in the distance. A large, faint 'shutterstock' watermark is visible across the center of the image.

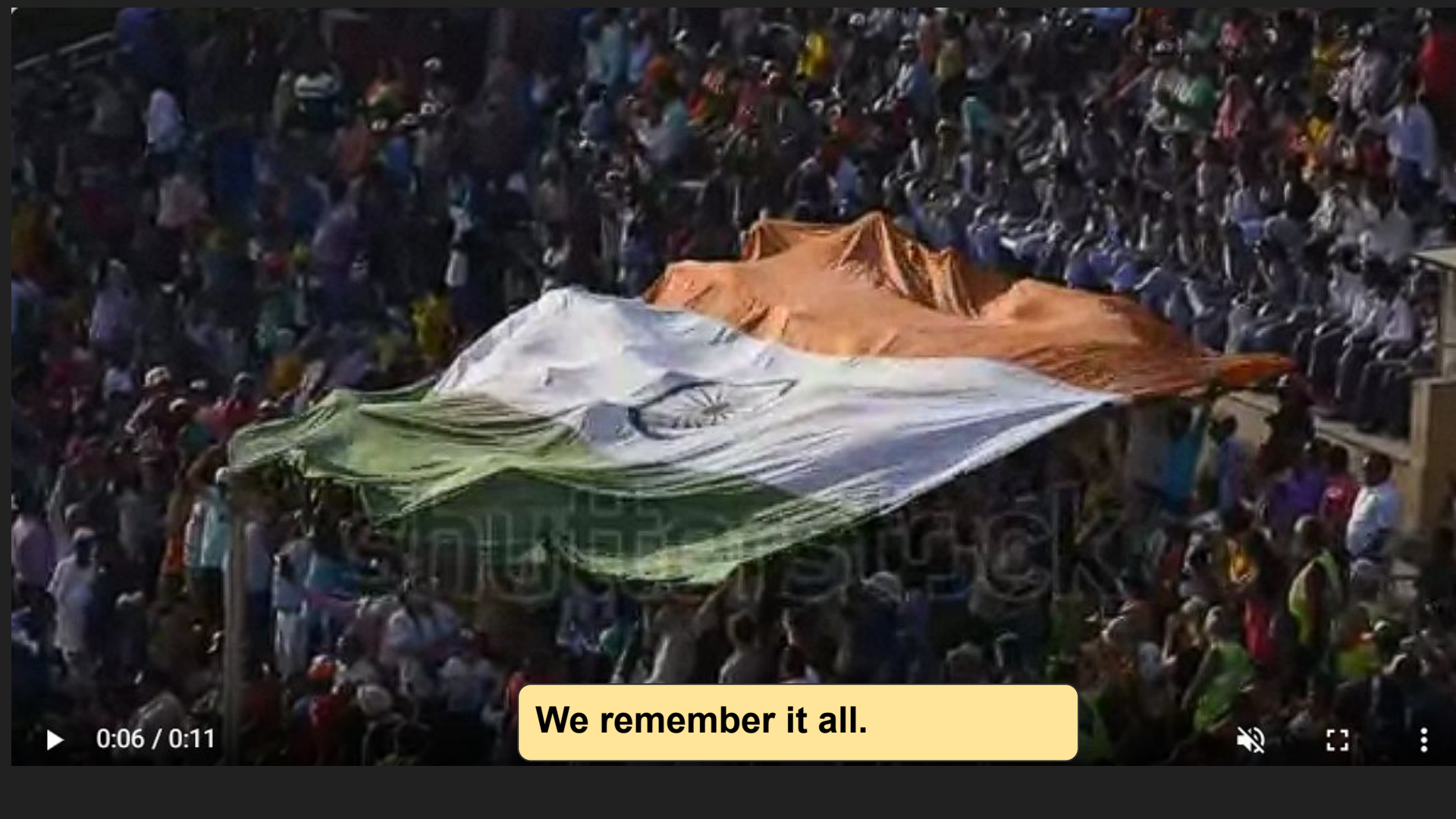
**Cricket, the heart and soul
of India,**



is a game that reminds us of the victories and defeats, tugging at our emotions.



From Mahi's iconic winning six to Yuvi's six sixes,



We remember it all.



0:06 / 0:11





But have you ever thought about the very foundation of this sport – the first official cricket match?



The first official match was played between the U.S.A and Canada in 1844



on the ground of St. George's cricket club based in New York.

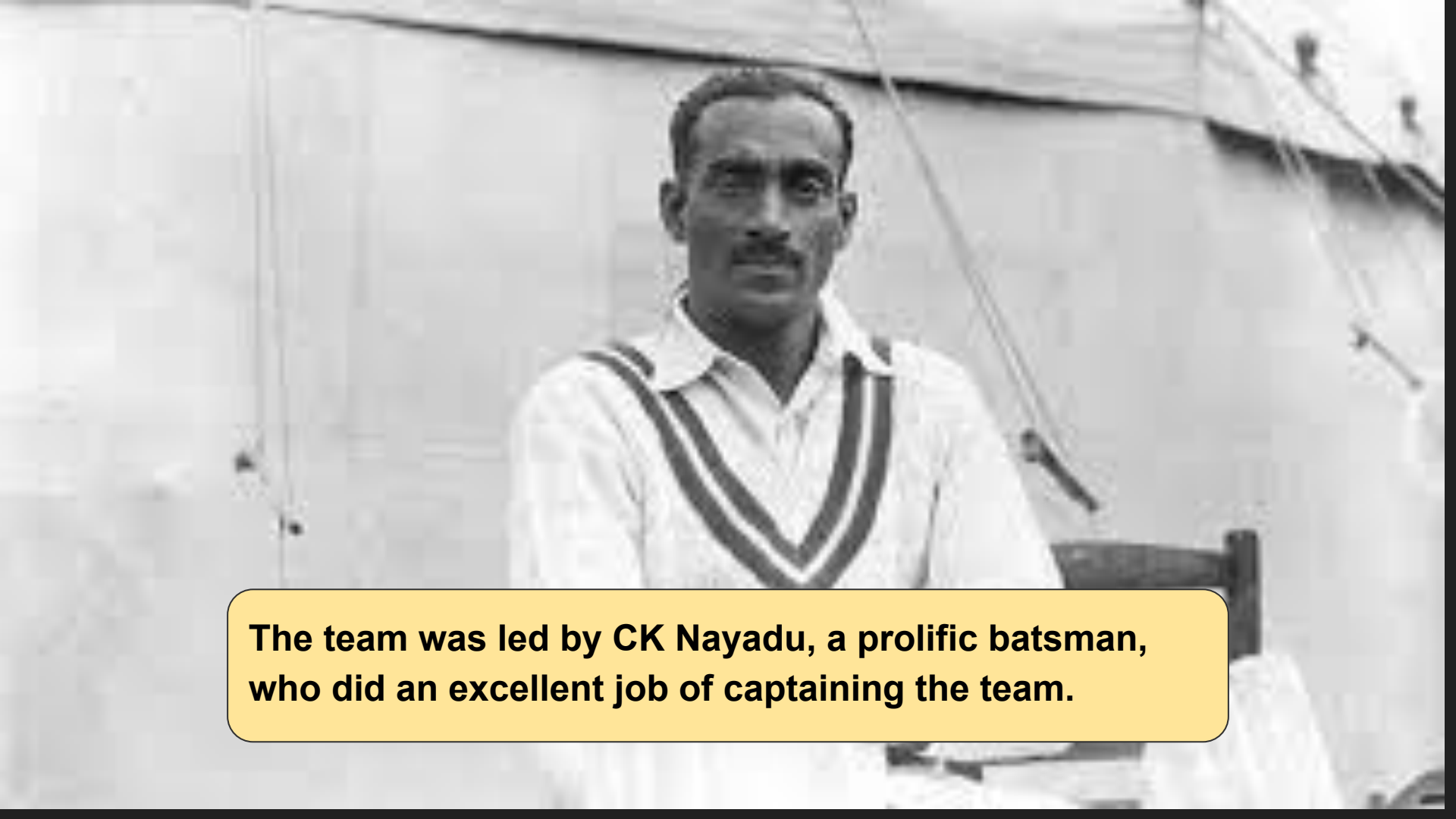


you must be thinking, when did the Indian team play their first international match?



June
1932

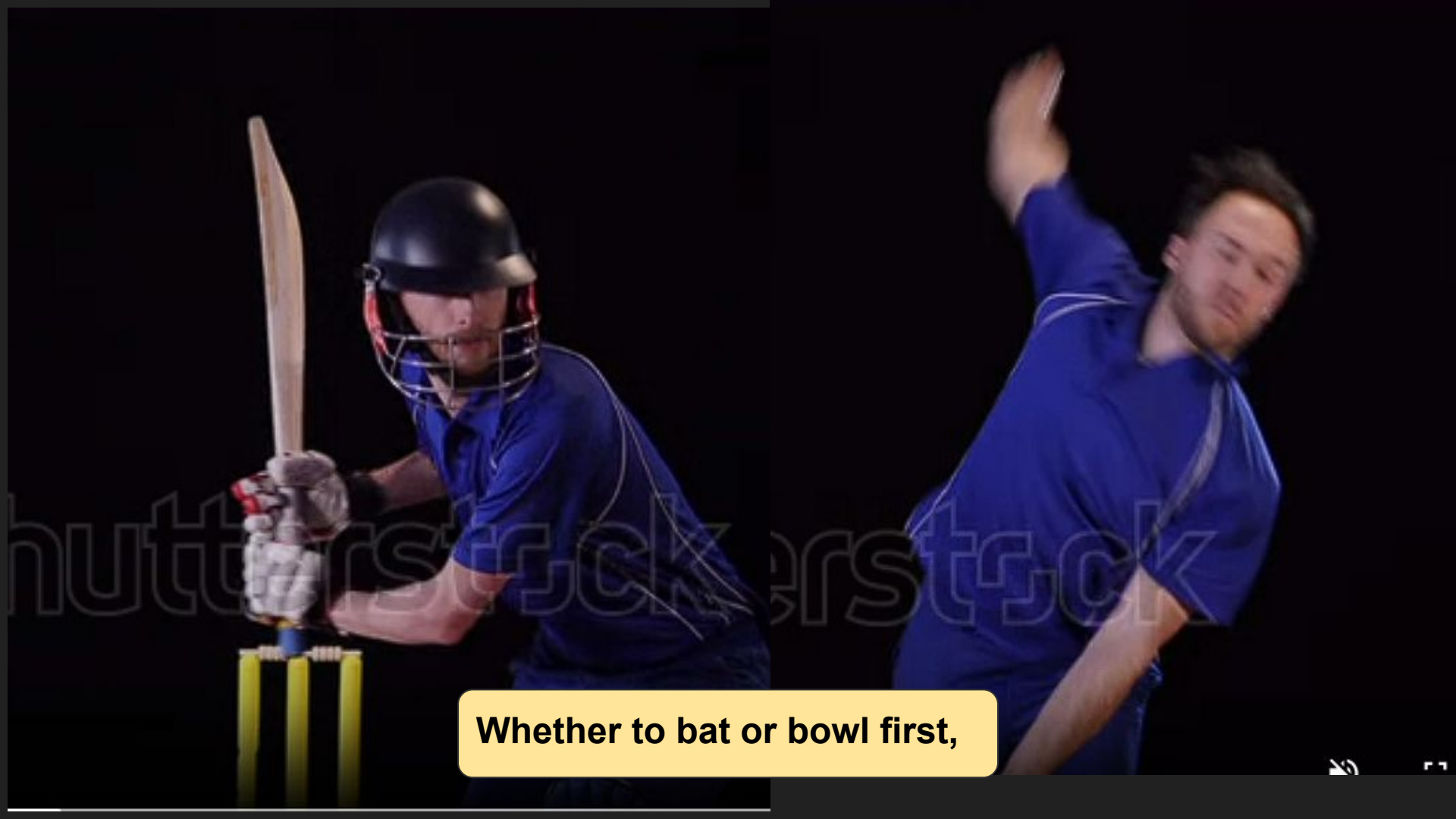
Almost 90 years later! In 1932, India played this match against England.



The team was led by CK Nayadu, a prolific batsman, who did an excellent job of captaining the team.



Being a captain is a very important role. Even before the first delivery of the match, a captain has to make a crucial decision.



Whether to bat or bowl first,





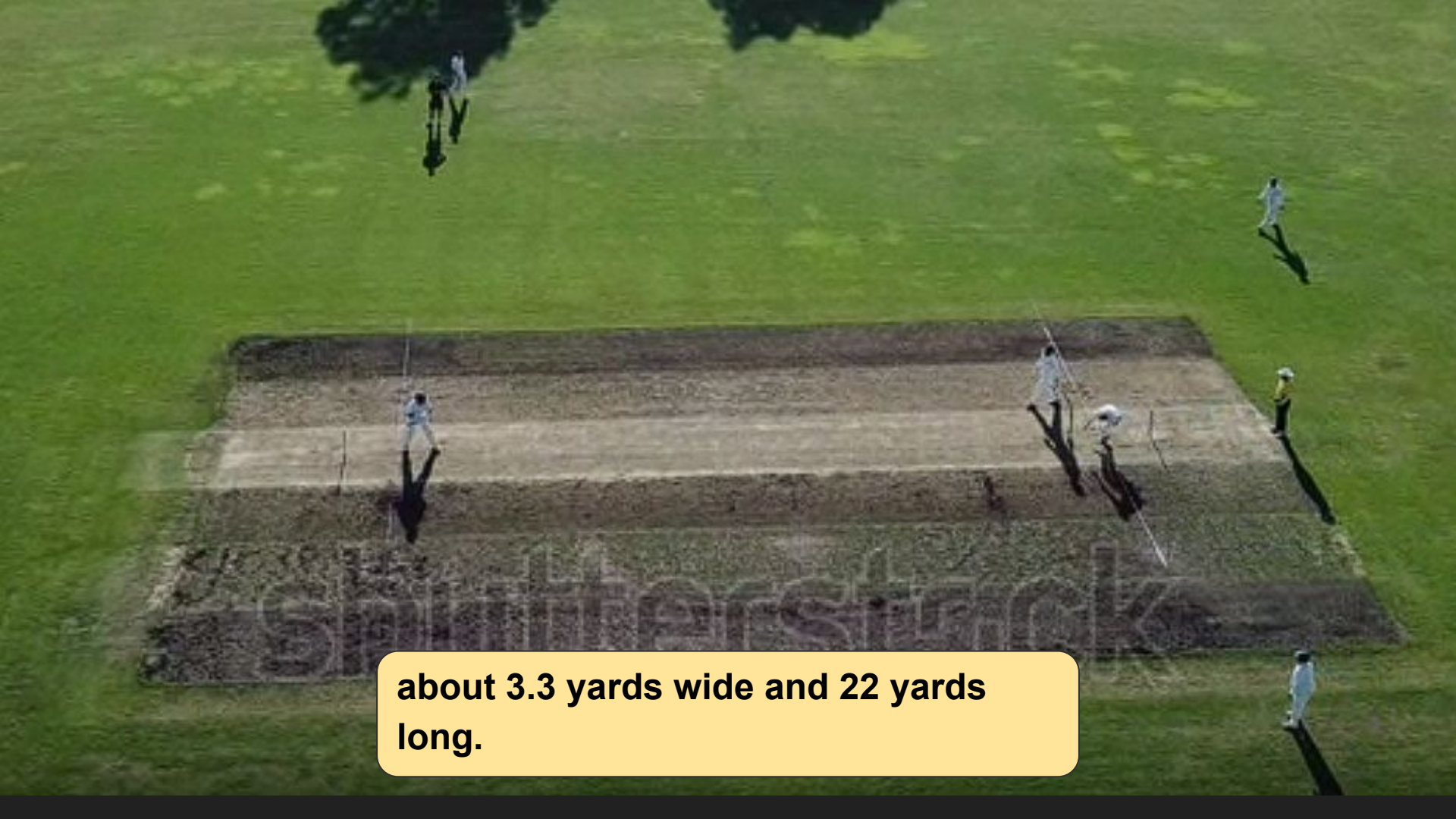
And for that, a captain must know what kind of pitch it is.



But wait, what is a cricket pitch?



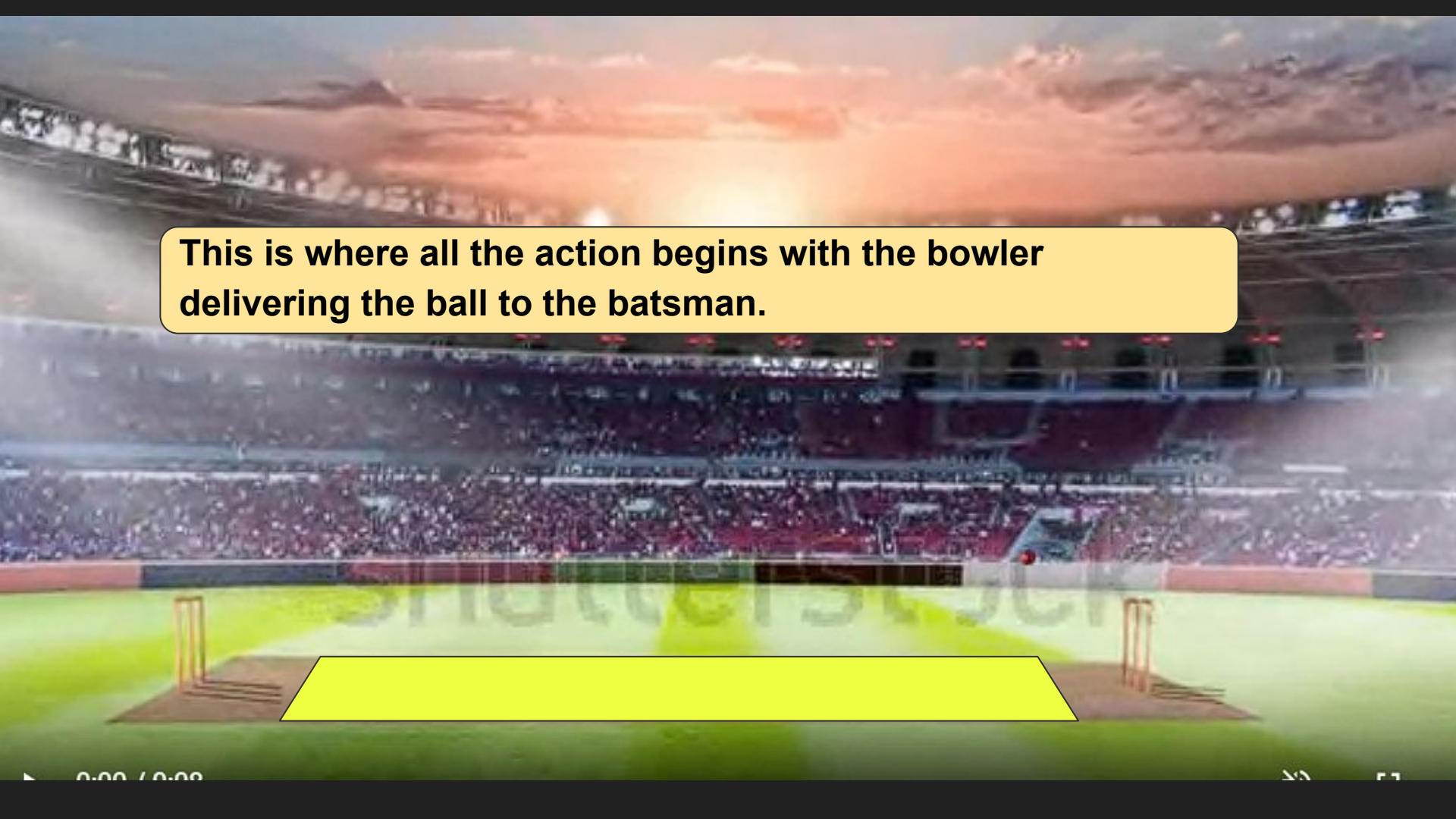
It's a flat strip in the middle of the field,



about 3.3 yards wide and 22 yards long.



Featuring wickets and crease at both ends.



This is where all the action begins with the bowler delivering the ball to the batsman.



But not all pitches are the same and that's why the captain needs to know how to read pitches.

A photograph of a cricket pitch with a green tint, showing several players in white uniforms on the field.

**Grassy
Pitch**

A photograph of a cricket pitch with a yellow-green tint, showing a large tree shadow and two players in the center.

**Bouncy
Pitch**

A photograph of a cricket pitch with a yellow-green tint, showing a large tree shadow and a player in the center.

**Dusty
Pitch**

A photograph of a cricket pitch with a cyan tint, showing several players in white uniforms on the field.

**Dead
Pitch**

There are mainly four kinds of pitches: Grassy, Bouncy, Dusty, and Dead pitches.

An aerial, top-down view of a large cricket stadium. The central pitch is a vibrant, lush green, contrasting with the brownish-tan of the outfield. The stadium seating is visible in curved tiers around the pitch, with some sections covered by white tarps. The title 'Grassy Pitch' is overlaid in large white text at the top center.

Grassy Pitch

A grassy pitch is considered a nightmare for the batsman against fast bowlers. Why?



Found in England and New Zealand,



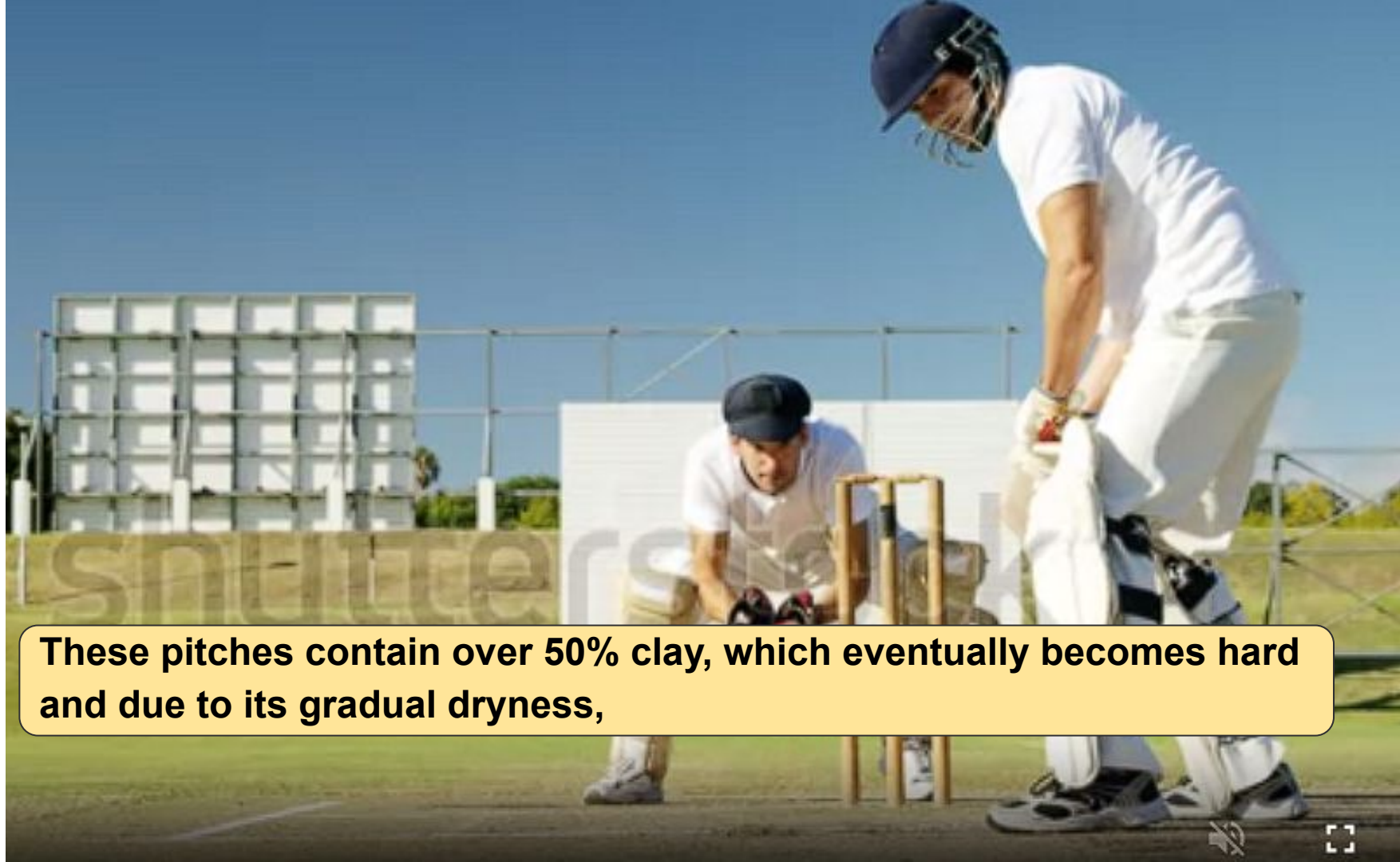
Pitches covered in green grass are gentler on the ball & keep it shiny for longer.



They also retain moisture and transfer it to the ball, making it easier for the ball to swing.



Pitches in Australia and South Africa, on the other hand, are bouncy.



These pitches contain over 50% clay, which eventually becomes hard and due to its gradual dryness,



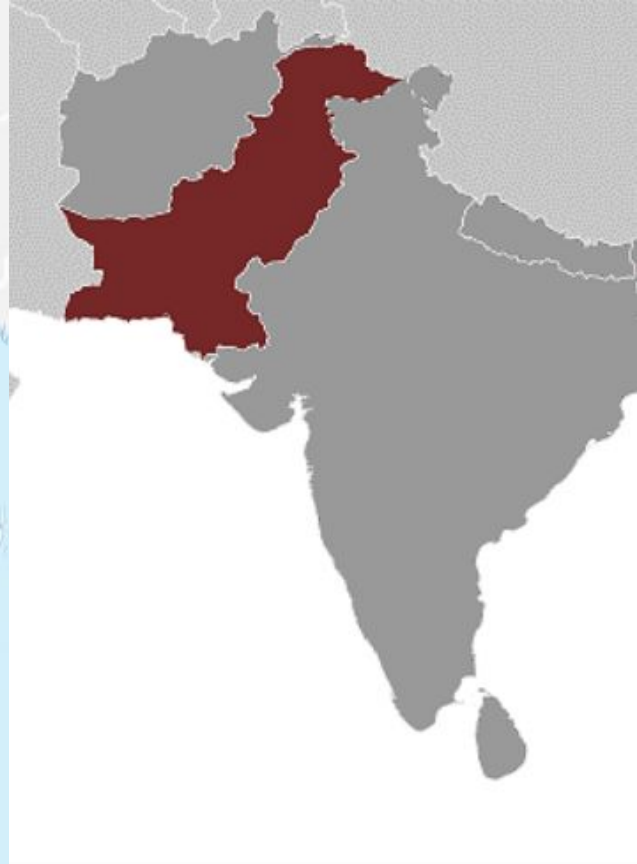
the ball extracts pace and bounce after hitting the surface.

Dusty Pitch



However, for those who specialize in spin bowling, dusty pitches are the best.

Onion



**widely found in India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan,
are the best.**

Dusty Pitch

A wide-angle shot of a cricket pitch on a sunny day. In the foreground, the three white stumps are positioned on a dry, dusty patch of the pitch. A bowler in a white uniform is running towards the stumps from the background. The pitch is surrounded by green grass, and in the far background, there are trees, a fence, and a mountain under a clear blue sky. A large, faint 'shutterstock' watermark is visible across the center of the image.

The surface of a dusty pitch lacks moisture and is composed of loose soil, allowing the ball to grip the surface and take sharper turns.

Dusty Pitch

And if the pitch has a good amount of clay in it, lack of moisture will result in cracks helping the deviated bounces.

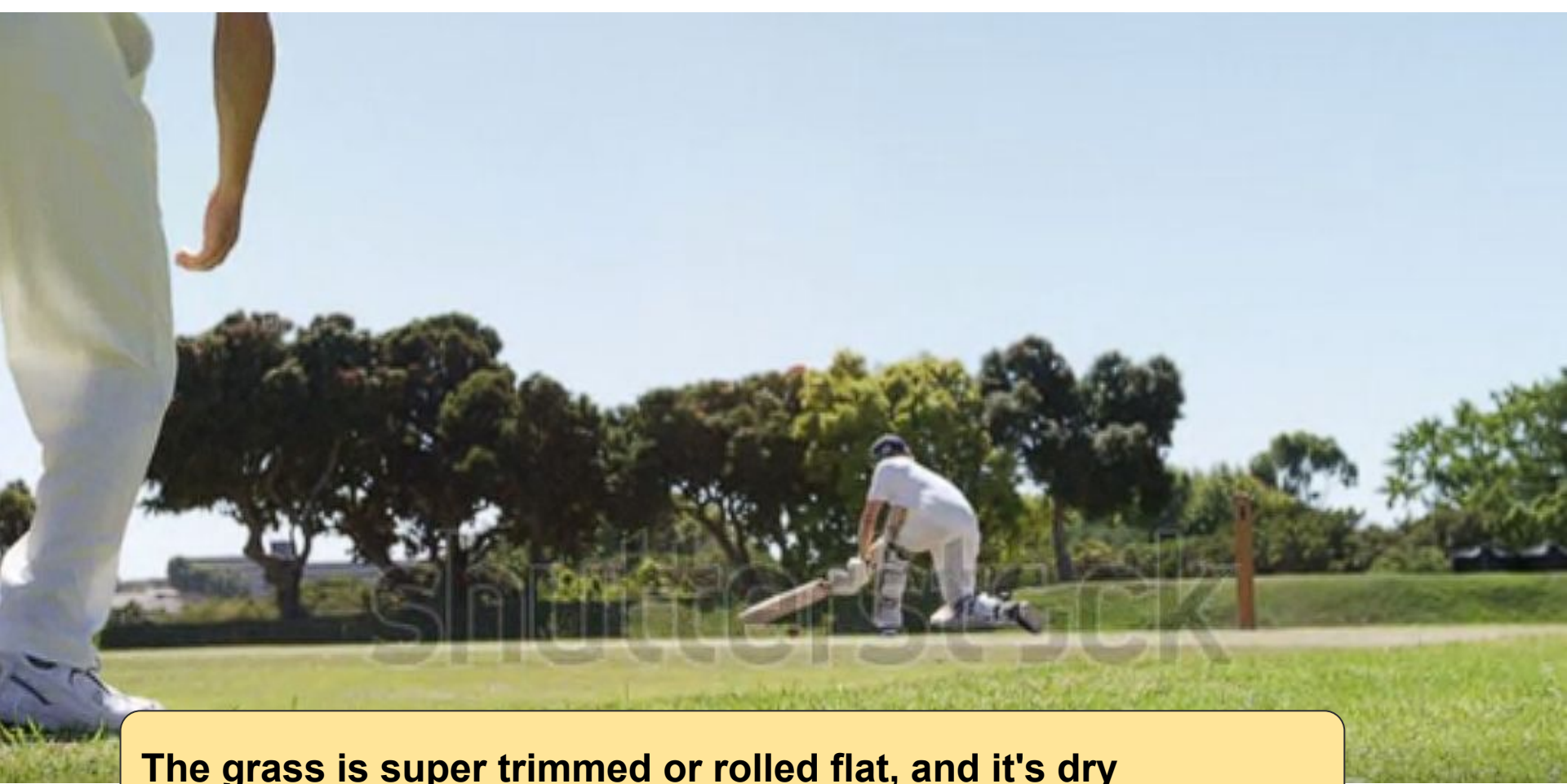


Is there any pitch where a batsman can really let loose?

Dead Pitch



Absolutely, meet the Dead pitch. This is a batter's paradise!



The grass is super trimmed or rolled flat, and it's dry



meaning the bowlers get very little help.



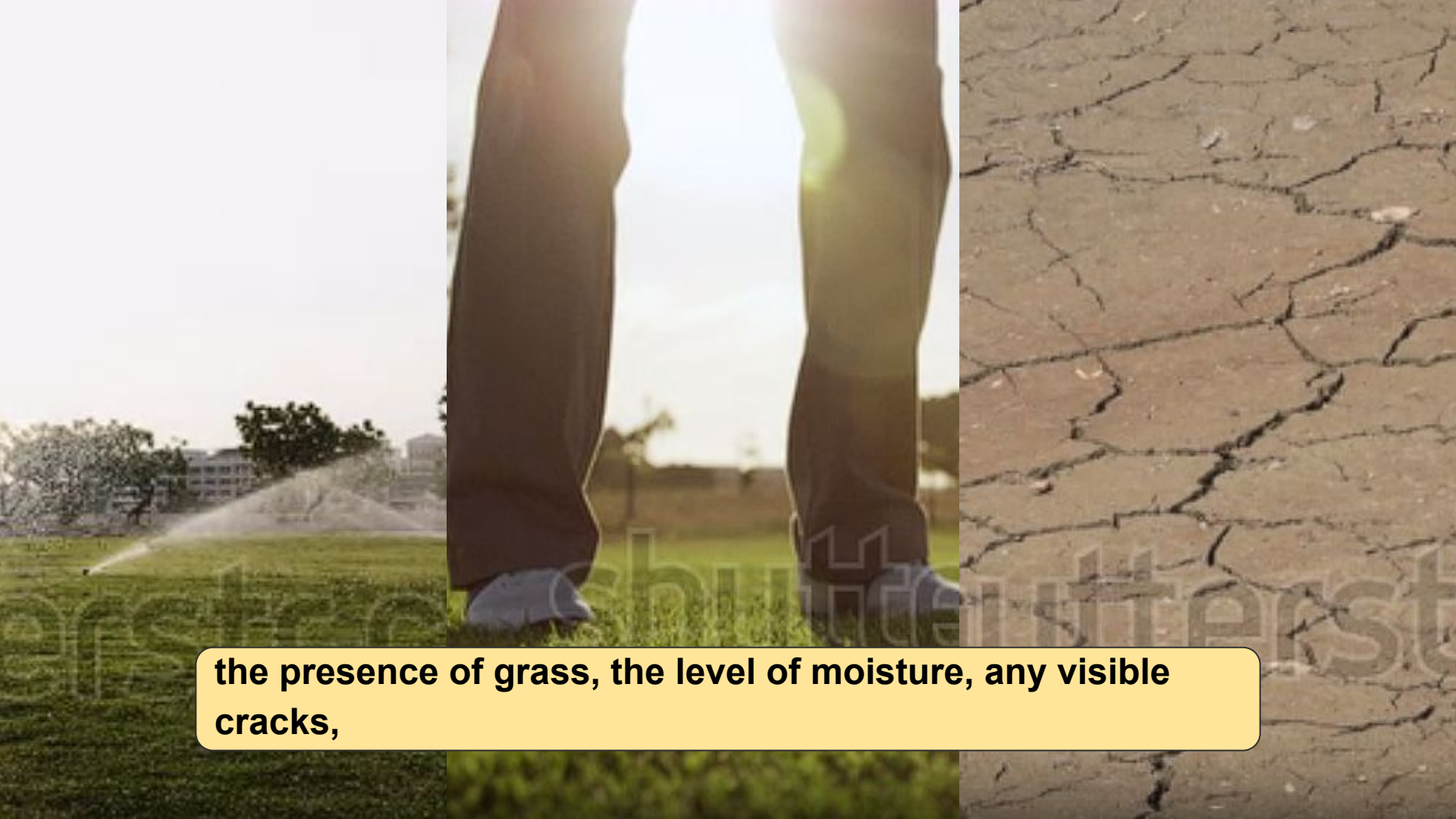
So, yeah, you can score runs like a boss here.



You'll mostly find these dream pitches in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, and the West Indies.



In summary, the captain needs to look at three things -



the presence of grass, the level of moisture, any visible cracks,



and the tightness of the surface due to rolling.



Only then, a captain should decide



whether to bat or bowl first.



Suppose you're the captain of indian team,



**And you see a grassy pitch with few cracks,
who would you send?**

Fast bowler

Spin bowler