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1983 World Cup

March 17, 2022

Although cricket is not the official national sport in India, it creates much more excitement and a greater fan following than the official national sport, hockey. In fact, no other sport in India can claim the position of cricket regarding popularity and revenue generation. The cricket mania in India would leave a stranger amazed. Go anywhere in India, and you can spot a bunch of boys busy with a cricket bat.

Reasons are many, mostly that India often makes it to the top in cricket. In its nearly 60 years of history after independence, the biggest international success of India is the World Cup victory in 1983, which the Indians still hold dear to heart. Subsequent appreciable performances in other World Cups and international tournaments have much to do with the huge popularity of cricket in India.



The British brought the game of cricket to India. Initially only the Parsi community of western India, who were close to the British Officials, started playing the game. In time the game found favor within the Indian royalty. Some of the Indian Maharajahs even gained the favors of the British for their cricketing merits. After India gained Independence in 1947, the British left, but the legacy remained. It did not take long for Indians to make it to the international arena.

Today cricket in India play the role of an adhesive in a land of contrasts and contradiction, so that the Indians from Mumbai to Kolkata have something in common. An ace Indian cricketer is worshipped like a deity. Whether he is from Delhi or Darjeeling hardly makes a difference. Even the movie stars from Bollywood, the biggest film industry in Asia, do not enjoy a similar status.

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People work out their social events, leaves from office and travel plans according to the Indian cricket team's schedule. There are several instances of Indian cricket fans arranging elaborate pujahs or going on a ceremonial fast on the eve of a final game of a significant international tournament.

The flip side of this does exist. Streets, offices, schools and hospitals run empty on a day when the Indian side locks horn with Pakistan in a sensitive match anywhere in the world. Incidents of heart attacks during a nail-biting finish or even suicide at the loss of Indian side have also been known to occur.



But the huge cricket mania in India has undeniably turned the sport into a large industry in the country. A lot of money spins around the sport and multiplies its effect in the national economy to the benefit of everybody. The Stock Exchange Index rises and falls and elections are won or lost centering around cricket.

So, cricket mania in India is a stronghold for its populace, which is hard to ignore. Whoever can tap its potential, reaps the benefits.

THANK YOU

-By Ashish Jha