

AN EXCERPT FROM THE BIOGRAPHY OF SUNIL GAVASKAR

Warm Up

Cricket is one of the favourite games of Indians. Do you play cricket too? Write/talk about who you play with, where you play and what your experiences are.

If you don't play cricket, please tell us why you think the game is so popular.

Do you recognize these cricket players?



Yes. They are Virat Kohli, Sachin Tendulkar, M.S. Dhoni, Kapil Dev and Sunil Gavaskar.

Vocabulary

gallery: a covered passageway open at one side, or a balcony, especially one projecting from the wall of a building

lob: to throw or hit (a ball or missile) in a high arc

invaluable: extremely useful; indispensable

privilege: a special right or advantage that only one person or group has

obsession: when you can only think about one person or thing so you can't think about anything else. This is a very unhealthy state of mind because a person who is obsessed can lose control over their actions.

abrupt: sudden

comrades: a companion who shares one's activities or is a fellow member of an organisation

verdict: a decision on an issue of fact in a legal case

tremendous: very great or large

contributed: To give (something, especially money) in order to help someone or some group of people.

Here is an excerpt from the biography of Sunil Gavaskar.

The most vivid recollection of my childhood cricket-playing days is the time I almost broke my mother's nose. She used to bowl to me in the small gallery of our house where we played our 'daily match' with a tennis ball. Since the area was small, she would kneel to bowl, or rather lob the ball to me. I hit one straight back and caught her bang on the nose, which started bleeding. I was frightened but she shrugged it off, washed her face and as the bleeding stopped, we continued the game.

My father was a good club cricketer in his days and a keen student of the game. Even now we have interesting discussions on various aspects of the game and I have found his advice invaluable in the development of my career. And, as I have already said, I have had the privilege of having a cricketing mother, who helped me to take the first steps in the game I have come to love.

Right from the beginning, I wanted to become a batsman and I hated losing my wicket. This became such an obsession with me that, if the

rest of the boys ever got me out, I would fight and eventually walk home with the bat and the ball. This would bring the game to an abrupt end since nobody else had a ball or bat. The boys cursed and called me names, but the tension did not last long and we generally got on very well.

Among these early comrades with whom I played were the Ambaye brothers, the Mandrekar brothers and several others who made up our team. Whenever I batted they would decide beforehand that they would appeal at a particular point. Whether I was out or not, I had to go by the majority verdict! We often played matches against teams made up of boys living in the neighbouring building and there was tremendous interest in the 'trophies' as we called them. These trophies were small white-metal cups for which we all contributed and bought for as little as Rs.1.50.

- A. Choose the most appropriate answer.
1. What caused the injury to the speaker's mother during their cricket game?
 - a. The speaker hit the tennis ball too hard.

- b. The area where they played was too small.
 - c. His mother accidentally hit herself with the ball.
 - d. His father bowled too hard.
2. How did the speaker's mother react to getting hit on the nose with the ball?
- a. She got angry and stopped playing.
 - b. She washed her face and continued the game.
 - c. She scolded the speaker for being careless.
 - d. She immediately went to the hospital for treatment.
3. What influence did the speaker's father have on their cricket playing?
- a. He never played cricket with the speaker.
 - b. He used to play for a professional team.
 - c. He gave valuable advice on cricket to the speaker.
 - d. He discouraged the speaker from playing cricket.

4. Why did the speaker often take the bat and ball home if they were out during the game?
 - a. To play cricket alone at home.
 - b. He was a bad sport and could not bear to lose.
 - c. To practice batting even more.
 - d. To show off to the boys.
5. How did the friends get together to make the speaker 'out' during the match?
 - a. The speaker decided for himself.
 - b. The Ambaye brothers made the final call.
 - c. A majority verdict among friends.
 - d. The speaker's mother made the decision.

- B. Answer the questions in your own words.
1. How did the mother bowl to the speaker?
 2. What was the speaker's ambition as a cricketer?
 3. Who were the speaker's comrades?

- C. Think and Answer

1. Why do you think the tension between the players did not last for a long time?

D. Choose the right words from the box to complete the sentence.

tension recollection sharp broke advice

1. I have no _____ of ever having been here.
2. The glass _____ when it fell to the ground.
3. She has _____ eyesight. She can find all the mistakes in the document in no time.
4. The _____ I got from my mother was invaluable.
5. There is _____ between the two friends. They are not speaking to each other.

E. Use words from 'Vocabulary' to complete these sentences.

1. His father's _____ advice helped him succeed in his career.
2. The art _____ featured a stunning collection of paintings by local artists.
3. I had the _____ of meeting Sunil Gavaskar at the stadium.

4. The soldiers were not just colleagues; they were _____ who had protected each other in times of need.
5. Her _____ with TV stopped her from studying and she failed her exams.
6. The bowler decided to _____ the ball high in the air to confuse the batsman.
7. The _____ end of the story left us wondering what the writer wanted to say.
8. Many individuals _____ generously to the charity event, making it a great success.
9. The jury's _____ in the trial ended the long-standing legal dispute.
10. The team showed _____ strength in spite of many challenges and won the match.

F. Use words from 'vocabulary' to make sentences of your own.