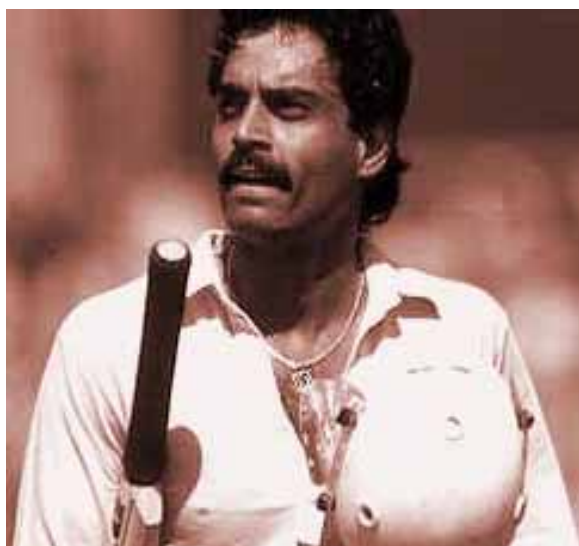


STAR OF INDIA WHO BECAME AN ALL-TIME GREAT

Profile of Dilip Vengsarkar by Aaron Gales

Dilip Vengsarkar was one of the great cricketers of his generation. He batted for India in over 100 Tests and one day internationals, playing with such distinction that he represented his country over a period of 15 years, totting up over 10,000 runs in both forms of the game. Little do many people know that he also once played for Hanging Heaton CC in the Bradford League, and at the time of joining the club was rated the top Test batsman in the world.



However, it was undoubtedly his performances for his country that led to him being proclaimed as one of the best batsmen of all time. He made his debut for his country against New Zealand in Auckland in 1975 and though India won the Test convincingly he made two low scores and found himself out of the side for a short while.

It wasn't long, though, before he was recalled to the side and he justified the selectors' faith in his abilities by scoring a series of centuries in the years 1985-7 against such illustrious sides as Pakistan, Australia, England, Sri Lanka and the West Indies. Overall in this period he was in truly irresistible form and scored 8 centuries in 16 Test matches, and was named Wisden Cricketer of the Year in 1987.

Despite all this success, however, there are two significant achievements in his career that separate him from the very good players and put him in the echelon of greatness.

The first of his achievements was against the great West Indian bowling attack, which at that time was terrorising world cricket. He scored a total of six centuries against them and also shared in a record unbroken second-wicket stand of 344 with the great Sunil Gavaskar. The second was his form in England. He became the first Test batsman ever to score three

consecutive centuries at Lord's - a record that has yet to be matched and will most likely stand the test of time.

He also spent time as captain of the Indian side but his tenure was extremely brief and after just ten matches in the job he was relieved of his duties and spent some time out of the side before characteristically fighting his way back in. When it came for him to retire from the game in 1992 he was second only to Gavaskar in terms of runs amassed and number of centuries scored in his career.

Even after retirement from the game Vengsarkar still plays a huge role in Indian cricket, running various academies in the country. He is also currently chairman of selectors for the various national teams of India.