



ICC AWARDS, 2009



Gautam Gambhir

Indian cricketers dominated the ICC awards night at Johannesburg, South Africa on Oct. 1 as they won both Tests and One-Day individual awards, besides having a strong presence in the Test and ODI Teams of the Year.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni featured in both Tests and One Day ICC World Teams of the Year both as wicketkeeper and captain of the sides. He was also named ODI Player of the Year for the second time in a row. Opener Gautam Gambhir also covered himself in glory by picking up the best Test Player of the Year award, besides also featuring in the World Test Team of the Year.

Apart from Dhoni and Gambhir, Sachin Tendulkar and Harbhajan Singh (as 12th man) also featured in the world Test Team of the Year. The World ODI Team of the Year has three Indians with Virender Sehwag and Yuvraj Singh being the other two, besides Dhoni.

However, the most coveted Cricketer of Year Award for the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy, went to Australian Mitchell Johnson who fought off stiff competition from Dhoni, Gambhir and England captain Andrew Strauss in a four-way race. During the voting period of August 13, 2008 to August 24, 2009, the 27-year-old Johnson played took 80 wickets in 17 Test matches, the highest number by any Test bowler in the period. His best match bowling figures were 11-159 against South Africa in Perth in December 2008 and his economy-rate over the whole period was a mere 3.12. Also, he managed to score a total of 632 runs for Australia, including a century and three half-centuries, to register an average of 30.09 during the same period.



Mitchell Johnson

Johnson also played 16 ODI matches during the period taking 28 wickets at an average of 24.25 and an economy rate of 5.06, his best haul being 4-34 against South Africa in April 2009. He is currently ranked third in the Reliance Mobile ICC Player Rankings for Test bowlers and is 11th in the ODI rankings. He follows in the footsteps of India's Rahul Dravid (2004), Andrew Flintoff of England and South Africa's Jacques Kallis (joint winners in 2005), Ricky Ponting of Australia (2006 and 2007) and Shivnarine Chanderpaul (2008) to take the top award.

Interestingly, Gambhir won the Test Player of the Year Award by beating Johnson, Strauss and Sri Lankan Thilan Samaraweera. During the 12-month voting period, Gambhir put in some remarkable performances with the bat, making 1,269 runs with an impressive average of 84.60 in the eight Test

matches he played. He scored five centuries and four half-centuries during the period.

Dhoni beat off tough competition from team-mates Yuvraj Singh and Virender Sehwag as well as West Indies' Shivnarine Chanderpaul to take the ODI Player of the Year Award. During the voting period, he played 24 ODIs and scored 967 runs at an average of 60.43

and at a rate of 86.63 runs per 100 balls faced. Besides scoring nine fifties, he had a hand in 26 dismissals (18 catches and eight stumpings) and led his country to victory in 17 of the 24 matches in which he played. No wonder, Dhoni is currently ranked number one in the Reliance Mobile ICC Player Rankings for ODI batsmen, comfortably ahead of the next best.

Pakistani Aleem Dar won ICC Umpire of the Year Award and broke the monopoly of Australian Simon Taufel who had been the winner of the award since its inception.

The five-man expert selection panel for the awards was chaired by former West Indian captain Clive Lloyd. Other members of the panel included Anil Kumble (India), Bob Taylor (England), Mudassar Nazar (Pakistan) and Stephen Fleming (New Zealand).



M.S. Dhoni

AWARDS

- Cricketer of the Year: Mitchell Johnson (Australia)
- Test Player of the Year: Gautam Gambhir (India)
- One-Day Player of the Year: Mahendra Singh Dhoni (India)
- ICC World Test Team of the Year: Gautam Gambhir (India), Andrew Strauss (Eng), AB de Villiers (SA), Sachin Tendulkar (Ind), Thilan Samaraweera (Sri Lanka), Michael Clarke (Aus), MS Dhoni (India-captain), Shakib al Hasan (Bangladesh), Mitchell Johnson (Aus), Stuart Broad (Eng), Dale Steyn (SA) and Harbhajan Singh (12th man; India).
- ICC World ODI Team of the Year: Virender Sehwag (India), Chris Gayle (West Indies), Kevin Pietersen (England), Tillakaratne Dilshan (Sri Lanka), Yuvraj Singh (India), Martin Guptill (New Zealand), MS Dhoni (Ind; capt., wk), Andrew Flintoff (England), Nuwan Kulasekara (Sri Lanka), Ajantha Mendis (Sri Lanka), Umar Gul (Pakistan). 12th man: Thilan Thushara (Sri Lanka).
- Twenty20 International Performance of the Year: Tillekratne Dilshan (SL).
- Umpire of the Year: Aleem Dar (Pakistan)
- Spirit of Team Award: New Zealand
- Emerging Player of Year: Peter Siddle (Australia)
- Associate and Affiliate Player of Year Award: William Porterfield (Ireland)
- Women Cricketer of Year: Claire Taylor (England).

Chandrayaan Finds Water On Moon

"India's first lunar mission has achieved a historical first and made a path-breaking and real discovery by establishing the presence of water on the Moon," Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman G. Madhavan Nair said on September 24, 2009.

The Moon Impact Probe, an Indian rover aboard Chandrayaan-1, detected the presence of water on its way down to land on the Moon's surface. It took close-up photos that indicated the presence of water. The lunar water discovery was confirmed by the Moon Mineralogy Mapper (M3), an instrument created by the US-based National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and carried aboard Chandrayaan-1. While expressing pride in the achievement, Nair added: "But the water is not in the form of sea or lake or puddle or drops. It is embedded on the surface in minerals and rocks."

One of the main objectives of Chandrayaan-1 was achieved when India's maiden Moon mission, Chandrayaan-1 found water. It is a big scientific discovery of the 21st century that scientists say will upend thinking about space and boost research. Water on the Moon means molecules of water and hydroxyl (hydrogen and oxygen) that interact with molecules of rock and dust specifically in the top millimetres of the Moon's surface. The result has helped shake off the failure tag from the Rs. 386-crore Chandrayaan-1 project that was aborted on August 30, 2009 after it lost radio contact with Earth. It stopped sending radio signals after suffering from several technical issues including failure of the star sensors and poor thermal shielding. The ISRO then officially declared the mission over.

Chandrayaan-1 operated for 312 days as opposed to the intended two years but the mission achieved 95 per cent of its planned objectives.

Though water exists on many bodies in our solar system, finding it on our own Moon is breathtaking, both from a practical and theoretical point of view. It adds to our knowledge of how cosmic processes work. And it may open the way to utilising the water on Moon for making hydrogen and oxygen—the first needed for fuel and the second for life. Thus, the possibility of using the Moon as a base camp for space exploration inches a wee bit closer.

Although water was spotted by the M3, a NASA probe and one of the 11 payloads on the spacecraft, glory shone on ISRO for the discovery that was made after nearly five decades of lunar exploration by Western nations. M3 instrument onboard Chandrayaan-1 detected water from electromagnetic radiation emanating from different minerals on and just below lunar surface. M3 recorded the manner in which light reflects off the lunar surface and that suggests the presence of water molecules. M3 revealed water molecules in amounts that are greater than predicted but still relatively small. The surprising finding has come about through the ingenuity, perseverance and international cooperation between NASA and ISRO.

This scientific feat is a landmark event in international space cooperation between India and other countries. Moon's rocks have

been analysed for over four decades and the Moon has finally given up one of its most tantalizing mysteries and given mankind's quest for understanding the cosmos an electrifying fillip.

The presence of usable quantities of water on the Moon is an important factor in rendering lunar habitation cost-effective, since transporting water (or hydrogen and oxygen) from Earth would be prohibitively expensive.

NASA has estimated that to carry a bottle of water to the Moon it would cost \$ 50,000. The implication is that if you have to go to the Moon to set up human habitation, you would not be required to take water for humans to survive. Potentially, with the availability of water, humans could live on the Moon. They could split water into oxygen (for breathing) and hydrogen (for rocket fuel). Finding water could make living on the Moon easier in the future.

Images from Chandrayaan show that although water is present mostly at the poles, it is also thinly spread over the surface till about 10 degrees south and north, using earthlike parameters. It appears that the water evaporates as the Sun heats up the Moon's surface in the daytime (one Moon-day is about three weeks) and condenses back in the night. In some of the polar craters, where sunlight has not reached for the past 2-3 billion years, the water will exist as ice, since the temperatures are about (-) 240 degrees Celsius.

Until now, scientists believed that the Moon was completely barren with no signs of water. As early as the 1970s, scientists had wondered what happened to all the water that was deposited on the Moon by comets and meteorites that collided with it. After all, a large fraction of water on Earth is also believed to have come from comets. However, it was thought that the sunlight was so intense that water probably evaporated into free space. Then speculation began to appear about the possibility that water may have survived in the cold polar regions where sunlight failed to reach. One of NASA's missions was sent into these cold dark regions to see if ice water splash could be detected but the results were not very clear. It is against this background that the results of Chandrayaan-1 are to be seen.

The discovery of water molecules on Moon is all set to alter the course of Chandrayaan-2 scheduled for 2013. The second Moon mission will see if we can go beyond analysis of soil samples and explore how we can go down further on Moon, whether we can go down a few centimetres or half a metre. The scientists will think of a deeper exploration of the Moon's crust.



G.Madhavan Nair