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the 2023 ICC Hall of Fame Inductee



An Evening with Aravinda

Dinner Dance
2024



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An Evening with
Aravinda
Dinner Dance 2024

Box Hill Town Hall
25 May 2024

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School Anthem



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Message from the President

Black & Gold of Victoria



Dear Distinguished guests, Members of Black and Gold of Victoria, esteemed alumni from other Australian states and overseas.

It is with immense pride and joy that we welcome you to the Black and Gold Gala Night 2024 - An Evening with Aravinda. This is a truly special occasion where we honour Mr Aravinda De Silva, a Sri Lankan Cricket Icon, the Vice-Captain of the 1996 Cricket World Cup Championship Team that brought glory to Sri Lanka and the 2023 ICC Hall of Fame Inductee.

It is our absolute honour and privilege that Black and Gold of Victoria has the opportunity as the first overseas old boy's chapter to celebrate our alma mater's most famous son, Mr Aravinda De Silva, on his induction into the ICC Hall of Fame. Aravinda's cricket exploits are legendary, and while cricket is a team sport, his pivotal role in the semi-final and final of the 1996 World Cup greatly contributed to Sri Lanka's ultimate success.

We are deeply grateful for the presence of our esteemed guests, the current Principal of D.S. Senanayake, Mr Sampath Weragoda Sir, the Colombo OBA President, Mr Mayura Amerasinghe and the Treasurer, Mr Amila Fernando. Your presence at this momentous occasion is a true testament to the respect and admiration we all hold for Mr Aravinda De Silva.

I also wish to greatly acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Dr Keshawa Edirisinghe, Founding President of Black and Gold of Victoria and a fellow batch mate of Aravinda. His unwavering commitment, guidance, wisdom and experience have been instrumental in the success of this event. Black & Gold of Victoria was established in 2008 and is in its 16th year of operations. We are proud to continue our mission of fostering a strong bond among our alumni and celebrating their achievements. I acknowledge the wonderful work of all the past Presidents and their committees, for fostering the Senanayake brotherhood in Melbourne and for raising over \$50,000 that has been donated in the past to the college in Colombo.

On behalf of the Committee, I extend our heartfelt thanks to our esteemed sponsors: Platinum—Guardian Medical Group, Tingo Education Australia and Sri Lankan, Gold—Sovereign Maxwell Holdings Pty Limited and Silver—Legacy Finance Australia. Your contributions have made this event possible, and we are truly grateful.

The goal of Black and Gold Victoria tonight is to raise \$10,000 from this event and donate it to school renovations and the cricket fund. We have all greatly benefited from the free primary and secondary education at D S Senanayake College, which laid a solid foundation for our professional careers and can attest to the critical importance of the role education and sports can play in the development of an individual as a responsible citizen of society. As we are all aware, Sri Lanka is faced with an economic crisis that impacts the government's ability to provide services and it is now our turn to assist our country of birth or origin in a small way.

On behalf of Black and Gold Victoria, I thank Aravinda for championing the creation and planning of this event and for generously giving his time. I also take this opportunity to thank my committee members, who have worked tirelessly on behalf of the members of Black and Gold Victoria to deliver this event and other events during the year.

I hope you have a great night as you rekindle friendships, make new friends and go down memory lane of our wonderful school-going years.
Long live the Senanayakian Brotherhood!

Channa D Wijesinghe
President
Black and Gold of Victoria
2023/24

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Message from the Secretary

Black & Gold of Victoria



Dear Distinguished guests, Members of Black and Gold of Victoria, esteemed alumni from other Australian states and overseas.

Firstly, I want to express my sincere appreciation to all of you for joining us for Black and Gold Gala Night 2024 - An evening with Aravinda where we felicitate Mr Aravinda De Silva, a Sri Lankan cricket legend on the momentous occasion of his induction into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame. We all grew up marvelling at his cricketering skills and with a sense of pride knowing that he was an old boy from our college.

I also acknowledge the presence of the Principal of D.S. Senanayake, Mr Sampath Weragoda Sir, the Colombo OBA President, Mr Mayura Amerasinghe and the Treasurer, Mr Amila Fernando, and thank them for travelling from Colombo and being with us as we celebrate Aravinda Aiya's great achievement.

This committee was appointed in late May 2023, and the 2023/24 year has turned out to be rather busy as we will now have the unique honour of holding two dinner dances within one financial year (October 2023 and May 2024). We have also built a new website for the association and introduced an online membership mechanism in accordance with the current constitution to create a sustainable source of funding for our OBA in the long term.

In July 2023, we hosted junior squash champion Nevindu Lakman at the request of Colombo OBA during his participation in the junior World Squash Championships in Melbourne. We thank all the old boys who supported this endeavour financially, attended matches, and provided emotional support.

In November 2023, Black and Gold held a 10th anniversary Dane to commemorate our beloved founding Principal, the late R.I.T Alles Sir. We gratefully appreciate the financial support of all the old boys who contributed, particularly the 2005 batch.

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of Mr Asela Seram (1997 Batch), who financially contributed to all of Black and Gold's 2023 events. The committee greatly appreciates his ongoing support.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge our sponsors of the October 2023 Dinner Dance:
Platinum Sponsors: New Cold, Cinnamon Bentota Beach Hotel, Class of 1998; Gold Sponsors: Class of 1995, Spice Ella; Silver Sponsor: Asela Seram, Infinity Finance.

We also acknowledge the outstanding support of our suppliers, entertainers and, in particular, our in-house caterer Mr. Champika Maddumage from Ambula, Mrs. Ama Siriwardana and the girls from Ama Dance Academy, Mr. Thusitha Wijenayake from Loud Productions, Mr. Prinie Rathnayake from Skaya LED productions, Mr. Nalin Thamel and Mr. Duli Jayakody from Mystery Band, Mr. Gihan Medis from NC Print Hub and all our partners, sponsors, well wishers and supporters.

As noted in the President's message, tonight's event is an opportunity to reflect on where we have come from, how fortunate we are to live in Australia and to give generously to the next generation of our alma mater's students so they can also develop into responsible citizens and contribute to a vibrant and sustainable society.

Please enjoy the night and make wonderful memories of the Senanayake Brotherhood.

Sajith Wickramaratne
Secretary
Black and Gold of Victoria
2023/24

Best Wishes
from

Naween Pandithasekera
Class of 1992

Immediate Past President
Black & Gold of Victoria

Message from the Principal D. S. Senanayake College - Colombo



Dear Distinguished Guests, Esteemed Alumni, and Honorable Members of the D S Senanayake College Old Boys' Association, Australia Chapter,

It is with great pleasure and excitement that I extend my warmest greetings to each and every one of you gathered here tonight for the exquisite event - "An Evening with Aravinda", a felicitation to ICC Hall of Fame Inductee with a glamorous Dinner Dance organized by the "Black and Gold Victoria" of the D S Senanayake College Old Boys' Association.

As the Principal of D S Senanayake College, it gives me immense joy to witness the spirit of camaraderie and nostalgia that fills the air as we come together to celebrate our shared history and memories of Mr. Aravinda de Silva and our beloved alma mater. Events like these not only provide us with an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and classmates but also serve as a testament to the strong bonds that tie us together as proud Senanayakians, regardless of the distance or time that separates us.

Tonight, we are honoured to have in our midst a true legend of Sri Lankan cricket, Mr. Aravinda de Silva, whose name is synonymous with excellence, grace, and unwavering commitment to the sport. His stellar achievements on the cricket field have not only brought glory to our Nation but have also inspired countless young individuals to dream big and strive for greatness in their chosen fields.

Mr. Aravinda de Silva has volunteered to support College Cricket at this moment when we celebrate 50 Years of DS Cricket. I am truly appreciative of his role as the Head of the advisory board of DS Cricket and his help in bringing in millions of rupees through sponsorships.

As we gather here to enjoy an evening of music, dance, and laughter, let us take a moment to reflect on the values and principles instilled in us during our formative years at D S Senanayake College. It is these very values - integrity, perseverance, and a quest for excellence - that continue to guide us in our personal and professional lives, shaping us into individuals of character and integrity.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the organizing committee of "Black and Gold Victoria", led by the President Mr. Channa Wijesinghe. Your dedication and hard work in ensuring the success of this evening are truly commendable, and I am honoured to be here tonight as the Principal of D S Senanayake. Thank you for the invitation and the hospitality. Your unwavering commitment to upholding the legacy of our esteemed institution is truly inspiring.

To our distinguished guests, I urge you to cherish this opportunity to rekindle old friendships, forge new connections, and revel in the shared memories that bind us together as members of the D S Senanayake College community. Let us celebrate our past, embrace our present, and look forward to a future filled with promise and possibility. In closing, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to each and every one of you for your continued support and loyalty to D S Senanayake College. May tonight be a night to remember, filled with laughter, joy, and a sense of pride in belonging to a community as vibrant and strong as ours.

Thank you, and may the spirit of Senanayakian fellowship continue to thrive and inspire us all.

Warm regards,

Sampath Weragoda
Principal
D S Senanayake College



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Message from the President of the Old Boys Association, Sri Lanka



Dear Members of the OBA Australia Branch, distinguished Invitees and Guests,

It gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you as we gather here today to celebrate the induction of our very own brother, Aravinda De Silva into the ICC Hall of Fame and the Annual Dinner Dance of Black & Gold Victoria.

This is a truly momentous occasion for not only brother Aravinda but for all of us who have had the privilege of knowing and being inspired by him.

The proud Senanayakian, Aravinda De Silva, or as the cricketing World fondly call him, "Mad Max," is a cricketing legend whose contributions to the sport are unparalleled. From his fearless batting performances to his strategic leadership on the field, Aravinda has left an indelible mark on the world of cricket, bringing credit to his Alma Mater.

As the President of the OBA, I am immensely proud to see one of our own being recognized for his exceptional talent and dedication to the game. Aravinda's journey from humble beginnings in Sri Lanka to International stardom is a testament to his unwavering commitment.

The past Presidents of Black and Gold Victoria and their Committees have been a helping hand to the main OBA in Colombo. In the recent past, donations have been significant in supporting College Basketball and Rugby. Thank you for Brothers.

The support of the current President of Black and Gold Victoria, brother Channa Wijesinghe and his Committee has to be mentioned, remembering the support rendered during the visit of proud Senanayakian Asian Junior Squash Ranked No 3, brother Nevindu Lakman malli, who was in Australia to participate at World Junior Squash Championship held in July 2023.

Lastly, thank you for inviting myself, the Principal Mr. Sampath Weragoda and the OBA Treasurer Mr. Amila Fernando to this event and let me remind you that tonight's presence of the College Principal is significant.

Having all of you gathered here this evening is a great strength to Black & Gold Victoria and to the main OBA in Colombo.

The evening is yours to commemorate, enjoy and uphold DS BROTHERHOOD

DS Means Love..

Thank you

Mayura Amarasinghe
President - 2022/2024
D S Senanayake College Old Boys' Association

Executive Committee 2023/24

Black & Gold of Victoria



Left to Right: Ruchika Hettiarachchige - Asst. Secretary (Class of 2005)
Kosala Kularatne - Vice President (Class of 1992)
Channa Wijesinghe - President (Class of 1988)
Sajith Wickramarathne - Secretary (Class of 2005)
Janake Weerakoon - Vice President (Class of 1997)
Callum Weerakoon - Asst. Treasurer (Class of 2005)
Absent: Roshan Unantenne - Treasurer (Class of 1992)

Activities 2023/24

The commemoration of the 10th Death Anniversary of our beloved founding Principal RIT Alles Sir

Black and Gold of Victoria organised an almsgiving on November 25, 2023, for 80 Sil devotees at the Keysborough Dhamma Sarana Temple to commemorate the 10th death anniversary of our beloved founding principal, RIT Alles Sir. The Executive Committee of Black and Gold of Victoria wishes to recognise the pivotal role in this endeavour played by the 2005 Batch of brothers, particularly Ruchika Hettiarachchige. The 2005 Batch was not only the main financial contributors of any batch (32% of the total funds) but also, on the day, representing the majority of the old boys who assisted with the dane to the sil devotees.

The Committee also acknowledges the contributions of all the other old boys who participated in this meritorious act, including Past Presidents Chaminda Galagedera, Mangala Banneyake and Naween Panithasekera.





ALMS GIVING PINKAMA
FOR 125 SIL DEVOTEES
IN REMEMBERING
R.I.T. ALLES SIR'S
10TH DEATH
ANNIVERSARY

WHEN :
ON SATURDAY THE
25TH OF NOVEMBER
2023

VENUE:
AT KEYSBOROUGH
DHAMMA SARANA TEMPLE
10 AM - 12PM
Organized by Black & Gold of Victoria
(D.S.Sanayake College OBA of Victoria)

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IF YOU
WISH TO CONTRIBUTE,PLEASE GET IN
TOUCH WITH:

- Ruchika : 0470650262
- Callum : 0489734832



Let us pay our gratitude to our beloved
Alles Sir !!
Your Presence and Contribution towards
this Meritorious event is Highly
Appreciated!!!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



Agenda

7.00pm

Music by Mystery

8.15pm

Welcome by Master of Ceremonies
- Mr. Roshan Unantenne

8.20pm

Formal Welcome by the President of Black & Gold of Victoria
- Mr. Channa Wijesinghe

8.28pm

A minute of silence

8.30pm

Come and sing along to the School Anthem - Sip Satha

8.35pm

Felicitating our DS cricketing Legend,
Mr. Aravinda De Silva
Introduced by Founder President of Black & Gold of Victoria,
- Dr. Keshawa Edirisinghe

8.40pm

Aravinda De Silva addresses guests

8.45pm

Fireside chat with Aravinda
Host Mr. Jay Weerakoon

9pm

Hit the Dance Floor to the Tunes of Mystery

10.15pm

Auction and Raffle Draw

10.45pm

Let the beats of baila move your feet - Mystery

1.00am

All good things must come to an end!

Menu

Starters

Fish cutlets
Hot butter prawns
Devilleed chicken

Mains

Egg fried rice	Boneless chicken curry
Yellow rice	Pepper pork
Egg noodles	Devilleed prawns
	Roast lamb

Cashew curry
Vegetables stir fry
Mix salad
Apple salad
Green salad

Mix badum
Papadam
Chilli paste

Desserts

Watalappam
Cream caramel
Fresh fruit platter

Drinks

Glenfiddich Single Malt Scotch Whisky
Saltram 1859 Barossa Shiraz
Taylors One Small Step Chardonnay
Coke | Lemonade | Soda | Tonic Water

Catering Partner - Ambula Berwick



Activities 2023/24

Black and Gold Gala Dance - October 2023

Black and Gold of Victoria held its much-anticipated Annual Gala Dinner Dance on 21 October 2023 to celebrate 15 years of operations in Melbourne, Victoria. The Senayake Brotherhood enjoyed a great evening of celebration, camaraderie, and memories. The wonderful band Dynamics entertained the guests as they danced the night away.



Activities 2023/24

Black and Gold Gala Dance - October 2023

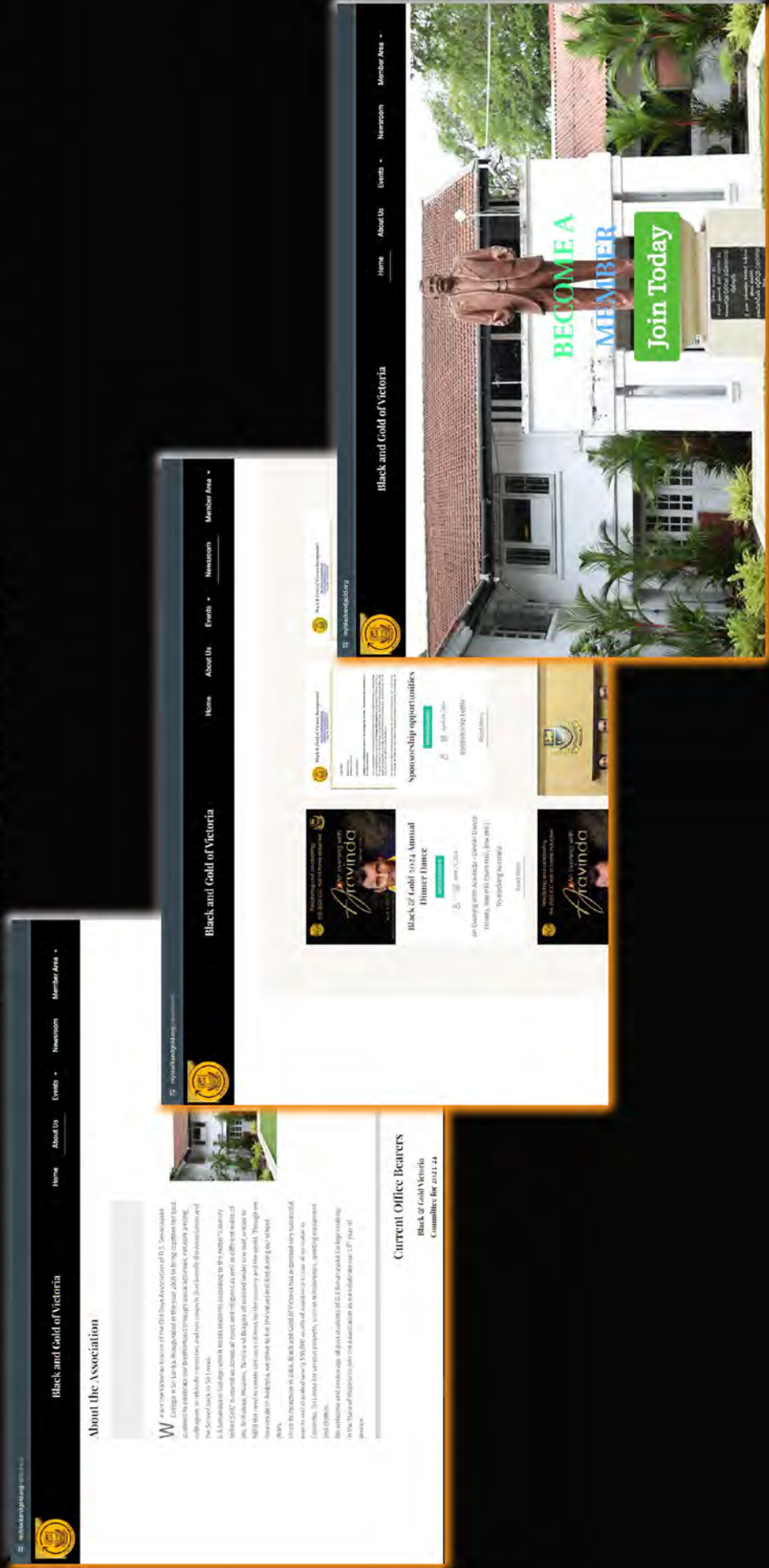


Activities 2023/24

Website redesign and development - September 2023

The Black and Gold Committee launched a new website for the association in September 2023. This user-friendly platform features an online membership registration mechanism, which is in line with the current constitution. This allows old boys of our college to easily become members of Black and Gold of Victoria. This initiative is a crucial step towards creating a sustainable source of funding for our OBA in Victoria, ensuring the continuity of our efforts in the long term.

Visit www.myblackandgold.org



Activities 2023/24

Squash Champion, Fellow Don. Nevindu Lakman in Melbourne

In July 2023, at the request of the Colombo OBA, Black and Gold of Victoria hosted Nevindu Lakman, a current student of D S Senanayake College and the Sri Lankan National Junior Champion, to compete in the World Championships held in Melbourne. It was the first time in over twenty years that a Sri Lankan had earned the right to participate in this annual championship.

This was the first time Nevindu had competed outside of Asia. He arrived in Australia ranked 500+ and reached a world rank of 73 at the end of the World Championships. Black and Gold of Victoria and our members are proud to have supported Nevindu to achieve this great feat.



Activities 2023/24

Presidents Visit to Colombo OBA and School - January 2024

In January 2024, Black and Gold President Channa Wijesinghe visited the College in Colombo and met with Principal Sampath Weragoda Sir and Colombo OBA President Mayura Amerasinghe. Constructive discussions, including some preliminary discussions, were held about future collaboration efforts, including fundraising initiatives, which ultimately led to the creation of An Evening with Aravinda.



Aravinda de Silva



Pinnaduwwage Aravinda de Silva

Debut 31 March 1984

Career 1984 - 2002

Tests 93 | 6361 Runs | 29 Wickets

ODIs 308 | 9284 Runs | 106 Wickets

First Class 220 | 15000 Runs | 129 Wickets

Top Records

Hundred in each innings of a match Test matches	✓	Hundred and a ninety in a match Test matches	✓
Two unbeaten fifties in a match Test matches	✓	Hundred and a duck in a match Test matches	✓
Longest careers (18y 352d) One-Day Internationals	6 th	Most nineties in career (9) One-Day Internationals	2 nd
1000 runs and 100 wickets One-Day Internationals	✓	1000 runs, 50 wickets and 50 catches One-Day Internationals	✓
5000 runs and 50 fielding dismissals One-Day Internationals	✓	Most player-of-the-match awards (41) Combined Test, ODI and T20I records	10 th
Most hundreds in a calendar year (10) Combined Test, ODI and T20I records	5 th	Most nineties in career (11) Combined Test, ODI and T20I records	8 th

Source: espncricinfo.com

The future Hope of Sri Lankan Cricket - Aravinda

First published in SISURA, the school magazine of DS Senanayake College on 10 February 1984.

Refer to Previous page for Original article

I encountered Aravinda at school a few days after he was selected as the Sri Lankan Under 19 Cricket Captain. By that time, a Sunday Newspaper had already launched its annual competition to crown the most popular schoolboy cricketer of the year, based on readers' votes through a coupon system. I discussed this competition with Aravinda, informing him of our plans to mobilize support amongst fellow students and parents to ensure he won the title.

His response was: "I really appreciate the sentiment, but I don't approve the idea. If I am to succeed, I want it to be solely based on merit".

This response encapsulates the integrity and principles that define Aravinda. He valued integrity over popularity, cherishing the heartfelt support and deafening applause from his schoolmates over meaningless accolades. In return, Aravinda played a unique brand of cricket for the love of the game, always with unwavering commitment, loyalty and integrity. He never played cricket looking for recognition, yet adulation naturally gravitated towards him. In my view, Aravinda De Silva is not merely a popular cricketer but a genuine sportsman who climbed the ranks through unparalleled ability, exceptional skills and a distinctive batting style.

Aravinda De Silva's cricketing journey officially commenced in 1975 when he represented D.S. Senanayake College in the under 13 team. During 1979-80 under 15 cricket tournament, he scored five centuries including the highest score of 143 against the Royal College. In 1981, he captained the under 17 school team, and his innings of 169 against St Joseph's College remains the highest score ever in the history of under 17 tournaments.

By the age of 14, Aravinda had secured a permanent spot in the school's first eleven team, a testament to his skill and dedication. He was elected as the captain of the first eleven team in 1981. From 1979 to 1983, he continued to dazzle spectators with his batting prowess, scoring memorable innings that etched his name in the annals of schoolboy cricket history including a remarkable 200 against Dharmasoka College which included 14 sixes and 13 fours, 144 in 112 minutes against Zahira College and an unbeaten 150 against Nalanda College. During 1982-83 school cricket season, Aravinda scored over 1000 runs, a feat considered rare by many.

In 1980, Aravinda toured the UK with the under 19 Sri Lankan cricket team at the age of 15. Even at a tender age, Aravinda's talent transcended boundaries. Aravinda was the first to score a century on that UK tour despite being among leading cricketers of the country like Arjuna Ranatunga, Rumesh Rathnayake, Vinodan John and Brendon Kuruppu. The only other player to score a century during the tour was Arjuna Ranatunga.

Aravinda also represented one of the strongest clubs in Sri Lanka, the Nondescripts Cricket Club (NCC). He was only 14 when he represented the senior team of the NCC. In 1979, during his very first match for NCC, Aravinda scored a century and demonstrated his great talent. In the match against Weliveriya Cricket Club, he scored a century in 49 minutes. His contributions helped NCC win several trophies, including the Honda Trophy in 1982, Browns Trophy and Bristol Trophy in 1983. One of his standout performances was an unbeaten half century in 29 minutes in the Brown Trophy semi-final against the Police team, recorded as the fastest in the tournament's history.

A defining moment in Aravinda's career came in 1983 when he was selected to play for the Sri Lankan national one-day team at just 18 years old. Despite the match being 'unofficial,' his inclusion underscored his exceptional talent and potential to excel at the highest level. He was named as the best young batsman by the Sri Lankan Cricket Board in the same year. His success led him to play club cricket for Indian Gymkhana Club in UK during 1983 season, where he scored over 2000 runs including ten centuries and nine half centuries with an average of 99.2.

Aravinda's batting style, often compared to that of famous West Indian cricketers, reflected his fearless and attacking approach to the game. His athleticism and unwavering self-belief marked him as 'the future star of Sri Lankan cricket'. At the age of 18, he has achieved more than many professional cricketers twice his age. It's entirely conceivable that Aravinda De Silva will join the ranks of cricketing legends like Sir Donald Bradman and Sir Garfield Sobers in the annals of cricket history.

The original Article was written by Keshawa Edirisinghe (Head Prefect, DS Senanayake College 1983-84)

Postscript: This is the translated and edited version of the original article published in Sisura, the official Newspaper of DS Senanayake College at the time. It was published by the Prefect Guild in February 1984. This article was considered as the first feature article published in print media on Aravinda De Silva. De Silva made his Test debut 6 months after the publication of this article.

The Greatest

The Island

By Rex Clementine

Published on "The Island" on 2024 April 28

A video clip from Benson & Hedges tri-nation series in the year 1990 involving two greats of the game Aravinda de Silva and Wasim Akram has gone viral. The short clip indeed is pure gold.

It not only has two of the greatest entertainers of the game in action but you can also hear former Australian captains Richie Benaud and Ian Chappell in commentary. The action takes place at Gabba. Not the concrete jungle that they have at present, but one of the most beautiful grounds in the world one time before its renovation to increase the capacity killed all the beauty.

Sri Lanka's batting had done well in that game and the top three – Athula Samarasekara, Asanka Gurusinha and Hashan Tillakaratne had put on 191 for three inside 40 overs. With quick runs needed in the last ten overs, Rumesh Ratnayake is promoted as pinch hitter ahead of Aravinda.

Soon Aravinda arrives at the crease too and doesn't waste much time hitting Wasim over point for a six. Chappell is lost for words. A scenario that often doesn't happen with a man who is never afraid to mince his words. These were no 60-meter boundaries that we find in modern day business of cricket entertainment. This is proper long boundaries in the good old days. The shot that Aravinda plays is so difficult to execute that it requires obviously lot of skill and a bit of bravado.

The other important aspect is that this is no ordinary bowler. This is the great Wasim Akram in his prime. Both are at their peak age of 24 and what entertainment it was.

Chappell at one point asks when you have the skill of Aravinda why experiment with pinch hitters and all. Aravinda clears the boundary once again going over long-on and Benaud chips in wondering why batters need to play unorthodox shots like the reverse sweep when someone like Aravinda makes a living with proper cricketing shots.

Aravinda may not have the numbers of a Kumar Sangakkara or a Mahela Jayawardene, but he will be loved by Sri Lankan fans for feats like these. Many were the bowlers who were put to the sword by his craftsmanship.

Aravinda was inducted to the ICC Hall of Fame in Bombay last year, an event we missed to cover. The reason being this newspaper had opted to cover the World Cup semi-final in Calcutta between South Africa and Australia. The dates of the two events were clashing.

Ian Bishop, the former West Indian fast bowler was in Calcutta as well. We asked him for a comment on Aravinda. The tall quick summed it up in one sentence. "Who Ari, he finished my career mann."

People also wonder what Aravinda would have gone on to achieve had he got his fair share of opportunities like the modern-day greats. Mind you during his best years from the age of 22 to 27 there was no cricket at all at home as no cricket team toured Sri Lanka from 1987 to 1992 due to the war.

When Sir Garry Sobers was asked who would break his World Record 365, most runs in a Test innings, he picked four names – Mark Waugh, Sachin Tendulkar, Brian Lara and Aravinda de Silva. Imagine had Aravinda got the same opportunities as the other three.

Still, despite all those obstacles, he could have gone on to become the first batter to score 10,000 runs in ODI cricket but he ran into problems with the selectors after the 1999 World Cup. He was given the cold shoulder for three years.

A wise man called Mr. Michael Tissera was instrumental in recalling Aravinda to the side in 2002 in his capacity as Chairman of Selectors. What happened in South Africa during the 2003 World Cup is history.

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Aravinda de Silva during his whirlwind 225 for Kent against Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge during the 1995 County Cricket Season.

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There's little doubt that Aravinda is the greatest batsman produced by the nation. He was a freak. Only freaks like him could grip the bat one way in the first innings and change it entirely in the second essay. Many are the poor youngsters who wanted to copy Aravinda's batting stance but soon would get into trouble because Aravinda had changed the stance for the next series. Only he could have experimented with such serious stuff in cricket and succeeded.

Lionel Messi has won it all in football but another Argentinian Diego Maradona will live in our memories forever for he left an indelible mark in people whom he met. Michael Schumacher may be the best racing driver that the world has ever seen, but Ayrton Senna's flare and flamboyance are far more cherished. LeBron James may be the highest paid sportsman in the world but Michael Jordan is still adored because he turned an unfancied team into one that won six NBA titles.

Similarly, Aravinda made a massive impact wherever he went; both on and off the field. He was a sensation when he represented Kent in County Cricket in 1995. He helped Kent end a 17-year streak without a trophy and with a bit more help from his mates could have won the one-day double as Kent lost the Benson & Hedges final to Lancashire at Lord's where he made a hundred. He also produced 1600 runs in First Class cricket that season.

England great Colin Cowdrey's son Graham Cowdrey was part of that Kent side and he wrote this about Aravinda. "I can not believe any player, anywhere, has been so popular. When Aravinda packed his bags, he hugged each of us and I have never known a professional sports team so close to tears."



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**Congratulations and Felicitations
to
Cricketing Legend
fellow Don, Mr. Aravinda de Silva
for being inducted to the
ICC Hall of Fame**



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