

Is winning world championships the ultimate index of one's brilliance?

"Victory is in the quality of competition and not the final score."

-Mike Marshall

Building on Mike Marshall's thoughts about victories – they are remembered for perhaps a few decades, but an act of good sportsmanship or fundamentally the quality of competition as he mentions - is something that is remembered for a lifetime. But sometimes – it so happens- that the best of the players may not win the ultimate crown, yet the one thing that etches the names of such personalities in the minds of the people – is the mettle with which they're made.

One such example is Sir Stirling Moss. He raced for over 14 years, was a winner of 212 out of 529 races which included 16 Grand Prix victories but never a Grand Prix Championship title. So what made him the greatest driver of all times?

Back in the 1950s – every aspiring driver wanted to be Stirling Moss – the reason being – not only was he a swashbuckling race-car driver, but also a phenomenal human being. He was considered as a larger than life figure in the world of motor sport – more so because – he was one of the survivors of an age when motor racing was about danger, bravery and camaraderie.

"A prodigious competitor, supremely talented racer, and consummate gentleman, he leaves an indelible mark of greatness on the history of international motorsport," F1 team McLaren said.

Toto Wolff – Mercedes boss – said - "Stirling's career was characterised by an impeccable sportsmanship and in this he truly set himself apart. He was a great figure in the history of Mercedes, both as a Grand Prix driver and the winner of the 1955 Mille Miglia."

In the world of cricket - there was a time when India's ranking in test matches had reached as low as 8th – which is when Dada was made incharge of the Indian Cricket Team and with his enthusiasm and fearlessness – he pushed the Indian team to the 2nd rank in test matches.

He even led India to the 2003 World Cup final but the Indian team stumbled in the final against Australia – led by Ricky Ponting. Sourav Ganguly, had the ability to pick young players and build them from scratch which eventually led to the creation of a championship-winning Indian team in 2011. Indian batsman Manoj Tiwary

acknowledged the fact that youngsters who were groomed under Ganguly's captaincy went on to become key players in the 2011 World cup triumph -

"He gave so much of security to youngsters at that point of time, whether it be Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Ashish Nehra or Gautam Gambhir. All that experience worked for us in 2011 under the brilliant captaincy of Dhoni."

This is clearly evident of the fact that one does not need to be the ultimate crown bearer in order to be the best in the world. Oftentimes, even in the world of work – we miss our targets, or are not able to crack a deal, or probably even after putting in our best of efforts with the various stakeholders – are not recognised the way we should be – that is not a barometer of our intelligence or the amount of knowledge that we possess.

Hence, coming full circle – addressing the question with which this flow of thoughts commenced – Is winning championship titles the ultimate index of one's brilliance? I feel the only thing that truly speaks about a person's brilliance – is not the titles or marks one has gained but the spirit of which they're made – which is an amalgamation of the knowledge, skills and values that one possesses.