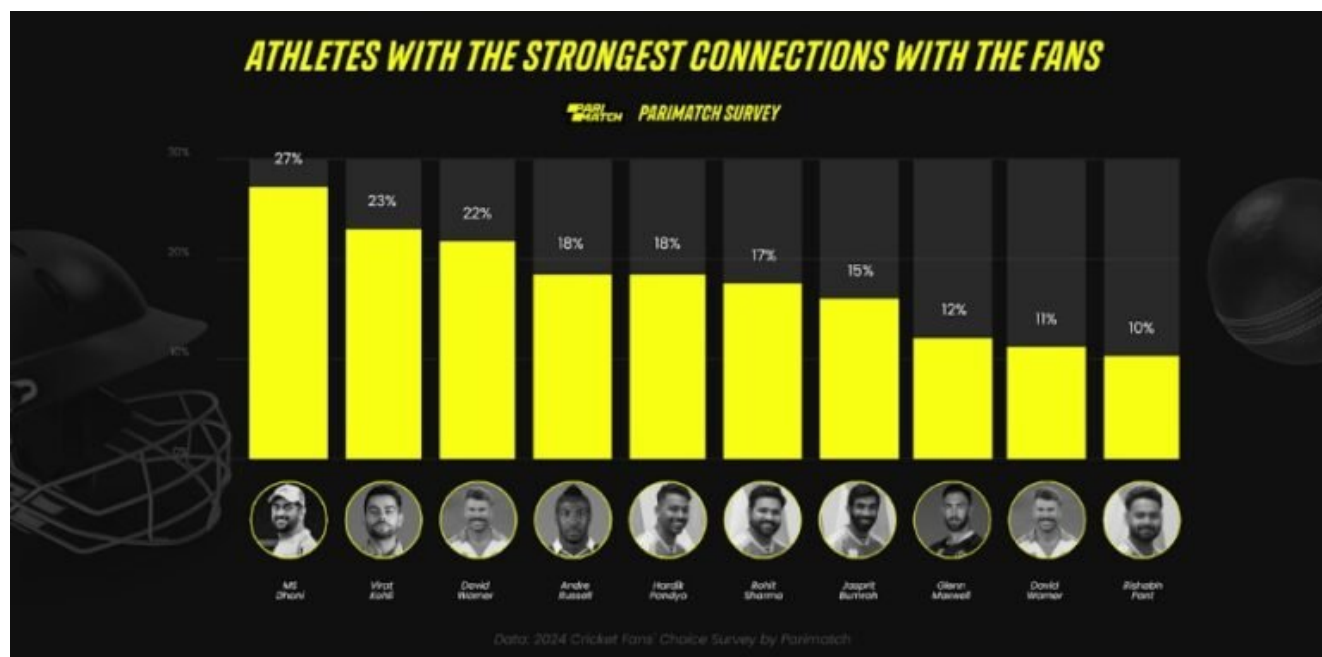


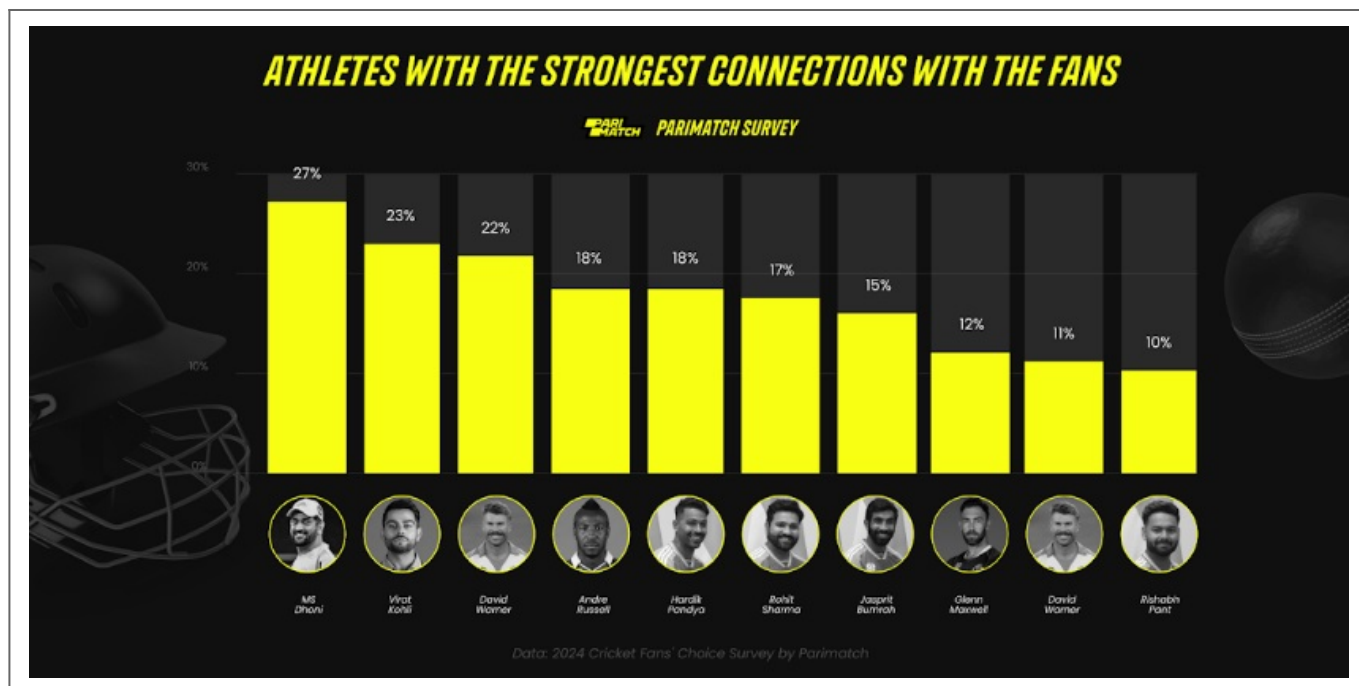
# Parimatch Releases Survey Results Revealing Top Indian Cricketers Among Fans

Category: Business

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Parimatch Asia team has released the results of its comprehensive survey “**Cricket Fans Choice Survey**”, which highlights fans favorite cricketers as voted by over 3,000 participants. The survey participants voted for their favorite active cricket players across several categories, sharing their opinions on a sport that holds a unique place in the nations heart. The results reflect fans sentiments regarding athletes performances and contributions to the game, as well as their character and influence off the pitch.



## Athletes with the strongest connection with fans

*"Cricket is not just a sport but a vital part of life and culture for millions across Asia, where approximately 90% of cricket fans reside. In India, home to one of the most powerful cricket tournaments globally, cricket holds a unique position in life and cultural identity, with athletes serving both as celebrities and role models. This deep emotional connection drives our decision to create this survey, gathering insights directly from the fans. We believe this survey will foster a richer dialogue around the sport that Asia is so passionate about,"* commented the **Parimatch Press Office**.

Findings from the survey include:

**#1 Virat Kohli edges out MS Dhoni as the favorite IPL cricketer; he also ranks highest as a favorite role model, for the most prominent on-field celebrations, and as the most popular on social media**

In the battle of the two former Indian skipppers, Virat Kohli edged out MS Dhoni by a 3% margin, with the Royal Challengers Bengaluru stalwart being chosen by 33% of fans as a best cricket player. Born and raised in New Delhi, Kohli became an

instant fan favorite in Bengaluru after RCB signed the young batter back in 2009.

Among the fans favorite cricket players are also **Sunile Narine and Nicholas Pooran**, Parimatch' ambassadors.

*"Im truly honored to be recognized by the fans. Their support means the world to me, and I look forward to continuing to make them proud on and off the field,"* commented **Sunile Narine**.

## **#2 Andre Russell tops the list of most interesting players to watch on the pitch**

Andre Russell topped the category of '**Most interesting player to watch on the Pitch**' with 31% of fans' votes. Unfortunately, the two-time ICC T20 World Cup winner won't be part of the 2025 IPL Auction, as he has been retained by Kolkata Knight Riders for INR 12 crores.

The Caribbean all-rounder spent a couple of seasons with the Delhi Daredevils before joining the Knight Riders in 2014. The batting powerhouse made his marker in the IPL in some style winning the 2019 IPL Super Striker award along with the Player of the Tournament award for the 2019 season of the cash-rich league. In 119 matches for KKR, Russell has taken 119 wickets and scored 2426 runs at a strike rate of nearly 175.

## **#3 MS Dhoni: Favorite Captain, Favorite Player to Watch in High-Pressure Situations, Most Interesting Player off the field, and Most Connected with fans**

Despite retiring from international cricket five years ago, in the list of **favorite captains**, Dhoni (48%) topped the list of favorite captains, edging out Rohit Sharma (25%). Kohli, Pat Cummins, and Pandya followed in third, fourth, and fifth place, with 17%, 15%, and 14% of fans votes, respectively. Additionally, 27% of fans believe he is the most interesting player to watch in high-pressure situations.

Notably, it's not just Dhoni's sports achievements that fans appreciate. According to the survey, 21% of fans consider him **the most interesting player off the field**, and 31% believe he is **the most connected to fans**. Beyond his on-field exploits for India and CSK in the IPL, Dhoni holds the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Army. He also recently made a cameo in a Tamil-language film, bringing him closer to fans in Chennai and Tamil Nadu, who lovingly refer to him as 'Thala.'

#### **#4 Bhuvneshwar Edges Rahane for Most Underrated Player**

In a sea of players, certain names tend to be overlooked when the discussion centers on the most popular and eye-catching stars. From the fans' perspective, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Ajinkya Rahane stand out as the most underrated players, earning 18% and 16% of the votes, respectively.

Both athletes have been unsung heroes of their respective sides' victories in the IPL, and the stalwarts now find themselves in the fray of the mega auction after their teams opted to move on and retain a younger core of players.

#### **#5 Jake Fraser-McGurk: Rising star for IPL 2025**

IPL 2024 witnessed several young batters throw caution to the wind and redefine T20 batting, with multiple totals exceeding 265 runs. Among the rising stars, Abhishek Sharma, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Riyan Parag, Tilak Varma, and Tristan Stubbs stole the spotlight, showcasing their range of shots with impressive strike rates.

Fraser-McGurk edged out Rinku Singh by 1% to top the list of players in contention for the **Next Seasons Rising Star** title, securing 40% and 39% of fans' votes, respectively. They are followed by Parag (26%), Varma (26%), and uncapped fast bowler Harshit Rana (22%), completing the Top 5 list. Their performances promise fans many exciting moments in the upcoming seasons.

## **Methodology**

The data was collected by the Parimatch Asia research team between October 1, 2024 and November 1st, 2024. The online survey was distributed via email and online platforms, with 3,011 qualified respondents from India.

## **About Parimatch**

Parimatch is the #1 global gaming platform, that provides a complete suite of sports and casino online betting services to its customers. Since 1994, Parimatch has grown to be enjoyed by 3,000,000 active users worldwide. It is trusted by the worlds top athletes and celebrities: famous Indian actress Kajal Aggarwal and Trinidadian cricket stars Nicholas Pooran and Sunil Narine are among their brand ambassadors. Parimatch is the Regional Sponsor of the Argentine Football Association and the Title Sponsor of the Antigua & Barbuda Falcons cricket team, a Caribbean Premier League (CPL) franchise. Since 2019, Parimatch has been one of the leading betting brands in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

