



BY INVITATION

HARISH THAWANI

The writer is the chairman of Nimbus Communications

Like in football, ODIs should have 3 substitutes

I don't see any evidence of the One-Day International format losing popularity but I can see why England and Australia have introduced changes to the format. As we are aware, virtually all the game's innovations have come out of England (the ODIs and Twenty20 formats came from England) and Australia (the concept of day-night games and coloured clothing) and it is no surprise that they seek to innovate once again for the good of the game.

Like all things in life, innovation drives renewed interest and I believe that it is time we introduced day-night Test cricket and spiced up the one-day format even though the television ratings for both the formats in India are still excellent.

So if you ask me if the split-innings formula will work in India my answer will be: It is too early to comment. Its impact on players, teams, spectators, viewers, broad-

casters, advertisers can't be decided at this stage. But personally I don't think the split-innings idea will work in India. I also don't think the Indian public will embrace the idea.

But I do have a few suggestions to galvanise the One Day Internationals. I believe that the ODIs need

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three innovations that will energise the format further:

1. Allow 3 substitutions (like in football), one during batting, one during fielding and one during innings break, which will take away the predictability of the game and also ensure a greater contest between bat and ball, yet we will see attacking batting.
2. Reduce the 30-yard circle to 25-yards and stop boring singles in the middle overs.
3. Allow two bouncers per over but below the head level.

I am convinced this is the format for the future and the above format will be able to address the ODIs without fundamentally tampering with the format. As suggested in some quarters, the split-innings idea will have impact on the momentum of the game. If there is a talk of introducing split format for the World Cup in 2015, I don't think it will work. We should rather stick to the original format with changes suggested above.

It is time India led the way in innovation in the game. We can and should be the thought-leaders, not merely economic leaders in cricket.