

Originally posted in The Hindu Times, October 16th, 2002.

Gavaskar honoured by University of Massachusetts

Washington, Oct. 16. (PTI): The legendary Sunil Gavaskar has been honoured by the University of Massachusetts' Centre for India Studies for his "unparalleled service to India as a cricketer."

At a function held recently to mark the anniversary of the Centre, the little master was presented with a plaque of recognition, which read "for your unparalleled service to India as a cricketer and in sincere appreciation of your dedicated and professional work in uplifting the image of India throughout the world.

"Your extraordinary efforts are a source of inspiration to youth in India, in the Indian diaspora, and all over the cricket community," the plaque said.

Chancellor Jean F MacCormack, who presented the plaque, compared Gavaskar with US sporting greats, Michael Jordan, Wayne Gretsky and Pete Sampras.

Gavaskar, who amassed over 10,000 runs in 125 Tests, termed every bowler he faced as the best in business. "If I were taking credit for 10,000 runs then I have to consider all the bowlers to be the best."

The former Indian captain said he was "lucky" to be successful in Test cricket and elaborated how he benefited from dropped catches in his debut Test in West Indies in 1971.

Sukalyan Sengupta in his introduction note hailed Gavaskar as someone "who displayed such technical brilliance, courage, concentration and grit that he became the leader by example of a whole generation of Indians.

"For this, we will forever remain indebted to Sunny," he added.