



Name	Ponnan Rahul
DOB	04/02/1992
Nationality	Indian
Player Status	Unavailable
Playing Role	Wicket-Keeper
Batting Style	LH Opening Bat
Bowling Style	N/A
Entry Route	International Sportsperson Visa
Coaching Qualifications	ECB Core Coach

Ponnan Rahul is a left-handed opening batter and handy wicket-keeper playing for the Sachin Baby-skippered Kerala – a star-studded side that also includes the likes of international players Robin Uthappa, Sandeep Warrier, and Sanju Sampson.

If American author Daniel Handler plans to pen a sequel to his best-selling novel ‘The Series of Unfortunate Events’, he need not look beyond the life and times of Ponnam Rahul, Kerala’s stodgy young opener, for inspiration. Since 2015, he has been on the selectors’ radar, and every time he looked like making his first-class debut, circumstances would contrive to put him out of reckoning.

Three seasons ago, it was a hamstring niggle that dashed his hopes. Back in 2017, he narrowly survived a motorcycle crash, before an arduous rehabilitation programme brought him back on his feet. When it finally looked like things had fallen in place, there were more problems in store.

First up, that all-too-familiar hamstring injury would flare up, which punctured his hopes of playing in the Vijay Hazare Trophy. Barely had he regained fitness when three weeks later, a glass pane from a bathroom door came crashing onto his face and pop a vein. Another surgery was followed by another rehab. The freakish accident looked like it would end his cricketing dreams for good. However, he would recover just in time for the 2018/19 first-class season.

Rahul began his first full-fledged season on an inauspicious note, watching his team perform from the sidelines. “I was

not picked for the first four games and watched my seniors Jalaj Saxena and Arun Karthik open the innings,” he says. Instead of whiling time away, he quietly observed the experienced players in action and picked their brains. So much so, that when he was finally handed the opportunity, he accepted it without an element of hesitation or fuss.

After notching up half-centuries against Tamil Nadu and Delhi, he rose to the occasion during the must-win game against Himachal Pradesh, scoring his maiden century, against an attack featuring CricX superstar Rishi Dhawan. His timely contributions proved instrumental in his team’s historic march to the Ranji Trophy semi-finals.

Roll on February 2022 and the return of Ranji Trophy cricket. Rahul would go on to produce scores of 147 (v Meghalaya), 44, 7 (v Gujarat), and 136 (v Madhya Pradesh) to finish atop of Kerala's run charts.

Tinu Yohannan, a former Kerala coach, says it’s Rahul’s never-say-die spirit that has got him this far. “He is a very spirited lad. Anyone else in his place, after what he has undergone, would have given up the idea of playing cricket. But it’s the tenacity that helped him overcome these adversities.”

Rahul then pursued another life-long dream - playing cricket in England. He enjoyed a prolific 2022 season with Lepton Highlanders hitting 674 runs at 56.17 including 3 hundreds (HS. 200) in the Drakes Huddersfield League.

The Indian run machine is now eager to secure another UK opportunity for the 2024 season.

## Overseas Statistics

Team (Season)	Mts	Inns	NO	Runs	HS	Ave	Ovs	Runs	Wkts	BB	Avg
Lepton Highlanders (2022)	13	13	1	674	200	56.17	-	-	-	-	-

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