



## THE INDIANS

Sumant Batra

Treepie, Rs 8,500

This is a messy, carelessly thrown together coffee-table book. The writing is painfully tacky – articles go missing, there are at least twice as many commas as there should be – and the chapters are randomly defined. This is more suggestive of shoddiness than of a deliberate decision to be free-flowing. The photographs

are good but not exceptional – and are captioned selectively.

You have to feel a twinge of affection for a book that dedicates a page to the beloved road-stall drink banta, but such moments – where you feel like you're seeing something you won't find elsewhere – are rare. The rest of it feels contrived and slapdash, whether in the humdrum observations about cricket and Bollywood or the use of obviously posed photos.

Jai Arjun Singh

