

Sun, 1st Feb, 2009 - Viv Ash Cuba Libre Invitational

Back to basics, the maxim of the beginning of a cricket season: line and length, straight bat, into the wicketkeeper, no silly running, body behind the ball, two hands fielding etc. These are the simple instructions that go through a cricketer's head when he is oiling up his mind and body for the coming months. However it is never that simple, when faced with stifling heat, a dodgy outfield and a body that isn't quite as lithe and reactive as it used to be.

On a day that shall be known as the Viv Ash Cuba Libre opener, twenty five young men turned out to do battle on rapidly degrading outfield through excessive soccer activities. The wicket won't be ready for a couple of weeks yet as it was laid only a month before. It should be briefly added that twenty five is an impressive stat as the season has opened with just thirteen before and improvisation has been the order of the day. It is good news too as it means games will start on time this season as people will have to arrive early to ensure selection.

So back to the cricket: sunny conditions, Harry and Miles captains, picking two teams from a motley crew, seven unknown quantities, and the four Captains of the Lima League teams considering incentives to attract fresh blood into their teams, that is if these guys could cut the mustard. Harry's team batted first, Chris Abbott back from his International Baccalaureate sabbatical and Chris Hodgson opening. A rank longhop soon accounted for Chris A playing uppishly to a wide one and being taken by Eids skipper John Bell at mid-off. Chris Hodgson was unlucky to be out of his ground when the batsman at the other end drove and the new young 15 year old Indian, Vikram, managed to deflect it onto the stumps. Dave Murphy did not last long, though it must be said he was in a much better condition than a fortnight ago when he had to play in sandals because he had cut his foot, dancing with poles apparently.

The middle order of Ed, Kamlesh and Harry, managed to tick over, adding 17, 43 and 35 respectively, but were never really able to get away. Eventually they managed to post a score of 141 in 30 overs. Would it be enough?

After a steak sandwich and a swig of pop, the lads went back out and Jorge and John B were quickly into their strides, both hitting useful twenties, though Jorge would have been back in the hutch with scores on zero if the opposition captain had not managed to spill something that could be described as a sitter. But ah, early season bloopers, that's all. Miles team managed to accumulate the runs without really having to perform heroics and the scores reached parity with an over to go, the scribe having walloped a four over mid-on and then contrived to run himself out calling for an insane single. Anish managed to run himself out and it looked like Harry's team would pull off an unlikely tie, but alas it was not to be as Sonu quietly biffed the winning runs over the tightening ring of fielders.

Game over, quick beer in the pub for those without overdue commitments, a sound start to the season, LCFC's One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary, Great stuff.

Special mention should be made to Ed (17 and 1 for 17 off 6), Matt Spry(5 and 1 for 22 off 6), Vikram (duck but 2 for 25 off 5), Shane, Anis (18 run out, puffed), Sanjiv, Phil and Matt for all making their debut.

Who's up for it next Sunday? Arrive early to avoid disappointment.

Thanks for Now