

*Limited over (30 overs per side) Cricket match between KLCC and Kent St Senior High, Perth, Australia at KTJ, Mantin – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007*

*“Fierce war and faithful love,  
And truth serve, by fairly friction dressed”*

G. Smith

It is best for all, that I deal with friction and readers deal with truth as  
*“I wish men to be free as much from mobs as kings – from you as me”*.

This tale was not without drama though the result was not that dramatic. It was a pity that we do not have a handicap system in cricket: had that been the case, the cumulative total of our weight and age would have given us a credit of around 30 runs (one run per over), and then the result would have been more reasonable.

*The consequence is, being of no party,  
I shall offend all parties: - never mind! let me begin my tale.*

Yes, we were all ready at the ground by 11.am as agreed, did I say all...? never mind. After Craig had completed his computation using fingers on both hands, we were told that we were still short of 3 players.

Craig was wild (as well he might be – Ed) and muttering not so pleasant words to himself and Graham Witt, who has been entrusted with the noble task of guiding the pair of indoor players to the venue, was looking at the sky, hoping that rain would come down soon to save the embarrassment. Thankfully, KSSH came to our rescue and offered three of their best players (this was what we were told) to KLCC and the match finally got started at 11.40 hours.

The honour of bowling the opening over was entrusted to Druvi, who, in spite of not having had much cricket in recent times, did not disappoint the skipper with the new ball. Both Druvi and Ashfaq bowled well in tandem but batting was so disciplined, each ball was played according to its merit.

As the first change of bowling, Craig opted to bowl with Geoff and this double change did have its desired effect. Craig bowled with good pace and bounce and Geoff matched with swing and accuracy, and they were soon rewarded with 2 wickets each. It also must be stated that the ground fielding of KLCC was above the bench mark and Ashfaq in particular took a brilliant diving catch at mid off (eh?! You sure? – Ed), to dismiss Brad Garland who was batting well up to then.

After the first 10 overs, the boys were 38 for 1 wicket and the match was evenly poised. And then 2 indoorians (Anu and Lashan) emerged from the horizon, having taken a safari in the wilderness of Pajam and adjacent areas as per

direction given by.....I better be careful here (yes, you had – Ed). Never mind, with the introduction of two newcomers, we managed to return two fielders who were doing a superb job for us (Thanks guys). The one retained was the wicket keeper and he was doing an acrobatic job behind the wickets thanks to our line and length bowling!

Both Anu and Lashan was introduced to the attack by the skipper and they both bowled well, not giving much away... Anu in particular troubled both batmen but was not lucky enough to take a wicket. Both Chris Lambkin and Ben Christie batted very well for KSSH (They both scored 46 and 47 respectively), except in the latter stages when they were compelled to throw caution to the wind to accelerate the score. Well, they did know what was waiting for them in the last over; to be frank, none of us knew that the final over would be so interesting. KSSH was 151 for 4 wickets at the end of the 29th over, and then Craig decided to make proceedings more exciting and summoned Graham Witt to do the honours of bowling the final over.

I must confess that there is a magic in Graham's bowling whenever he bowls (I have seen this many times): if he can not get them out with the ball, they commit "Hara Kiri" by trying to run, as if they were hypnotized by well-tossed deliveries (who wouldn't be? – Ed). In this case, it was the latter that did the trick, as in 6 balls two wickets were lost owing to some intelligent bowling by Graham Witt and agile fielding behind the wicket by the keeper. It was not that batmen surrendered their wickets, rather they got confused about their bearings and they were still gazing at the ball, even after failing to strike it. All the keeper had to do was to run behind the ball traveling way beyond the leg side and aim at the stumps, without looking at the bowler (to avoid getting hypnotized). I hope I have expressed clearly what took place and given the credit to the one who deserves it? (Amplly clear, I'd say – Ed). The other noticeable feature with G. Witt is that when he gets them, he gets them in pairs, as in the case of the navigational advice given to indoor boys. (I am finished, I will be taken to task by G.Witt in coming reports).

Jokes apart, it was a marvellous performance from KLCC with the ball and on the field by restricting a young and talented side for 157 runs, with the exception of the writer who usually chases behind the ball after the ball has safely passed, to come with some humorous/silly excuses to cover up the failure.

*Writers, like coins, grow dear as they grow old,  
It is rust we value, not the gold.*

A. Pope

We were all treated to a delicious buffet lunch (Thanks to Bala) and food was really enjoyed by our visitors from Australia as they rarely get an opportunity to taste Malay cuisine in Perth.

Bala, ten points for you for the food, other arrangements etc and seven points for your efforts on the field. I hope that I have not offended you; in fielding, the base line is always the writer, hence and I always get zero (thoroughly merited, I'm sure – Ed).

Before the meal could get digested, more bad news was coming for the writer, as I was informed by Rick that we both have to open batting for KLCC. As if the news was not bad enough, I committed the cardinal error of approaching the skipper discreetly for a more favorable position in the batting order, only get myself full blasted to the Swedish standard Sa 3 (near white metal quality) (????? – Ed). Faced between the devil and the deep blue sea, I chose to face the latter without any hesitation. It was much safer to face the red cherry from Kent than the ..... Never mind, I had better learn to pay respect and behave (indeed – Ed).

KLCC started their innings very cautiously but it must be stated that the bowling was not that fierce; much more was expected from them with the new ball, in this writer's opinion, at least. It was true that the new ball was swinging in the air, but it was still playable. Rick offered a straight bat and got to a reasonably good start and the writer, thinking that he was in a paddy field (must have looked similar), offered an agricultural stroke to an in-swinging full toss (almost hip high), only to see his wickets getting shattered in the 3rd over. The skipper, Craig, walked in to the crease at no 3 position and looked very comfortable from the start.

Oh, I almost forgot, Rick impressed the captains with one of his cover drives, but on this occasion it was the bottom part of the bat which went through the covers, instead of the ball. It was a brand new bat and normally it takes some real hard hitting to break a bat from the handle, unless it was made of English willow (just a joke, but in this case the bat in question has been presented to Rick by an Englishmen so the conspiracy theory cannot be ruled out).

When Rick departed for a well-made (but slow – Ed) 13 off 33 balls, Geoff joined the skipper at the crease and they both managed to play some pleasant shots all round the wicket. Craig made 39 in 49 balls with five well-timed boundaries, and Geoff played more of a supporting innings by rotating the strike. When it became evident to Craig (when it was simple enough to compute) , that we were behind the run rate, he tried to accelerate the scoring but it was not possible to penetrate the slow outfield and agile schoolboy fielders. The only option left was to take the aerial route and Craig lost his wicket by trying to loft the ball over the covers, offering a catch to the fielder at point. At that point KLCC was 72 for 3 wickets after 19 overs.

Anu joined Geoff at the crease and they both pushed the score along very well but the lush outfield denied lots of 2s and 3s. When Anu departed for a well-compiled 16 in 26 balls, the chase was effectively over. At that point we were 92 for 4 wickets in 24 overs. When our innings closed after 30 overs, we had 123 on the board for 5 wickets. Geoff remained not out for a well-played 28 in 44 balls.

Had we been given the handicap which I mentioned at the beginning, it would have been a close call for the oppo. But it was not to be, and we lost the match by 35 runs but it was not just a walk in the park either for the boys.

In summary, it was view of the writer, that KLCC bowled better than the Kent Street boys, especially Craig, Geoff, Anu, Ashfaq, Lashan and Graham. It was the fielding of the boys which saved around 20 runs and which decided the fate of the match.

After brief speeches by the Kent Street head coach, captain and KLCC captain, two special mementos were presented to KLCC, one for Bala for organizing the match(well done, Bala) and one for Geoff, who was adjudged as the best KLCC player (Well done, Geoff). In addition, all the KLCC players were presented with memorabilia by the Kent players individually.

It was a good game of cricket; all had their share of fun and luck but the day belonged to the Kent youths from Australia.