

Kelawar Vs Penang - Kinrara Oval 10/11/07

The one o'clock start was met in anticipation as Murali won the toss and, seeing that the majority of the Kelawar side were not even at the international ground, dutifully put Kelawar into field to begin a rain-affected 1st innings.

Led by Speed senior, the Bats strolled out onto the field as the rest of the team were just arriving obviously without the need of a warm up at ten past one, not to mention any names-Arshad (little sneak – Ed).

The rest of the Speed family was left to lead the bowling attack against Alistair and Shan, who picked up runs as they came (ooh er – Ed). In true England fashion (? - Ed) early chances went begging with a drop catch in Speed minor's first over and three in Speed major's first as well.

Eventually the breakthrough was made as Speed major, noticing that he could no longer rely on his old man or the rest of the side for that matter, took some initiative and trapped Alistair LBW for 31 in the 8th over. In a desperate attempt to follow his success in his final over, substance failed to materialize as a string of no balls followed to create an over so long that the scorer literally stopped counting.

Simon and Chris Storer took on the bowling duties as the brothers ended their spell, leading to Storer taking two wickets in his first over including that of a Boony look-a-like too good to be true. Unlike Boony, however, he departed for 2 in his second ball.

It was in the 16th over that the next breakthrough was made, Storer again proving to be the danger man and finishing his spell with three wickets for 28 off 3.

While Chris was busy taking wickets at one end, however, Gus and Sharul were providing Penang with a solid total to work with at the other, both retiring on 14 and 31 respectively. Lee looked as though he was beginning to share the same fate until Graham Witt gave the umpire his faded Bounty Buccaneers hat and measured out his run up in intimidating fashion. Steaming in like a train, he looped the ball up as the batsmen experimented with a number of shots as the ball hurtled towards them. Eventually he gave up by the time the ball pitched and promptly removed off stump in true Brett Lee style as Penang Sports Club Lee trotted off with a neat and tidy 23 runs to his name. Jaya was the next to fall to the magic of Graham as the ball looped up, down, up off his bat and down into the hands of the skipper, who had dropped one off his son's bowling about an hour and a half earlier.

No Witty spell would be complete without the ritual stumping, as Joe became the unlucky victim as he charged down the crease to meet the ball that floated past him, much to the delight of James as he punched off the bails and politely appealed to the already convinced umpire.

Murali came in and departed one ball later to the sound of a lot of quacking from the pavilion as Rizvi removed him unceremoniously from the crease by bowling him in his second over. Thomas came in last at number 12 to close the Penang innings with Shankar making 9 runs with the latter making 12. The Penang innings finished on 167 after the usual 21 extras coming from the Kelawar bowling attack.

Al Jazeera representative James led the Kelawar innings with Dave Solomon as Joe and Gus provided the first challenge for the improvised openers to deal with and they didn't have to wait long as James trudged off after being caught by young Thomas off Gus's bowling for 8.

This brought Arshad to the crease, who had been quiet in the field. Dave departed after being run out by Murali, followed by Arshad, who retired on 34 as did Padma, who got 4 runs less. Speed major hit fielders as opposed to gaps before exiting after being bowled by Jaya but Gupindar got to 29 without bending his elbows before getting caught behind.

The skipper lasted approximately 14 minutes for his 3 off 5 balls, getting bowled by the man responsible for the wickets of Gupindar and Dave, the Penang Captain, Murali.

Chris Storer, the hero of the bowling attack, made 12 before becoming the first of a series of wickets for Shankar, who finished with 3 for 22 off 4 overs.

Graham Witt paid the price for his rollercoaster, up-and-down bowling by facing 3 balls, the second being the best when he got to the other end and the last being the worst when he got bowled.

Simon was the most unusual of Shankar's 3 wickets as he was the only one to get run out making 3 times the amount of runs Witty scored. Speed minor was not out on 1 at the end while Rizvi did not find it necessary to bat as Kelawar made 149 runs, 18 short of the Penang Sports Club total - always an ambitious one, especially after a lot of rain, during which much beer was consumed by both teams. Man of the match was Thomas for Penang after a master class batting show facing the likes of Witt and Rizvi and bowling that left Kelawar jealous - 2 for 13 off 5. Altogether a great afternoon, filled with the usual banter that Murali supplies on his southbound trips, topped off by some great cricket all round from some more than others.