

Navaratnam Shield – Game 2 versus Selangor Warriors – 16/12/07

As the team assembled on a sunny afternoon at Kilat, the skipper pondered on the contrast of shining Youth and sage Experience that the Nava Shield brings together. *“And so, from hour to hour we ripe and ripe, then from hour to hour we rot and rot, and thereby hangs a tale”*. In the absence of changing rooms, older members were asked to change discrete al-fresco, so as not to excite interest of lady supporters or, more likely, scare the Juniors with foretaste of inevitable decrepitude.

A couple of late team changes brought in Gravy for Jawad (unfortunately ruled ineligible for this competition) and Speed Major for Kelters who had called in a dodgy tummy that morning. A mix-up over the list of registered players caused some initial consternation and a momentary departure from Modest Stillness and Humility, but was amicably resolved over a couple of mid-week beers at PJ Cub.

We won the toss and elected to field. Warriors got off to a good start despite a typically tidy spell from Willow (1 for 17 in 4 overs). Cadman, opening at the other end, troubled the batsmen with late inswing on the occasions when he could get the ball in their half, but also troubled the deep square leg to retrieve the ball when he couldn't. Still, Cadders picked up one of the openers for a duck. Warriors were well set at 47 for 2 after 7 overs.

We then staged a marvelous recovery, set off by Speed minor with an excellent 4-over spell of consistent and niggardly outswing (that's racist, isn't it? – Ed), yielding 1 for 18 and the scalp of Shabab, who was by far their most dangerous player. Rizvi and H also bowled extremely well – H with 3 for 16 in 4 overs (2 wickets of batsmen in the top 6 takes him half way to his annual quota) and Riz with 2 for 13. Storerrs finished the oppo off with 1 for 2 in his single over. All-in-all, a great result with Warriors all out for 101.

Fielding was somewhat mediocre, however. Skipper (Webby, not H, in case you were wondering – Ed) exercised his prerogative to do as I say, rather than as I do, in exhorting players to chase down the ball and stop the twos. Travis excepted, the Juniors looked somewhat sluggish in the field and the old man might have beaten Matters to the ball on a couple of occasions - this age is of *'creeping like a snail unwilling to school'*, not unwilling after a thick edge over extra cover! Cadders, though, did take a good catch just in from the midwicket boundary high over his head in true Aussie fashion. Also, Cranners had a good day with 1 catch and 3 stumpings.

The old firm of Tattersfield and Webb started slowly but surely with 9 in the first three overs, content to let Extras do most of the scoring. Webby again

remonstrated with the umpire for short bowling, ambitiously claiming waist-high 'bouncers' as over-the-shoulder, and played out an over of half-trackers that had H regretting accepting a single off the last ball of the previous over, and Craig salivating in the stand. The openers picked up the rate, though, to sit comfortably at 50 for no wicket after 10 overs, and then plodded on for a while until tiredness induced H to accelerate. A string of 4s and 6s brought up his 50 and we were cruising to a 10-wicket victory when Webby got himself bowled in the 16th over with 6 runs left to win (25 in 30 deliveries). A mini-collapse ensued, H out one run later to a dodgy LBW (58 in 59 deliveries), and then Flo caught on the mid-wicket boundary for 0. Travis had the bad fortune to come in against their fast opener and bravely played some solid defensive shots, before also falling LBW. The doughty Cranners was then elevated to see it home with an impeccable 2 not out.

Absence of beer and showers brought the gathering to a swift conclusion. Next stop Kelab Aman on Sunday morning, where normal post-match service is expected to resume in festive abundance.
