

AMO, AMAS, AMAT, AMAN!

Contemplating a game of cricket from a hotel room in Penang is one of life's true pleasures. And for another of life's true pleasures, there's nothing like a well-filled swimming costume; and when I looked in the mirror I thought, "That's nothing like a well-filled swimming costume." However, there is inordinate pleasure to be gained from contemplating one's fellow guests, (and certainly not oneself) when idling around a pool for a few days: women. There's nothing quite like them. Men, on the other hand, are something else. A Speedo banana hammock is a truly revolting item of apparel and wearers should be shot, without trial; but a strategically-placed two piece is a delight to behold. Yellow ones in particular. But I digress. Nonetheless, with the benefit of four days' chilling one can look back at Sunday's Nava Shield match against Kelab Aman with a sense of well-being and a job well done.

Having won the toss, our indomitable captain elected to field – it's always easier to bat second at Kelab Aman because of the dampness in the outfield. The Headmaster was tossed the new pill and he roared in for the first delivery of the day. I'm not sure which flavour it was (like most pies, they all look the same) but it dribbled against the intrepid glovesmith's leg (placed in the classic, coaching manual 'long barrier') on the third bounce and sort of bobbled for a bye! Umpire Speedy confessed to being amused at the 'keeper's expression which must have contained something like pain, pained disbelief and annoyance. The next few overs followed the pattern established over the previous two Nava Shield games: batsmen play and miss and generally look incompetent and bashful when confronted by a combination of the Boss' probing and Kelvin's late in-swing. Runs were accrued, somehow, with a mixture of bravado flashing and geriatric nurdling. In addition, the ball seemed to be following Flo in the field, again, and he was unlucky not to hang on to one flashing cut (he saved two runs, however). Kelvin and the Beak bowled their overs right through and at 36-0 from eight we were not exactly panicking. The introduction of Gupinder and Speed Minor into the attack paved the way for the first wickets to fall and there would have been more, but Flo was, erm, "unsighted" by a lofted pull and was heard to be apologising to the hapless Chris before the ball came to rest about two feet behind him. Gupinder and the guardian of the sticks combined for three stumpings (the first off a leg-side wide); and the former's neat and tidy spell yielded 3-14. Chris the tyro bowled tidily as well, frustrating the batsmen who, as ever, erroneously and misguidedly look to tonk the midget bowler. He elicited a run out, gloriously (and selfishly) taken by Flo, at midwicket, who elected to try to explode the stumps (which he hit from side on) and run the batsman out by a good ten yards, instead of lobbing it in and running him out by nine! Graham Witt came on for one interesting over, but the track proved to be a little too slow for his deliveries and this prompted the arrival of the engineer of the gravy train. This time, however, he found the cupboard bare. Arvin bowled tidily from the other end and closed out the innings with aplomb – his deserved wicket courtesy of a safely pouched catch at square cover for Speed Minor.

The interval between innings was punctuated with cries of "There's too much pepper in this!" and "Who's nicked all the bleeding celery sticks?" as Pres and Trixie were warming up for the festive season with their Rhesus Negative concoctions.

Henry and Arshad strode out to begin Kelawar's reply and it was apparent that the Kelab Aman players fancied their chances (particularly against the former). There was a fair degree of "noise"

and “chatter” going on, particularly from behind the stumps, but this started to diminish as the overs ticked by. With a mixture of bit of luck and the occasional bludgeonage, our openers accrued runs steadily and the fifty came up in the tenth over. Henry was the first to fall, caught at long on; and Arshad quickly followed, caught behind, as did Flo. From being 56-0 we were suddenly 59-3 and the noise was back. Young Cadman strode to the crease with a confidence that belied his years but not his size (not for the first time did the opposition question whether he fell under the age criterion for “junior”). Looking supremely confident and aided by the stentorian presence of the Dean the runs started to flow again and when the latter was out, stumped we only needed another twelve with six overs remaining. The ‘keeper was sent out to mop up the innings and ensure himself another asterisked score; and he was amazed, nay shocked and hurt, to find that the wicket keepers’ union had been suspended. The following exchange took place:

Obnoxious, mouthy Aman ‘keeper: *We’ve got them now, boys, they won’t get these; this bloke can’t bat*

Modestly still and humble Kelawar ‘keeper: *Take a look at the scoreboard you tucking fwat*
And so it was. Cadman stroked the winning runs with four full overs to spare. A job well done, indeed!

MATCH SUMMARY:

Kelab Aman 102-4 (20 overs)

KCC 103-4 (16 overs) Henry, 26; Cadman, 24*; Arshad, 23

WON by 6 wkts