

Kelawar Cricket Club vs Melbourne Cricket Club

Kinrara Cricket Ground - Malaysia (27th August 2009)

The way many have perceived, it was similar to a contest between David and Goliath. And, if you were in the shoes of David, it was not a bad idea to walk away, to salvage your pride. Then again there will be always another bunch of people who would not mind rushing to places where Angels fear to tread. Some call them fools, and some call them brave.

In spite of pouring rain, army of bats were proudly dressed in red shirts and parading in the pavilion, ready to kill at the command of the Batman, Graham. And Chanting of Hakka form was heard from loudspeakers all around ground as a part of physiological warfare, knowing the opponents fear for black cats.

Rain did not look like withering away even at 7.30 PM, and faces of bats were red, instead of shirts as their glorious dream of beating Goliath under lights was slipping away from them. As the game was about to be called-off somebody came up with a brilliant idea of making a deal with the ground staff to keep them standing by, just in case.

Finally around 8.30 PM, rain withered away and covers were removed, patience of visitors and Kelawar were rewarded. Graham invited MCC to bat as a friendly gesture, as it would make sure that they could play their game freely, utilising their full quota of overs. Numbers of overs was reduced to 16 per side. As an experiment, it was decided to bowl 4 overs from one side, instead of the alternative method (Please do not ask me why all the overs were not bowled from one side, may be some rational explanation)

MCC entered to the masquerade disguised as Dragons to nullify the advantage of bats (night vision). And dragons they were, from the start. It was not a hospitable day for Anu as both MCC opening batsmen were able to hoist him over the rope, mostly for his over pitched deliveries. As Bats were pondering what to do next, Graham came to their rescue by making a radical change in attack

Jason was summoned by Graham and after some strategic/ tactical instructions; Jason was seen running like a hare to the wicket with red cherry in hand, smiling all the way (as if he was in some kind of trance). It worked!! (I am not sure whether it was Graham's Instructions or charm of Jason, or both). Not only did Jason put on the brakes, but also managed to take 2 prize wickets in 2 balls. And sadly missed his deserved "hat- trick".

For the first time "Dragons" realised that catching "bats" in night was not an easy task. *(was that because all the beer was consumed by both teams prior to the match? – Ed)*

Matt Larson also mesmerised the MCC batsmen with accurate slow medium bowling and took 2 wickets from 2 balls. He too missed his well deserved "hat-trick". And by then MCC was facing with an embarrassment of being bowled out in less than 16 overs. Finally MCC managed to score 136 runs in 16 overs setting a challenging task of getting 8.5 runs per over. *(umm, that doesn't seem too embarrassing at all! – Ed)*

It ought to be mentioned that Simon, Graham and Jean also bowled well and contained the batmen under pressure. Graham balled 3 overs for 15 runs (Some sort of discrimination!!! as all the others were given 2 overs). Basically all slow bowlers did well for some strange reason.

Kelawar started batting very well indeed; both openers (Rick and Porter) were stroking the ball beautifully with some elegant shots through the covers. Porter scored 29 (had it not been for his calf injury he would have retired at 30). Rick scored 24. Neil Morgan did bat well to score 25 runs.

Apart from above, others did not manage to make a significant contribution and at the end Kelawar was 90 for 6 wickets in their allotted overs.

We owe a big "thank you" to our visitors for accepting to play with us and waiting patiently for rain to cease. It was a match played in true spirit of cricket. Playing against a team of such high repute was a pleasant experience for Kelawar and especially for those who almost got a hat trick against such a competitive team.

MCC statistics- Middin- 26, Stockdale – 32 retired not out, Caven- 32 retired not out

Power- 2 wickets for 6 runs and Muller 2wickets for 10 runs

(What? No Kelawar stats? – Ed)

(Okay, seeing as I have the book in front of me... Lee 2 for 19, Larsen 2 for 6; Porter 29, Riddell 24 – Ed)