

## Match report – Kelawar vs. Phuket Cricket Union. 8<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at STC.

**PCU 165 all out in 29.5 overs. Kelawar CC 169 – 5 in 30 overs. Kelawar won by 5 wickets.**

A very enjoyable game with the touring Phuket Cricket Union ended with Kelawar winning off the last ball in dramatic fashion having nearly conceded the game through an initial slow run rate then the inability of your author to make it as far as the other end of the wicket.

The day started brightly with PCU electing to bat first and after photos were taken the innings began in similar sunny vein for the visitors as Kevin and Raju put on 49 for the first wicket in 8 overs. Kelvin and Andy Daniels started off the bowling for Kelawar extracting pace and bounce and there was a suspicion of complacency and taking the foot off contributing to Phuket's settled start as bowling changes and casual fielding, especially from your twinkle toed scribe who was wearing children's size ballerina shoes for the day to accentuate his hamster paced running style, Drummond, who succeeded in cajoling a ball that was travelling many times more slowly than him over the boundary rope, and Tim who attempted to catch his first victim with his chin. The confidence of the Phuket batsmen grew as the nature of the pitch became clearer and they advanced to a hundred for two off the first fifteen overs with Simon Emes bowling well to take both openers, most notably a startled Raju, who had compiled 33 off 24 balls, amazed to see his stumps disturbed having left a ball he took to be a leg side wide. Whether exaggerated swing or seam movement or simple misjudgment caused his demise was to be decided in the bar later.

That Phuket failed to capitalize on their solid start could largely be attributed to the star of the first half for Kelawar. Phil bowled a wonderfully tight spell of slow bowling to take four for 22 off his allotted six overs with two in the final over including the dangerous bat, and soon to be proven considerably more dangerous ballet shoe crusher opening bowler, Ismail who was well caught second ball by Andy Daniels holing out having been deceived once again in the flight. Ben bowled four tight overs, excepting the occasional wide ball, and Drummond ended up wicketless, at least on paper, with 0-49. Morally, as all in the vicinity of the Golden Horses were aware, except crucially the umpire and the batsman himself, he had taken at least one wicket as Martin had charitably run one off the face of the bat into Tim's gloves only to stand his ground and be adjudged not out.

With Kelvin and Andy returning for a last spell the Phuket Union's innings finished at 165 all out in the final over.

Kelawar got off to a wobbly start as Andy's Murray- Watson and Scott and Graham were each hustled out by the pacy, off two paces, opening bowler Ismail and before any advantage could be gained Kelawar found themselves at 29-3 off the first ten, slightly brightening to 57-3 off the first fifteen at drinks. With Rick sweating litres, taking occasional very subtle mid over ballerina shoe lace tying breaks and the bowling from Phuket being accurate and difficult to get away Kelawar were struggling. Rick was characteristically enigmatic; a lovely timed flick off the pads balanced by a gurning heave at a good length and the ball landing safely, sweet leg glances and missed pulls. Tim

was watchful and the two worked as a partnership with (slightly extended) counseling sessions between overs to keep them on track. Tim fell for 27 to Raju, capping a good day that started with a stumping and catch as well as a bruised chin, 97-4 off 22, and there was still plenty to do. Ben scored 21 at a run a ball, Rick was turning more puce than a Kelawar evening shirt and whilst still in sight when Ben fell, with the score on 143 in the 28<sup>th</sup> over, it still looked like being Phuket's day. More drama was to come as Andy Daniels, in trying to approximate Rick's face colour by sunning himself on the boundary was demoted in the order and Kelvin came in to make it all look easy. Last over and Kelawar needed 15 to win with Kelvin facing. The first ball was a wide. The second ball Kelvin left and confidently looked up at ump's who smiled back unmoved. A few perfectly printable but heat of the moment words to himself later Kelvin furiously launched and smacked the third ball over long off for six, the sweetest strike of the day, and timed the following one sweetly for four. The game was very much on, and Kelvin nurdled the next for one which became two through some suicide running. By this stage Rick was scarlet, the ballet shoes and Ismail's inswinger into his right calf were taking their toll and he didn't care any longer turning blind and completing the second to gracefully assume the position at the bowler's end once more. A dab for a single left Rick with the task of one run off the last which, once through the infield, raced away for four. Kelvin had plundered 18 off 10 balls, the perfect finish for Kelawar, and everyone could retire to Out Of Africa for the evening's entertainment.

Phuket were fine visitors, always playing the game in a cheerful fashion, and the sweaty activities of the afternoon were a prelude to a very convivial evening in their company.