

PATTAYA CC'S WALKING WOUNDED LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY AFTER EPIC BATTLE

Pattaya CC fronted up for a second game in three days in scorching heat against Indorama at Thailand Cricket Ground on Sunday. Pattaya skipper Simon Philbrook won the toss and had no hesitation in sending Indorama out to field in the blazing sun. Pattaya got off to a steady start despite losing opener Venky early, shortly followed by John Spiers retired hurt with a quad injury. This brought Colin Clark to the crease and along with Dan Nicholson the scoring rate increased as the pair picked off runs with relative ease by good placement and running between the wickets. Colin was dropped in a very sharp chance at sort extra-cover and then again at mid-on which proved to be costly for Indorama. The stand was brought to an unexpected end when Dan became the second player to retire this time hurt on 49 with a twisted knee and Pattaya had three back in the hutch with only one wicket down. Despite the unusual setbacks Colin continued pushing the ball around and found the boundary a few times while wickets fell at the other end as Pattaya pursued late quick runs. He fell in the final over for 71. There was just time for some final ball comedy as Salman Khan and Thomas Manoj ran for two but scored none as Salman ran one short and then failed to make his ground on the second as was run out. Despite this Pattaya posted a very competitive 155 for 5, on a ground where boundaries are hard to come by.

In reply Indorama lost wickets early and regularly. Salman made amends for his last ball exploits by removing both openers, Ajay bowled for 8 and then enticing Arun to launch one almost into orbit but well caught at mid-wicket by Simon for the same score. He was even seen to field a briskly hit straight drive with his hands. Thomas also enticed number 3 to lob one rather more gently to Simon first ball. This brought the two key batsmen for Indorama to the crease. With the sounds of cheering from the nearby cock-fighting stadium and gunshots ringing out from a nearby marsh, the injured warrior, John Spiers, was brought into the heat of the battle to tempt the batsmen with his off-spin hand-grenades. He soon got one to explode off the pitch and an ambitious swipe from the dangerous Dhiraj resulted in a top edge caught by keeper Colin who was fortunate not to cause another injury in a collision with the diminutive Khalid. Bernard Lamprecht soon dismissed Vikas fending a lifting ball back down onto his stumps but Vishnu at the other end was starting to push the innings as Indorama got ahead of the run rate despite the tumbling wickets. The crucial moment came in Paul Hack's one and only over. After being hit for three consecutive boundaries, the wily Hack surprised Vishnu with a straight one and bowled him through the gate. From this point Indorama were always just a bit behind the required rate and despite some valiant hitting, helped by a couple of dropped catches, they were bowled out in the 23rd over for 136 to give Pattaya a 19 run victory when Andy Emery was brought back on at the cock-end and hit the top of Sharma's middle stump with his first ball.

As always the game was played in great spirit by two highly competitive teams. The result ended Indorama's season while Pattaya's Dad's Army lives to fight another day, proceeding to a semi-final against Amphawa in Bangkok on Sunday 10th May. The winner will play Kerala Strikers in the Grand Final on 17th May after Kerala beat league-topping Amphawa in the qualifying final.