

### **35<sup>th</sup> International 6s at Chiang Mai 2025 – Drifters Part 2 – The path to victory.**

The first 3 days of cricket found the Drifters in first place and thus earned a spot in the Cup Group A alongwith The Sex Pistols 1 and The Lamphun Lion Kings. The next 2 days would see another League table with all the various Trophy groups, Shield, Plate, Bowl, Spoon etc, aiming to get into their respective semis and finals.

Day 4, Wed 2 Apr. The Drifters played The Sex Pistols 1, a team with some accomplished and very capable cricketers. This was expected to be a close match and provide quite a challenge to The Drifters. Simon Philbrook was ill and thus Luke took the wicketkeeping duties. The Drifters won the toss and elected to bat. Abaid and Luke were sent in to face the extremely pacey Taylor Scott. His pace suited both batsmen who plundered 21 off the first over but only just retained their wickets as fielders couldn't quite get to the aerial balls. Luke drilled Michael Baxter for 28 in the second over as the score reached 49 for 0. Abaid failed to connect properly with a big hit in the 3<sup>rd</sup> over and was caught by Brian Scott at Long-on for 18, 52 for 1. Mike Gerits went in at No3 and immediately hit boundaries to push the score to 62 for 1 after 3. Mike survived a stumping appeal off Brian Scott's bowling despite being out. Luke retired on 35 after another 6 and Habby Singh entered the fray as the score got to 82 for 1. Andy Emery, no, not the Captain of PCC, bowled the last over for 15 leaving Mike on 26 not out and Habby on 12 and The Drifters on 97 for 0.

The Sex Pistols 1 had a monumental challenge but they had belief. Taylor Scott and Michael Baxter opened the chase against Mike Gerits. A handy 17 off the over. Abiad was next and bowled Micheal for 23. 33 for 1 off 2 overs and a little behind the required rate. Habby bowled a very tidy over for 10 and effectively stifles the Sex Pistols, 43 for 1 off 3. Tim Peters was next and was launched for an enormous 6 by Taylor Scott who was then caught next ball by Abaid at Long-on for 23, 60 for 2 after 4 overs. Brian Scott and Mathew Metcalfe batted out the remaining over from John Pike, each scoring 13 not out as their innings concluded on 72 for 2. A valiant chase, but not quite enough.

Day 5, Thurs 3 Apr, was the final day of Table 2 with The Drifters playing The Lamphun Lion Kings (LLKs) who had managed to recruit Chanchai, Johnny and Cherm to bolster their team's credentials. The Drifters won the toss and decided to bowl first. The LLKs sent in Chanchai and Johnny to face Mike Gerits. A very tidy bowling effort kept the score down to 8 via 2 dotballs and only 1 boundary 4. Luke was not so economical with No Ball beamers and wides but still only 26 after 2 overs. Abaid bowled well, but the batsmen lifted their game and the score went on to 39 with the help of extras. Habby added his usual front-foot No ball and 15 were added to the total and 54 for 0 with one over to go. Chanchai managed to retire on 31 but not enough had been added by the others, eventhough the last over was an untidy one with 19 scored. 73 for 0 was a respectable score but well within reach of The Drifters.

Abaid and Luke were sent in to face Chanchai. Uncharacteristic wides from Chanchai started the chase as Abaid launched into boundaries to Point and Long-on, one of which was helped over the boundary for a 6 by Frame. 27 off the first over and the LLKs needed wickets. They didn't get any as Luke hit 4s and Abaid hit 6s, 48 for 0 and an unexpectedly easy win looked likely. Johnny received the same treatment as Abaid retired on 34 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> over at 62 for 0. Mike Gerits secured a win with a 6 in the 4<sup>th</sup> over as The Drifters reached 77 with 7 balls to spare with Mike and Luke on 12 and 17 not out.

With a second win, The Drifters took 1<sup>st</sup> place in Cup Group A and thus secured a semi-final place against the Cup Group B runners up – probably Margate CC. That would be on Day 7, Saturday 6 April. In the meantime, The Drifters would have a day off whilst the other trophy matches reach their conclusions.

Day 6, Friday 4<sup>th</sup> Apr. As predicted, the Margate CC defeated the Lanna Purple Helmets and being runners up would oppose The Drifters for the Semi-final of the Cup

Day 7, the Finals day, Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>. Margate won the toss and decided to bowl with Oscar Carter opening against Abaid and Luke. The usual deluge of big hits resulted in 20 off the over and a good start. Joey Delco bowled well in the first half of the over but the end result was the same, 40 for 0 off 2. More boundaries from The Drifters and good fielding from Margate still added 23 more runs as Luke and Abaid retired. Mike and Habby added a further 28 in the next 2 overs including some extras. 91 for 0 and an assured victory.

Margate sent Michael Blake, a giant of a man, and Alex Mazure to face Mike Gerits. Great shots but they all went straight to fielders only 4 runs. Abaid was promptly smashed around by Blake but he hit a huge skier which Abaid impressively swallowed up, gone for 17 and 20 for 1. Habby also bowled well for a routine 12 runs and Margate were struggling at 36 for 1 off 3. Tim Peters had a terrible over with a No Ball 6 and wides for 28 off the over as Margate progressed to 64 for 1. Luke took the last over and had Alex Mazur run out by a good throw from Mike Gerits for 23. Tim then dropped a catch, but it was of no consequence as Margate finished on 74 for 2 and their competition was over. The Drifters were in the final, but who against.

The next semi was between Darjeeling and the Lamphun Lion Kings. The LLKs batted first and made 57/2 but were well beaten in 4 overs, thus Darjeeling, last years winners, would battle The Drifters for the Cup

The Final had the potential to be a real nailbiter and so it turned out with good and bad fortune flowing in both directions, injuries and umpire decisions all having an impact. Darjeeling won the toss and decided to bowl in the light drizzle that had started to fall. Abaid and Luke faced the pace of Christian Cabburn and managed a rocky steady 17. Sonny Rosha was hit for 10 runs by Luke but only singles thereafter for a respectable 14 runs. Then things

changed, after a 6, Abaid got caught on the boundary by Brandon Jones off Kieran Linger for 19. 44 for 1 off 3 was par for a final but The Drifters needed something extra. Luke hit 12 more from Lyons and retired on 34 which brought Habby to the crease. However, he hit his first ball down Brandon Jones' throat for a Golden Duck and it was 59 for 2 off 4. Mike and Simon Philbrook finished off the innings with 15 more runs and Simon being run-out off the last ball for a Diamond Duck. 74 for 3.

This was a chasable score and Darjeeling were determined to win. Brandon Jones and Sonny Rasha opened against Mike Gerits. The 3<sup>rd</sup> ball saw yet another superb catch from Luke and Sonny went for 4. Brad Wissink took the crease and gave Luke a hard time in the 2<sup>nd</sup> over as Darjeeling recovered to 27 for 1. Abaid bowled the 3<sup>rd</sup> over for a measly 8 runs but had Brandon Jones caught by Mike for 6 as The Drifters gained the upper hand again. 35 for 2 after 3 overs. Habby bowled the 4<sup>th</sup> over and clean bowled Alfie Lyons for 5, but this brought in Christian Cabburn who battered Habby. 20 runs off the over and 55 for 3. Only 4 runs the difference and Darjeeling had big hitters at the creases. Then, the wicket keeper, Simon Philbrook, pulled a hamstring and was allowed a replacement, so John Pike came on and Luke took the gloves. Darjeeling needed 20 runs to win and Brad went on the warpath against Tim Peters. A 6 was then down-graded by the umpire to a 4 as it was reported as not crossing the boundary. This proved crucial as Brad retired on 32 with 1 ball remaining which needed to be a 4 to win. 2 runs were scored by Kieran Linger and Darjeeling finished on 73 for 3. The Drifters won by 1 run and added some silverware to the cabinet. What a finish

The awards ceremony was conducted with presentations to the winners and runners up for the Cup, Shield, Bowl, Plate and Spoon trophies. The Player of the Tournament Award was given to Luke Stokes for his 7 innings not out, having scored 211 runs with a strike rate of 319. Abaid Ullah also won a Player of the Day Award for his batting with 34 not out in 7 balls

The Drifters (PCC) would like to thank their Sponsors, The Arab News, the Outback Bar, the Magic Bar, and the Pattaya Sports Club for their support and assistance. Also, thanks to the staff, organisers, umpires and sponsors of this magnificent cricketing event. It was a fantastic week.