

The Drifters (PCC) aim for the Double at the Chiang Mai International 6's -Part 1

The World's largest cricketing extravaganza took place for the 36th time at the Gymkhana Ground at Chiang Mai from Sun 29 March until 4 April 2025. The ground was in excellent condition whilst the temperature was Gas Mark 6. The Drifters were current Champions and maintained their 100% attendance record.

There were 36 teams, with only one withdrawal due to travel difficulties resulting from the Iran War. These included 4 ladies teams from 10 countries from such far-flung places as; England (5), Australia (13), New Zealand (1), UAE (1), Greece (1), Montenegro (1), Thailand (6), The Maldives (1), Jersey (1) and Japan (2). The Drifters had few original team members left, some were no longer playing or unable to attend, thus they were supplemented by Luke Stokes (Captain), Harry Archer, Ali Garnsworth and Adam Hitchcott from Pattaya CC and finally Abaid Ullah from The Southerners and Jarrod Bruce.

The 6's format is a far cry from the limited-over matches that you see around the world with 5 overs per innings with each player bowling one over, except the wicket keeper. Wides and No Balls accrue 3 runs each and are not re-bowled and there is no free-hit. In Round 1, the teams were divided into Players and Gentlemen Divisions and after 3 matches their positions would determine which trophy they would play for. For Round 2, each trophy group was divided into two smaller leagues for 3 matches each. The winners of those groups would feed into the semis and finals.

The Drifters first match was against the accomplished Clifton Hill Stray Cats from Victoria, Australia. Luke won the toss and equaled the number of tosses that Capt Emery from PCC had done in a whole season. He decided to bowl first. Ben Wilcox and Lou Burstin were finding the gaps in the field and striking the ball well. Ubaid's first over leached 15 and Jarrod was 14, aided by some sloppy fielding from Abaid -I think his back is still giving him problems. Noddy (Adam) Hitchcott was next, where one of his two wides allowed Ali to stump Ben Willcox for 27. CHSCCC reached 51 for 1 off 3 overs. Further rough treatment was meted out to Luke who bowled too short and Harry as CHSCCC reached an enormous total of 92 for 1 from 5 overs as Ben Caplikas retired on the last ball for 34. (There are a lot of Bens in that team)

The CHSCCC opened the bowling with James Wright and Lou Burstin against Abaid and Luke. The batsmen kept up with the run rate until Luke was caught at Long-off by Ben Caplikas and Ubaid retired on 30. Ben Wilcox and Ben Levels tightened up the bowling and restricted the Drifters to 78 for 1 and a loss by 14 runs. Not a good start.

Day 2 brought a change of approach against the accomplished Thai Junior Cricket Development Fund. Take the pace off the ball and pitch it up. Luke's request to bat first was met with approval from the TJCDF and as usual Abaid and Luke opened against Duan who went for 19, a good start although Ubaid was dropped on the boundary. Luke was not as lucky in the second over as Pit had him caught by Leng at Long-on for 11 having faced only 4

balls. Harry Archer joined and also began to hit out as the Drifters reached 37 for 1 off 2 overs. The assault continued with more boundaries from both batsmen against Atom and more dropped catches from TJCDF, this time to Harry's benefit. 58 for 1 in the 3rd over. The 4th over saw Harry being bowled by Chalam for a brisk 16 and Ali Garnsworth being dismissed 2 balls later having been stumped by Lao for a Duck – off to the Duck Lady . This slowed the run rate and brought in Jarrod Bruce. 62 for 3 in the 4th. Abaid hit a 6 and retired on 34 as Jarrod and Noddy closed out the innings on 79 for 3. TJCDF were unlikely to chase such a total.

Pit and Leng opened the batting for the TJCDF against the Drifters whom had decided to dispense with pace. Abaid struck almost immediately when Harry caught Leng for a Duck on the deep mid-wicket boundary. Chalam joined the throng to hit a 4 and 9 for 1 off the first. Bruce bowled Pit for 6 as Chalam scored most of the runs. Noddy and Luke were also very economical as the score was restricted to 33 for 2 off 4. Harry took the final over and got belted for 16 by Chalam who retired on 35. The TJCDF finished on 49 for 2 and the drifters won by 30 runs.

Day 3 saw the Drifters in a must win match against The Silly Sloggers in order to finish in the top 6 and stay in the Cup for Round 2. The Drifters' request to bat first was granted and they planned to slow the pace down. Abaid and Luke opened against Sam Phillips. Good hitting from Ubaid and poor fielding from Pebz added 19 to the board. Chong went round the wicket to Abaid and got the same treatment, 34 for 0. Pumpkin had an excellent over for only 5 due to pitching the ball up to Luke. Cooling was also hit for 15. Pebs took the last over and Abaid hit him for 6 and retired on 35. Bobby Raina hit a 6 into the Match-box windows and was then run out off a wide. Luke remained 25 not out and the Drifters concluded on 82 for 1.

The Silly Sloggers response was to send Sam & Luke Phillips to face Bobby. 14 off the over and a missed opportunity behind the stumps and Luke almost caught a ball right on the boundary rope. Abaid's over was a killer with only 3 scored and Sam Phillips bowled for 3. This effectively ended their innings. Noddy's over started with a No Ball 6, ie a 9, but recovered to give away only 13, 30 for 1 and 26 per over needed. Luke had 15 off his over and Harry took the wicket of Brad James, bowled for 15. 59 for 2 and beaten by 23 runs. The win put The Drifters in 4th place and secured spot in the Cup Group for Round 2.

The 2 matches in Round 2 and any progress in the semis and finals will be covered in Part 2.