

## **Pattaya CC defeat Bangkok CC by 10 runs to become BCL A Division Champions of the 2021-22 season.**

Having lost the first 2 matches the season, PCC won the next 9 matches, culminating in their first piece of silverware as winners of the Bangkok Cricket League A Division for the 2021-22 season. As the season progressed, PCC began to believe in themselves and a top-4 place looked possible, then first place, followed by a match final at Pattana Sports Resort (PSR) on 3 April. There were fortuitous events along the way when rivals lost unexpectedly and rain washed out the elimination final, but PCC thoroughly deserved their place in the final.

It was a very cold, almost freezing, windy day at PSR when PCC lost the toss and were asked to bat by BCC. PCC's usual openers took the crease – Wez Masterton and Ryan Driver against Niraj Patel and Rahul Jangir. Disaster struck early as Wez hit his 4<sup>th</sup> ball down Wayne Atkinson's throat at the Long-on boundary for a duck and Niraj claimed his first of two wickets. Luke Stokes took the crease, and was determined to stay there to exact revenge with Ryan. Niraj and Rahul bowled very accurately for the first few overs but the batsmen found their range and hit Rahul for 27 in two overs, forcing his removal from the attack. Ryan survived a drop from Prasad. Vishal Patkar got the same treatment and PCC progressed to 61 for 1 by the 10<sup>th</sup> over. Soundar Khrishnamy had a good first over but Ryan hit him for 6 and then got caught by Wayne on the boundary for 38. Luke took on the mantle of keeping the PCC innings together and he continued to batter Vishal and Niraj. There followed a bit of a PCC middle order collapse as Colin made a brief appearance for 4 before being caught and bowled by Abaid Anwer. It was unclear as to why Abaid was playing for BCC as he plays in the Premiership Division for Chiang Mai and could be described as one of Thailand's most accomplished batsmen. Despite being restricted to batting at No 7 or later by the BCL, he was instrumental in BCC defeating AIT to get to the final as he scored 62 runs in less than 30 balls. PCC were unimpressed by his presence in more ways than one and there may have been some sledging and use of the word "ringer". Both Pete Reeh and Habby Singh made brief appearances; Pete for 3 having been caught by Prasad Newarkas off Soundar and Habby for a Golden Duck, brilliantly caught by Abaid on the Deep-midwicket boundary off Niraj. PCC had reached the 15<sup>th</sup> over with 82 for 3 on the scoreboard and then stumbled to 101 for 6 by the 18<sup>th</sup>, but help was at hand from Jainish to support Luke who picked up the pace. Luke eventually fell in the 24<sup>th</sup> over with the score on 158 when Captain Abhi Kulkarni had him caught by Abaid for 91 and next ball had caught Jainish caught superbly by Abaid for 16. The last runs were added by Captain Simon Philbrook (12), bowled by Vishal and a few from Trevor Moolman and Andy Emery. With 8 wickets down, PCC set BCC a stiff target of 177 – feasible with their batsman plus an importee, but not guaranteed. Abaid had taken 3 catches plus a caught and bowled and Soundar had taken 2 for 21 from 5 overs.

Preetam Jena and Wayne Atkinson led the chase for BCC against Wez Masterton and Ryan Driver. As usual Wez and Ryan bowled all of their overs to keep pressure on the batsmen and it paid off. Wez had Wayne caught by a diving wicket keeper on 4 and Rahul entered with the score on 8. Ryan remained wicketless at 0 for 23 from 5 overs, whilst Wez was removed when his 4<sup>th</sup> over went for 12. By the 10<sup>th</sup> over BCC were at 1 for 49 and keeping in touch with PCC. Preetam and Rahul began to pick up the run rate against Steve Christie, Jainish Parikh and Andy Emery's first over although Rahul had some luck when he was dropped. It didn't last as Andy struck 3 balls before drinks when Wez brilliantly caught Rahul for 39 on the boundary. 94 for 3 at 15 overs and BCC slightly ahead. PCC managed to stem BCC's progress within 2 overs as Steve had Preetam caught by Wez on the boundary. Vishal and Niraj Patel managed to keep the score ticking along by getting boundaries from Steve and Habby until the 19<sup>th</sup> over when BCC lost their way and PCC took charge. Vishal, a big hitter, was bowled by Habby for 32 and

others quickly followed suit, leaving Niraj to hold the fort. The fightback centered on Andy Emery, who had Captain Abhi stumped by Colin for 1 and then Abaid arrived at the crease. A dot and a big hit towards the Long-off boundary found Luke's safe hands and Abaid trudged off for a Duck. There was ecstasy (not the tablet form) on the field and in the PCC tent. There were 4 overs to go and BCC needed 36 – it was going to be close. PCC fielded like demons to Andy and Habby's very accurate bowling. In the last 4 overs BCC only managed 1 boundary 4, a single 2 and 19 singles. It was not enough, and BCC were strangled to a score of 166 for 6 and lost by 10 runs. Niraj and Insha Javaid finished Not Out on 22 and 11 respectively.

Both teams had played very good cricket and there was little between them. Andy Emery had bowling figures of 3 for 27 from 5 overs and was the bowler of the season in Division A, whilst Luke Stokes was awarded MotM for his 91. PCC now have some silverware to add to their Trophy cabinet.