



PENULTIMATE BALL MAXIMUM DENTS PATTAYA CRICKET CLUB'S LEAGUE HOPES

With two balls remaining, eight wickets down and sixes runs required by Aditya Birla CC for victory Pattaya CC were confident of securing what would have been a remarkable win. But ABCC batsman Gihan had other ideas as he swung through the line of a fast, full length delivery to send it soaring over long on and in doing so severely dent PCC's T20 league title aspirations.

It was a game of huge momentum swings as PCC won their first toss of the season and elected to bat first on a swelteringly hot morning at Horseshoe Point. Sunny was again in fine form and celebrated his call up to the Thai national team as he punished anything wide with a fluent 26 ball 31 before he clipped one off his hip to the jubilant square leg fielder. Yasir, John G and Debdas all perished in pursuit of runs and PCC were 66 for 4 after 9 overs.

PCC captain Simon, 59 not out from 39 balls, became the cornerstone of the remainder of the innings as he maintained a healthy run rate with support from Hansie (14) and Usman (29) and PCC closed with a competitive 175 for 6. The pick of the ABCC bowlers was Shahab who finished with 2/23 from his 4 overs, having conceded 13 runs from his opening over.

In reply, despite two early wickets, Shahab and Faran maintained the required run rate and after 10 overs ABCC were comfortably placed at 91/2. The PCC bowling had been ragged at times and Mithu's off spin and Usman's left arm quick worked in tandem as the pressure slowly built. Faran (35) and Shahab (66) fell quickly in succession and wickets began to fall regularly as the batsmen were unsure as to how to reach their target. To add to the tension an enormous tropical storm gathered menacingly that made the ground extremely dark, except when the lightning struck, and Sunny bowling at the speed of light had the last over to bowl with 9 runs needed. His first ball ripped out Mishra's middle stump. The new batsman Arun scrambled a single and Gihan pushed two runs from the third. A swing and a miss seemed to put PCC in the box seat but Gihan's final mighty blow ended a fantastic T20 game that left PCC regretting their wayward first half bowling efforts.

PCC can still qualify for the playoffs but they need to win their remaining two league games and hope other results go in their favour.