

Pattaya Cricket Club assist The Drifters at the Chiang Mai International Sixes (Part 1, Days 1 & 2)

The Chiang Mai International Sixes, established in 1988, is the World's largest international sixes competition with, this year, 29 teams from 10 countries as far afield as England, Japan and New Zealand. The Drifters are one of only 3 team that have a 100% attendance record and this year included a few additional players from Pattaya, namely, Luke Stokes, Habby Singh, Simon Philbrook and a debutant, Max Burzler to supplement Noah Langham, John Pike and Tim Peters.

The competition took place at the Gymkhana Ground, Chiang Mai, from 31 Mar until 6 April and culminated in six different cups; The Spoon, The Plate, The Bowl, The Shield, The Cup and The Ladies Cup. The teams were divided into three main groups, The Players, The Gentlemen and The Ladies, all of whom played preliminary matches which determined their position in their group and thus which Cup they competed for.

The teams have 8 players from which six play. There are 5 overs per innings with everyone bowling one over except the wicket keeper. Wides and No Balls count as 3 runs and are not re-bowled except the last ball on the innings. Teams earn 4 points for a win and bonus points for runs scored, wickets taken and a chase reached in less than 4 overs.

Day 1. The Drifters' first match was against The Lords Taverners from Australia who batted first with Brian Scott and Mick Baster opening and Tim Peters opened the bowling. An uneventful innings with no wickets taken and few runs off the bat, but nonetheless, the openers scored 18 each and Mr Wides got 25 – I've reported on that sorry story before. Habby Singh and Tim Peters bowled fairly well. The Lords Taverners concluded their innings on 62 for 0 from 5 overs. The Drifters opened with Luke Stokes and Habby against Glenn O'Brian. Luke soon retired on 34 after 12 balls (four 4s and two 6s) and was replaced by Noah Langham with a few balls remaining. Habby was 18 not out and Noah 8 not out after 4 overs with Ryan Greenwell being hit for 26 runs off the last over. 64 for 0 and a win by 6 wickets with 6 points. A good start.

Their second match was against the Laos Elephants from, guess where, who batted first with Michael Simcock and Rick Monaghan. Both batsmen retired on 30 but they were made to earn their runs as the Drifters bowled much straighter with only 2 wides. Habby bowled a tidy last over in which Prashantha was out for a duck, caught by Noah. The Laos Elephants concluded at 67 for 1. Luke and Noah opened for The Drifters and Luke immediately set about Michael Simcock with 22 runs. Leonard faired even worse as Noah smashed him for 29. The Third over, Rick Monaghan's, only yielded 13, but Luke retired on 30. The final over saw Noah hit a 4, retire on 31 and win the match in 3.1 over. A win by 6 wickets and a run rate of 21.5 per over. An excellent day.

This concluded day 1 with The Drifters in first place on the overall table with the NCL Thunders (last years winners) to play on day 2.

Day 2. The Thunders batted first and opened with Abaid Ullah and Inzaman ul-Haque whilst Luke opened the bowling. 4 Byes off the first ball and then Inzaman hoisted the second to Cow Corner where it was well caught by Habby Singh. Out for a duck. An excellent start but it brought Akash to the crease and he used ramp shots and reverse sweeps to take a further 9 runs. Habby bowled the 2nd over but a front foot No Ball (Habby's speciality) was hit for 6, ie 9. More 6's from Abaid punished Habby for 27 off the over. Max managed to get some dot balls, but Akash still managed to reach 31 and retired in the over. 54 for 1 in the

3rd. Time Peters bowled the 4th over but Abaid set about him, taking two 6s before he retired. Aukatul got in the boundary hitting mode and 25 off the over for 79 for 1. The last over fell to John Pike who with the help of a great throw from Luke and a suicidal run from Faysal Ahmed had him run out for a duck. Aukatul finished 12 not out and the Thunders were 93 for 2. An impressive and easily defendable total. Noah Langham and Luke opened. Luke got a 4 off the first ball from Faysal Ahmed and was dropped off the next but the bowling was accurate and neither could get away. 11 off the 1st over. Inzaman bowled the second and he too was tidy with only 10 given away. Abaid had the third and managed to get Noah caught in the deep for 10 and 30 for 1 off 3 overs, which meant 64 from the last 2!! Aukatul also had a tidy over but Luke was not getting the strike and the score stuttered to 39 for 1 from 4. However, Shafil came in for some punishment in the last over as Habby retired on 32 and The Drifters staggered to 61 for 1 and a loss by 32 runs.

At the end of Day 2, The Drifters were in 2nd place with only Darjeeling or St Francis de Sales having a chance of demoting them. Day 3 is the last of the preliminary rounds and The Drifters have a day off. The next report will cover The Drifters progress through the final stages.