

Pattaya CC revert to bad habits and a self-inflicted loss to Kerala Tuskers CC by 3 wickets.

Kerala Tuskers (KTCC) are 2nd in the Bangkok Cricket League A Division with 3 for 3 wins for a reason – they have batting and bowling talent as they just come down from the Premiership, but they are not invincible. PCC made them work for their victory due to a herculean batting effort, worthy of a Man of the Match award by Mike Gerits with 129 not out in 71 balls including 10 fours and 9 sixes. However, some PCC's bowlers were woefully inaccurate giving away 26 wides in a total of 32 extras, a PCC record, which was a significant contributor to the loss. Again, PCC had problems holding onto catches although they were not alone in this respect, as all major batting contributors were dropped at some point. PCC remain 4th in the A Division having played most of the leading teams who still have matches against each other, so ground may still be recovered.

The match started early, 1230, at Horseshoe Point on a cool and cloudy 8th Dec day. KTCC won the toss and elected to bowl first, so Luke Stokes and Roshan Perera (back in Thailand) opened against the pace and accuracy of Mohammed Faheem and Sreyas Varghese. Sreyas found a little bit of movement off the wicket and Roshan got an edge to Srikanth Bhavadhan at wide first slip for a duck in the second over. Mike Gerits took the crease and both batsmen played steadily against a skilled KTCC attack who kept the run rate down to 6 an over for the first 7 overs. Mike survived a dropped catch by Jijomon KC when on 27 runs which proved to be a costly mistake. The 8th over saw a bowling change as Ratheesh Koyadan and Rajeesh Nair took the ball. Ratheesh bowled the only maiden over of the match and although neither bowler took a wicket, they were very economical at 5-7 runs per over. Luke was finding it very difficult to make progress as Mike hit most of the boundaries. The score was 56 at the 10th over and 93 when drinks were taken at the 15th over, some 10-15 runs behind an ideal score. Bowling changes after the break brought immediate results as Luke skied Abdul Jamsheed's first ball to Ratheesh at long on for a quiet 28 from 40 deliveries and PCC were 93 for 2. Morgan Prior, a debutant, took the crease but never looked comfortable and fell to Jojomon's spin, caught for 1 by Sreyas. 95 for 3. At this point Mike went on the rampage and smashed Abdul for four sixes in one over and Jijomon for two more which brought up his 100. Jainish Parikh tried to join the party but he fell to Jijomon, his second wicket, for 8 having been caught by Sadish Sivaji and PCC were 131 for 4 in the 19th over. At this point the run-rate had increased to 7.5 per over and a reasonable score looked feasible. Karan Mehta replaced Jainish and his swashbuckling style brought some reward against Ratheesh and Rajesh, but he too fell in short order for 17, caught by Vishnu Hari off Sreyas for his 2nd wicket. 183 for 5 in the 24th over. The last over saw Andre dropped at long-on and Mike bashed Mohammed for more sixes as he remained 129 not out and the score on 199 for 5.

KTCC were faced with a monumental run chase, but they were up for the challenge. PCC would have to play well and take all of the opportunities to keep KTCC under control. It didn't start well. Srikanth and Rajeesh opened against Andre and they took advantage of his pace by hitting 18 in boundaries whilst Andre leached 6 in wides. The highlight of the over was a brilliant throw from Jainish at mid-on to run out Rajeesh for 14. 25 for 1 off the first over. Habby Singh, who was the pick of the PCC bowlers despite 5 wides and the obligatory no ball, put the brakes on KTSS with some accurate bowling, but the run rate continued at a brisk 7 per over. Irfan Memon had a brief appearance as he fell for 1 from an absolutely brilliant running/diving catch by Luke Stokes off Andre's 2nd over. 29 for 2. The next wicket came in the next over as Habby removed Rajeesh's off stump for a duck and PCC were on a roll at 31 for 3 in the 3rd. This is where the match changed. Srikanth and Sadish protected their wickets and plundered runs where they could. The proceedings were not helped when Andy dropped a skier from Srikanth in the 7th off

Habby's 3rd over and Morgan misjudged another. Everyone except Marcus Chalkley had a bad over at some point. KTSS reached 100 in the 13th over and took drinks with the score on 122, some 29 runs ahead of PCC and on target for a narrow win. PCC needed to take wickets and curtail the run-rate. The 4th wicket did not fall until the score reached 163 in the 19th over when Sadish was bowled by Karan Mehta for 63. At this point the wickets fell fairly quickly but it was too late and the run-rate remained a smidgen too high. Jainish bowled an over of spin, for some inexplicable reason, and was hit for 14 runs, including 4 wides, but he did have Srikanth caught for 71 by Andre on the boundary, 171 for 5. Vishnu Hari only lasted 3 balls as he was run out by a good throw from Terry Pavia to the keeper and 178 for 6 in the 21st over. The last wicket to fall was Mohammed for 3, excellently caught by Habby on the boundary, but KTSS only need 16 more runs from 3.5 overs. Ironically KTSS won at 23.5 overs with another wide from Andre. 200 for 7 and a win by 3 wickets.

The MotM award was given to Srikanth Bhavadan for his 71 runs and 1 catch, which may have been a little harsh on Mike Gerits with 129 not out. PCC need to nip the horrendous extras totals in the bud if they are going to stay in contention for the final 4 of the table.

PCC would like to thank their sponsors, the Outback Bar, the Magic Bar, and the Pattaya Sports Club for their support and assistance.