

Sat, 16th Feb, 2008 - TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS WIN DIVISION 3 IN THRILLING FINALE

Final delivery had three countries hopes on the line

In a breathtaking climax to the Americas Division 3 Championship in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Turks & Caicos Islands clinched the title, and promotion to Division 2, with a heart-stopping 3 run victory over Belize.

In an extraordinary turn of events, three teams – Turks & Caicos Islands, Belize and Chile – all stood a chance of winning the championship off the final ball of the match. After being set 197 to win, Belize were 192 for 9 with one delivery remaining, to be bowled by Turks & Caicos captain Ralph Doughty. With Howell Gillett facing, undefeated on 62, there were three permutations - Chile on 12 points, Belize and Turks & Caicos both on 8, but both with superior net run rates than Chile - a six (or five runs) would give Belize the match and the title, bizarrely four runs would have handed the championship to Chile as this would have been a tie, and thus 2 points per team instead of 4 for the win, and anything less than four would be enough for the Turks & Caicos to triumph. Gillett's desperate swing did not make clean contact and only one run was scored, and Turks & Caicos were champions.

After being asked to bat, Turks & Caicos found the going tough against some disciplined bowling and energetic fielding. Only two batsmen failed to get double figures, yet top score was from opener Terrence Thomas with 26, in 41 balls with 3 fours.

It also took a fighting rearguard action from the Turks & Caicos lower order to post a reasonable total of 196 all out in 41.3 overs, as at one stage they were really struggling at 79 for 5 after 18 overs. Urial Gilbert, 24 off 33 balls with 2 fours, Howard Dickenson, 24 from 38 balls, 3 fours, and Wayne Williams, 18 not out from 43 balls, 3 fours, all made valuable contributions.

Pick of the Belize bowlers was Kenroy Roca with figures of 4 for 26 off 6 overs, three of his four victims coming from the Turks & Caicos top order. Kene Broaster continued his good form in this tournament with 3 for 57 in 10 overs, while Warren Anthony chipped in with 2 for 25 off 6 overs.

In reply, Belize laboured and struggled to get any momentum to their innings, although Turks & Caicos did their best to help bowling a total of 45 wides. When the fifth wicket fell in the 33rd over Belize were only on 115, with only talented Conway Young, with 29 off 67 balls, 4 fours, able to make any inroads.

In fact things got progressively worse for Belize, as after a minor recovery between Howell Gillett and captain Dirk Sutherland, who added 34 for the 6th wicket, three batsmen were out without scoring, all falling to man of the match Leroy King, and Belize were seemingly stranded at 159 for 9 after 47 overs, still 38 runs short.

However Gillett had other ideas, plundering 17 off the 48th over, and everyone around the ground sat up, including the Chileans. King bowled a superb final over of his spell, the 49th of the innings, only conceding 3 runs, and Belize were left needing 18 to win off the final over, to be bowled by experienced Turks & Caicos skipper Ralph Doughty.

A boundary from the first ball, smashed to the cover boundary by number 11 batsman Mykelt Anthony, followed by a no ball for only having three players inside the ring, followed by a wide, suddenly meant the equation was 12 runs off five balls, with the possibility of a tie also now significantly greater, but Doughty pulled it back, including that pressure last ball, and Turks & Caicos held on for the championship crown with a 3 run victory, leaving Belize tantalisingly close on 193 for 9 after their 50 overs, and the Chileans despondent as well after hope had flared for them.

Leroy King finished with fine figures of 4 for 33 in 10 overs, while Howard Dickenson recorded an interesting spell, great figures of 3 for 21 in 6 overs, but with 14 wides.

A brave undefeated 63 from Howell Gillett, scored from 98 balls, with 4 fours and a six, just wasn't enough for Belize on the day.

There was also great interest and drama in the other game of the final day, with debutants Peru registering their first ever international victory by upstaging Brazil, who only the previous day had done the same by shocking Chile in a run feast.

Choosing to bat first, Peru could only 136 all out in 33.1 overs, with only skipper Harry Hildebrand, 37 in 49 balls with 5 fours, and Hans De Wit, also 37, but in 80 balls with 4 fours, making meaningful contributions. Handily placed at one stage, 94 for 2 after 24 overs, to post a sizeable total, the Peruvians lost their last 8 wickets for a mere 42 runs, and a second Brazil victory beckoned. Jeetu Khemani was the best Brazilian bowler with 3 for 43 in 10 overs, while Ravindra Chanchlani (2 for 23 in 6.1 overs) and Vishnudhai Chaudhry (2 for 13 off 3 overs) weighed in with important spells.

However Peruvian opening bowlers Atul Sharma, later named man of the match, and Ahmed Nadeem had other ideas, and together they routed the Brazilian top and middle order to leave them at 28 for 6 after 14 overs. Both bowled unchanged for 10 overs each, Sharma finishing with 3 for 34, and Nadeem with 3 for 23.

A brief Brazilian recovery threatened between wicket-keeper Deepak Karunakar, who made 23 off 48 balls with 1 four, and Jeetu Khemani, 17 off 23 balls with 2 fours, but Tony Sanford took 3 for 15 in 4.2 overs to leave Brazil all out for 73, and victory to Peru by 63 runs.

With this result, Peru clinched a creditable 4th place, with Brasil taking 5th.

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	L	Pts	NRR
1. Turks & Caicos Islands	4	3	1	12	1.424
2. Chile	4	3	1	12	0.410
3. Belize	4	2	2	8	0.720
4. Peru	4	1	3	4	-0.782
5. Brazil	4	1	3	4	-1.436

Tournament Individual Award Winners

Player of the Tournament: Simon Shalders (Chile)
 Batting Award: Simon Shalders (Chile) 283 runs
 Bowling Award: Ravi Chanchlani (Brazil) 12 wickets
 Fielding Award: Kene Broaster (Belize)
 Wicket-keeping Award: Donovan Matthews (Turks & Caicos Islands)



Turks & Caicos Islands – ICC Americas WCL Division 3 Champions 2008



Simon Shalders (left) of Chile – Player of the Tournament & Best Batsman Award – receives one of his awards from Ricardo Lord, President of the Argentine Cricket Association, host country for the event.



Robert Casasola of Belize is trapped lbw by this delivery from Howard Dickenson of Turks & Caicos.



Conway Young of Belize plays and misses at a Urial Gilbert delivery.