

Llamas stunned by Chilean captain's outstanding innings while Brazil squeeze to victory over Belize

The first day of the ICC Americas Division 3 tournament in Santiago Chile produced contrasting victories for Chile and Brazil respectively, with the undoubted individual highlight coming from Chilean captain Simon Shalders, who blasted a brilliant undefeated 195 against Peru. His breathtaking innings steered hosts Chile to an imposing 323 for 5 in their 50 overs, ultimately too much for the Peruvians, who were all out for 160 in reply, and 163 runs short.

On the lower Craighouse ground there was a thrilling finale as Brazil claimed a nailbiting win over Belize by 1 wicket with 3 balls remaining of the final over. Earlier Belize had posted 183, all out in the 43rd over, but Brazil were victorious as Ravindra Chanchlani struck the third ball of the final over for four to take Brazil to 187 for 9.

Understandably Shalder's innings dominated the Chilean scorecard after they elected to bat first on the Craighouse upper field. His 195 came off 136 balls, and included 20 fours and 7 sixes. Guy Hooper weighed in with a solid 32, off 57 balls, with 2 fours, while Tristan Bradbrook (21) and John Fecci (20) also chipped in. For Peru, Nadeem Ahmed Ansad was the pick of the bowlers, taking 1 for 29 in his 10 overs.

Peru never looked likely to mount a threatening challenge against such a daunting target, and only skipper Miles Buesst, who made 32 in 69 balls, with 3 fours, and Chris Abbott, with 20, provided any real resistance. John Fecci struggled a little to find his line, but still proved to be the most effective of the Chilean bowlers, taking 4 for 24 in 6,2 overs. Kamran Zeb also bowled well in taking 3 for 32 in 7 overs.

After the Shalders onslaught on the top field, all the drama really unfolded in the afternoon on the lower ground as Brazil chased down the testing target set by Belize. Although Belize finished on 183, they really had Brazil to thank for this by being gifted 44 wides, as well as being let off the hook at 102 for 8 in the 27th over, the last two wicket stands pooled together 81 runs.

Jermaine Pook, batting at number six, held the innings together with a stubborn 34 not out, scored in 80 balls, with 4 fours. Together with Lloyd Casasola (20), 33 runs were added for the ninth wicket, while number eleven Mykelt Anthony bludgeoned 30 in 17 balls, with 2 fours and 3 sixes, as the last wicket added 48 runs. Best of the Brazilian bowlers were Deodat Randolph, 3 for 43 in 10, Ravindra Chanchlani, 2 for 34 in 10, and Rubabul Islam, 2 for 32 in 10.

Brazil struggled initially to gather any momentum in their run chase, and indeed when captain and key batsman Matt Featherstone departed in the 23rd over, making the score 59 for 4, not many would have bet against a Belize victory. But all-rounders Rubabul Islam and Deodat Randolph had other ideas, and a fantastic fifth wicket partnership of 90 steered the Brazilians into pole position at 149 for 5 in the 41st over.

Islam played the man of the match innings, making 76 excellent runs mixing caution and aggression, in 108 balls, with 6 fours and 4 sixes. Randolph weighed in with a great knock of 48, in 67 balls, including 5 fours. However, there was to be a few more twists in this absorbing contest, as Belize fought back to reduce Brazil to 182 for 9, with one over remaining. But Chanchlani and Miziara grabbed the glory for an outstanding first day win for the Brazilians. For Belize, Mykelt Anthony took 3 for 31 in 10 overs, in addition to two good catches, and Howell Gillett took 3 for 26 in 5 overs.

So results on day one thus set up a juicy clash between Chile and Brazil tomorrow, with the winner going to the top of the table, while Peru and Belize go into their encounter knowing that a loss means being knocked out of a contention, while a win puts them right back in the hunt.

It appears that Simon Shalders is now third on the list of highest individual scores in official ICC international cricket (Associate & Affiliate) after his brilliant undefeated 195 on day one for Chile against Peru. I suppose one could also argue it is third in all international cricket, as his innings beat the official ODI mark of 194, jointly set by Saeed Anwar and Charles Coventry. UAE's Arshad Ali made 213 against Brunei in the 2006 ACC Trophy, while Gerrie Snyman of Namibia made 196 in the WCL Division 2 tournament in 2007 – a match Namibia eventually lost to UAE. Shalders himself will sympathise with Snyman – in 2006 at the ICC Americas Division 3 tournament in Suriname, he made an undefeated 180 out of a Chilean total of 289 for 9, only for the Turks & Caicos Islands to reach 290 for 8 in reply.