

## **'Flying a Kite from Mid-off': a Review of the 2011 Kiteflyers Cricket Season by Ed Baxter**

***The Kiteflyers 2011 are:*** Ed Baxter (Captain) Miles Buesst, Nick Barsby, Kenny Steen, Dave Sharples, Gerhard Buttner, James King, Paul King, Damien Catchpole, Harry Hildebrand, Chris Abbot, Gavin Breeze, Gareth Evans, Santiago Chavez, Jimmy McManners, Dave Berry Frances Carr, Helena Houghton, Tegan Butler, Diane, Cally Nixon and Rodrigo Vega.

Under a fresh captaincy and a new shirt emblem, which looked suspiciously like Lima Cricket Club's (LCFC), the Kiteflyers took to the field in 2011 with no less than 5 new recruits from various countries. The Malawian Table Tennis champion, a miner and his son and the latest clone from Harry Hildebrand's production line of handsome young men gave the club a new cosmopolitan edge. Other welcome additions included the development squad in the guise of a couple of WAGS and their friends who gave the club a far better-looking edge than it has experienced in its 30 years of history as an expat football (and cricket) team.

Two notable youth players joined this year in the form of James King and Santiago Chavez both of whom were great additions to the development of Cricket in Peru.

The Kiteflyers Unit took to the field with an air of optimism and hope of a new start with a genuine chance of winning some form of silverware or other. As it turned out over the course of the season having played 12 games the Kiteflyers won 7 and lost 5, putting us top of the table with Chak De. The Kiteflyers - in the guise of the Flyers - won one tournament, the Caledonian Super 8s Trophy; and beat every team at least twice throughout the season.

Team	1 <sup>st</sup> 20/20 Apertura	Pairs	2 <sup>nd</sup> 20/20 Clausura	Pairs Development	Total
Kiteflyers	1	2	2	2	7
LCFC	1	0	3	1	5
Eigenosssen	1	3	0	1	5
Chak De	3	1	1	2	7

So excellent work boys and girls! It was great to see us turn it around after such a rubbish start against Chak De. Highlights of that game came in the participation of everybody in the team and some great fielding. Conceding 248 runs is a record in Lima from 20 overs so at least we'll go down in the annals for something. This game also bought Dave Sharples to the fore as a viable spinning option to turn to. Wheeling in like a purposeful Shane Warne, he leapt into his delivery stride, went over on his good ankle and rolled at least 3 times down the pitch. The ball he bowled was a thing of beauty, a googly turning back in on the batsman off a great length and was to prove to be the best ball he bowled all season. The game from there was less fun and despite some stubborn batting the right team won on the day. Chak De have been much maligned for their zealous appealing and ridiculous trouser wear, but it is hard to be negative for long about such an enthusiastic cricketing club from the sub-continent who produce the most random cricket results anyone can remember.

Moving swiftly on, the Kiteflyers next took on the might of LCFC, everyone's favourites to win everything. This game bought the Kiteflyers their first victory of the campaign, against the odds, and as it turns out, by around 50 runs. The highlights were the awesome ball from Miles Buesst that destroyed their soon-to-be one-man-team, Louis Grandjean; and some solid all-round batting that put on a competitive 138. The fielding here was great and this was probably the best team performance from the Kiteflyers with everyone chipping in with the bat and holding a lot of the catches that came their way.

Coming joint second in the Apertura tournament was surely a sign of things to come.

Harry "Luanahuana" Hildebrand set up an 8-a-side tournament whilst the Peru team was away in Costa Rica - and the Kiteflyers manfully won 2 games from 3. It was these games that enabled the likes of Gerhard, Dave Berry and co. to really get involved and try out their batting and bowling skills in the middle. It was great to see some lusty blows and dropped catches from Kenny ... who became more and more annoyed with himself every time. Despite the fact there were three goalmouths around his deep square leg position, they often avoided the customary boot from the keeper we are used to seeing after the ball flies past him on the football field.

The second T20 tournament started with real optimism for The Kites ... and Chak De were duly dispatched in the 1<sup>st</sup> game. Miles Buesst and Nick Barsby destroyed their brown-trousered batting line up with what was basically straight bowling. A minor wobble brought young James King to the crease who then calmly proceeded to knock off the remaining 40 or so runs and set up another enthralling encounter with Lima Cricket.

This time LCFC were missing a couple of players. As it turns out, they only needed one - who managed to hit 112 of about 12 balls! Hats off to Louis Granjean. Before this onslaught of massive proportions it must be noted that the best spell of bowling this year (swiftly followed by the worst) was to be bowled by James King: 4 overs for 4 runs and 1 wicket, a great performance which surely deserved to be on the winning side.

LCFC this year were full of sporting talent and produced some wonderful displays of cricket. Winning the Clausura was a deserved result and was a good indication of the organization of their team.

Only one T20 game remained however and that was won in emphatic style by the Kites who amassed the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest score of the season, 218, with the highest score of the season 119, by Nick Barsby. Unfortunately, John "The White Shadow" Bell had been unable to call upon his 11 players and with some rather strange bowling and batting actions, along with the name of the team, made for some kind of cricket circus. Added to this circus was the Ringmaster himself, Harry Hildebrand, who managed to pull off one of the fielding moments of the season. John Bell was at the non-strikers end when the batsman creamed the ball at Harry. I think Juliet had already written a 4 in the scorebook, (it was only Harry after all) when something spectacular happened. Harry "dived" like a falling tree and stuck out a hand leaving him prone on the ground. From a semi-yogic position he produced the

ball, throwing down the stumps and sending the Digger Bell back to the score hut. A ridiculous turn of events. Sometimes struggling to put a team together, Eighenossen made a manful attempt this season to be competitive so a well done to them.

Special mention must go to Chris Mahoney's Green Trousers which are a fitting tribute to Anish of Chak De!

It was a great way to round off the T20 tournaments and big credit must go to all those who participated in these tight matches. There were some great moments in the field, with the bat and with the ball and it was great to witness the development of some of the newer players in the team.

Let us not forget however the Development Tournament that ran side by side with the Clausura. The Kiteflyer club's only silverware of the season was won in emphatic style. A mix of players from the regular team and the soon-to-be Peru women's XI made up the Flyers, who won two of their games. Lusty blows from Frances Carr and some flamboyant stroke-making from Dave Sharples (he still keeps going on about his 6 over extra cover) meant that a lot of the totals that were made were unassailable by the other teams. Thanks must go to Kenny Steen and Dave Sharples for captaining and Helena Houghton, Cally Nixon, Tegan Butler, Frances Carr and Diane who all made their cricketing debuts this year.

### ***And so to the AWARDS!***

These awards are based on the votes of people who emailed/spoke to me over the past week. Those of you that have won one, congratulations, it is a prestigious thing to have on your CV.

***The "Phil Tufnell" Batsman of the Season:*** The stats don't lie. The leading run scorer and the man who got the highest score of the season, Mr Nick Barsby!

***The "31 off one over" Bowler of the Season:*** A tight category this one with mentions for Sharples, Nick and Miles. Baxter was strangely not nominated (!) but the guy with the Glen McGrath arm is the eventual winner - James King!

***The "Julian Walter" Fielder of the Season*** – This one was pretty unanimous to be honest. Springing like a cat from the darkest corners of Africa and through the mists of Lima Cricket Club, this man put his body on the line many times: Gerhard Buttner!

***The "Kevbot" Newcomer of the Season*** – Nominations for this one included Me(!), James and Kenny. Weirdly enough Nick wasn't even mentioned but the eventual winner was: Santiago Chavez!

***The "You were crap before but now you're alright" Most Improved Player of the Season*** – Kenny was a keen contender for this one but after falling over when bowling his very first ball of the season the only way was up and everyone agreed that the rightful winner for this award is: Dave Sharples!

***The "Hot Spot" Moment of the Season*** – Kenny's catching exploits and Harry's various shenanigans were all highlights but this has to be a team award. Conquering a full strength LCFC showed just how good a team we could be on our day.

***The "Dilscoop" Shot of the Season*** – No one really knew who to vote for with this one, but one shot is always mentioned: Gav Breeze's ridiculous back foot 6 over long off.

***The "Shane Warne" Ball of the Season*** - Dave Sharples curve ball (?!) was mentioned here but it has to be Miles' dismissal of Louis with the most vicious in-swinging Yorker of the season.