

Report on tour to Lima by Wheatons Cricket Club, Sat, 23rd & Sun 24th Nov, 2011
by Chris Hodgson.

On Saturday, Nov 23rd, 2011, we played a T20 game at LCFC against a touring side from Australia, Wheatons CC. After an initial hiccup of my car threatening to explode on the way to the ground, and some emergency mechanic work, we got started by a pretty prompt 1.30. Julian Walter won the toss for Lima and decided to bat. A decision was made with the Wheatons' captain that batsmen would retire on 20, and have the option to go in again at the end of the innings, as well as anyone who made a duck.

Nick Jones got us off to a great start and soon had to retire, and we managed to score pretty quickly throughout the whole innings. New lad Cameron Smith, old lad me, and a few others all made runs, but the star of the show was undoubtedly James King, who made his 20 runs the first time round after facing the preposterously low number of 5 (five) balls! Shots included a six of Appleyardian proportions that was only prevented from flying out the ground and straight into someone's window by a strategically positioned tree. Father Paul played the yin to his son's yang, and managed to balance this out with a duck - and then soon realized the down side to the 'ducks get to bat again rule', as he now faced what would be an unprecedented pair in a single T20 innings. He didn't let this faze him though, and managed to get a few runs, avoiding a place in Lima cricket history. We finished on a pretty solid looking 158 for 6.

Wheatons were keen to let everyone have a bat and opened with their oldest player I think - a cracking bloke who I sat next to at dinner that night and was 71. James King was as solid with the ball as he was with the bat, and Mark Bowie at the other end made sure they didn't get too comfortable by hoying down a few well-timed beamers! Wheatons put up a pretty good chase, but if anything, probably suffered from the 20 run maximum, as just when a couple of their guys settled in, they had to retire. Nevertheless, they pushed us pretty close and finished on 140.

Special thanks to Norberto, who came down and umpired, and made organizing things a lot easier.

On Sunday we had an entirely different Lima team out, captained by Mike Soulsby. Following in the footsteps of his illustrious club captain, he won the toss and chose to bat. This time, we capped batsmen's scores at 35. Mike raced out the blocks and was made to retire before I'd even reached 5 runs, I think! Other run makers included Ed Baxter, Ian Roughton, Chris Hodgson, Chris Mahoney, and a fair few others - pretty much everyone chipped in. Final score 266/8.

After a lunch laid on by our good friends at Chimu, WCC came out to bat. It was a while before we made a breakthrough, but when the first wicket came, it was a cracker - Chris Mahoney at first slip taking a low diving catch off Louis Grandjean's bowling, that was eerily reminiscent of real cricket. The Aussies batted well though, and certainly weren't struggling to find the boundary. Come the halfway mark, they were pretty much bang on the run rate, but looked like they might struggle for batsmen, having already lost 4 or 5 wickets. As the game moved on, the pace gradually slowed, and by over 30 or so, it was clear that they wouldn't make it. We managed to bowl them all out in the end for a round 180. The main wicket takers were Louis Grandjean, Dave Sharples and the evergreen Hans de Wit.

Then just in case anyone was in any doubt as to their origins, we finished the match by sharing a bottle of whisky at pitch side, and enjoying a stirring rendition of Waltzing Matilda, led by their legendary scorer and the bearer of one of the biggest shiners I've ever seen, 70-yr old Ian. (And ably assisted by our very own legendary scorer, Juliet Solomon)

All in all, two thoroughly enjoyable days cricket, with what was a really sound group. Our thanks for them for making it all the way out to our little cricketing outpost and being such good sports. We had the better of them over the two days, though I dare say they would have taught us a lesson if their average age had been 10 or 15 years younger than it was - an example-setting 60.