

Sun, April 17th, 2011 – ‘Las Cenizas’: England v Australia
By Australia Captain, Harry Hildebrand

The fairytale victory of the Australians in 2010 did not eventuate (as planned) on the glorious day that was turned on for *Las Cenizas 2011*. Last year, a recent arrival, Tim Nicholls, said he might be able to act as a pinch hitter opening - and went on to score 86, and then continue to dominate during the domestic season, winning Batsman of the Year!

This year we had no such luck: Richard Dewhurst (6*) looked promising until he pulled a hamstring; John Datsun (10) warmed up for an hour in the net and was too tired to hit anything by the time he got to the middle. Ex-Consul, Dan Sullivan (0), looked promising until he missed his third ball by digging a hole in the pitch and was clean bowled. To sum up: we were looking pretty ordinary after the first 10 overs ... but I digress!

Arrogant as ever, Peru Vice captain and England skipper, Mike Soulsby, showed surprise when he lost the toss and mumbled something about a short game when the jubilant Australians decided to bat. Soulsby's mumblings looked well thought-out when young James King (4) was unluckily run out by a charging Datsun; but then the Queenslander who has spent too long hanging around Kiwis, Nuck Futzpatruck (43) came to the crease and settled things down, then started taking it to the bowlers, once the opening pair of Nick Barsby (29 for 2 off 6) and Miles Buesst (26 for 4 off 6) were taken off.

Hildebrand (16) showed why he had not come in until further down the order. And then the might of Chris Mahoney (43) arrived at the crease, batting at number 7, and with the help of the little known Kevin Filippi (20) took the total to a healthy 168 by the end of the 30th over.

It was an inspiring display, particularly by Rex Littlewood (0), who had apparently travelled all the way from Australia for the game and got to face 2 balls! Something should also be said about the best fielder for the Poms being the evergreen, sprightly John Bell: a safe pair of hands, if ever I have seen one (bastard caught me!).

So in the wash up, Nuck Futzpatruck, Chris Mahoney, and Kevin Fillipi were the pick of the Aussie batsmen. The Pommie bowlers shared the wickets around, although Ed Baxter (30 for 2 off 6 - Ed buying a couple of wickets with the help of John Bell's catching!) and Julian Walter (20 for 1 off 3) were expensive. Tony Sanford (22 for 0 off 5) bowled well – for a token Saffer.

The pommies strolled out way too confident after an extended lunch break (thanks to the priority food service we received). Chris Hodgson (7) was soon caught at square leg and John Bell (0) missed a straight full toss ... making me wonder how he took such a brilliant catch earlier in the day!

James King (16 for 0 off 6) and Nuck Futzpatruck (28 for 2 off 6) bowled superbly and if it hadn't been for Mike Soulsby's occasional swipes out of the park (he only had one shot), they would have been under all sorts of run-rate pressure. Mike went eventually for 36, but Nick Barsby was still at the crease, and even though he swung and missed quite a few times, he connected often enough to start to take the game away from the Aussies, with the help of wicket-keeper/batsman, Ian Roughton (31).

The rest of the game is largely a blur, but the game-changing moment would have to have been ex-consul Dan Sullivan's first over (closely followed by his second over). Admittedly he had played a game of Hockey in between, but let's just say he was having 'length' issues and I

am not referring to a part of his anatomy. He nearly banged his big toe with the ball, not once, but at least 16 times over the two over stint. It was a successful ploy in the sense that he got a wicket, yorking Jon Lucas (1) on the 3rd bounce, finishing with figures of 34 for 1!

The Aussie Ambassador, John Wood (11 for 1 from 1.1 overs) then stepped up to the plate and took a wicket and we were looking good ... except that we were actually looking bad! With Miles Buesst not even needed to bat, Nick Barsby (47*) and Ed Baxter (19*) managed to bring home the bacon with a small matter of 3 overs to bowl.

Nick Barsby was duly awarded Man of the Match and the trophy (too fragile to travel) will be passed on to Mike Soulsby in the near future. The Ambassador agreed to fund some of the frivolity afterwards and many thanks as frivolity did reign supreme. It was great to meet so many new people; and great to be able to give Angus Sharpe and Rex Littlewood something to smile about after their [torrid few weeks](#).

The only downer was that the bloody pommies won the urn ... for the first time in Peruvian cricket history!