

With a splendid new Peruvian Ashes trophy – donated by the Australian Embassy in Lima – on offer to the winning side, and the Australian team resplendent in new, specially-made shirts and baggy green caps, this year's *Cenizas* match between England and Australia had an extra intensity.

Harry Hildebrand, acting captain of Australia, won the toss and had no hesitation in putting England in to bat for the first innings of 15 overs. It certainly looked like a good decision after 7 overs with England struggling at 39 for 4, with Cameron Smith having been bowled off the first ball of the day, by Garth Lawrence (2 overs: 2 wickets for 4 runs). However, a quick-fire partnership of 74 between Nick Barsby (31*) and England captain, Miles Buesst (49) pushed the score up to a par total of 129 for 6 from the allotted 15 overs.

The Australia reply started relatively quietly, with the first two overs yielding only 3 runs. But in the 3rd over, Garth Lawrence exploded into action, carting Nick Barsby's second over for 28. The carnage continued until the 7th over, when veteran spinner, Tony Sanford (2 overs: 1 wicket for 4 runs) bowled him for 49, as he attempted a slog-sweep. It was a remarkable innings, featuring 6 fours and 3 sixes, and put the green and gold firmly on top as they sought to create a decent first innings lead. To illustrate the dominance of Garth's hitting, his opening partner, Damien Catchpole, had scored 4 by the time the partnership was broken!

The rest of the Aussie innings was a little anti-climactic, as the England bowlers managed to wrest back a measure of control. James King's 36 runs helped Australia gain a 3-run lead, finishing on 132 for 6.

After a delicious traditional cricket tea, the England batsmen were back in action, and once again the innings started in low key fashion. After 10 overs, they were 47 for 2, and a score of just over a hundred was looking likely. However, at this stage, England's most destructive batsman, Louis Grandjean, had his eye in and he proceeded to turn the game on its head with a very rapid 60 runs, featuring 4 sixes and 5 fours. Some late hitting from Buesst (19) and Barsby (12*) took the score up to 154 for 5 from 20 overs. An overall lead of 151 runs, which was certainly within the scope of the strong Aussie batting line-up.

Again, the innings started slowly with Australia at 40 for 2 off 10 overs, and with opener Dan Sullivan retired hurt, having top-edged a pull into his own face. This time, though, there was no turn-around as wickets continued to fall regularly, with only Clint Donkin (17) putting up much resistance.

The door was slammed firmly shut in the 14th over, when Nick Barsby, whose bowling had been badly mauled in the first innings, came back with a vengeance to take an incredible 4 wickets for 2 runs in his one over and mop up the tail.

The Aussies finished on 67 all out, 84 runs short of England's total, and the trophy was handed to the England captain for safe-keeping until next year's clash.