

Sun, Feb 20th: Apertura Week 2: Kiteflyers v LCFC

A beautiful day and a big pile of shirts greeted the Kiteflyers and Lima Cricket Club on Sunday as match 3 of the Apertura T20 tournament got under way at 10:30am. The change in the weather also resulted in a massive change of fortune for the two teams who were pitted against each other for the first time this season.

The smart money was on Julian Walter's posh boys - and Chris Hodgson - against the Kiteflyer rogues, who had two captains of Peru returning to their ranks. The bookmakers proved to be wrong however as Kiteflyers Miles Buesst and Chris Abbott got off to a great start with the bat and were going great guns when Abbott was brilliantly caught by Chris Hodgson at short extra cover. From here on, the innings fluctuated with both teams in the ascendancy at times with some great spells of bowling and some lusty blows by the batting side. Highlights included a stunning catch by Mike Soulsby to catch a bewildered Hildebrand at deep square leg; and a big turner by Julian Walter to dismiss Nick Barsby caught behind by Jorge Pancorvo. Hildebrand seemed particularly happy with his golden duck and claimed "that it could have gone worse." I guess he could have been run out without facing a ball.

Julian Walter proved to be the bowler of the innings with 3 wickets; and Miles Buesst led the batting team scoring 69, with a meaty blow into the tennis court being a memorable moment.

The Kiteflyers eventually ended up on a relatively competitive 137 for 5 from their 20 overs. But, given the quality of the LCFC batting line up, with arguably the two best batsmen in Peru in their top three, it looked like it might not be enough ...

Step up Miles Buesst and Nick Barsby. A fantastic 6 over spell of bowling effectively destroyed any hope LCFC had of winning the game. The crumbling started with a great ball by Nick to take the edge of Mike Soulsby's bat and sail through to Gav Breeze who took a lovely catch behind the stumps. As soon as Soulsby had carried his duck to the boundary Hodgson lofted to cover and LCFC were reeling. The ball of the day was yet to come however: Miles sprinted up to the wicket and released an in-swinging bitch of a ball that pitched on the crease and straightened up to take out Louis Grandjean's off stump. The guttural roar that followed from Buesst told the story and the celebrations began as the Kiteflyers began to believe.

Julian Walter and Rob Champion gradually steadied the ship for 6 overs and a number of golf shots resulted in boundaries, but at drinks LCFC needed 100 runs off 10 overs. The pressure soon told and the wickets began to fall, notably to Dave Sharples, Chris Abbot and Damien Catchpole, who got both Walter and Champion to break the final resistance.

A great moment came when, from a typical Ed Baxter full toss, Tony Sanford absolutely mullered it flat and hard to the boundary. Blended into the background, however, was Dave Berry who leapt salmon-like to catch the rocket. Quite simply awesome.

When the final ball of the game came in the 20th over Lima were still scratching around in the 80s, and the Kiteflyers won the game by nearly 50 runs.

The Jonty Rhodes Fielder of the Day: Dave Berry for his quite frankly ridiculous catch on the boundary with one hand.

The Wasim Akram Ball of the Day: Miles rip-snorting yorker to dismiss Louis.

The Phil Tufnell Man of The Match: Miles again for his 69 and his great spell of bowling

With grateful thanks to Kiteflyers captain, Ed Baxter for this report.