

Las Cenizas, 2010

There is something about 'The Ashes' which brings out the best in the combatants...and Sunday was no different. In a game that we hope will assume a long history in Peruvian Cricket we saw an epic struggle between the 'proud criminals' from Australia and the over-rated upper crust of English Society. The underdogs were definitely the Australians Captain Hildebrand had only seen two of his charges in action ... and thought that Damien Wilkinson would be the (self-professed) gun. Instead the unassuming Tim Nichols ('I could have a bit of a slog at the top of the order') turned out to be a match winner ... but it wasn't just down to him. On with the story.

Mike Soulsby in his typically superior, pompous, English manner called 'heads' (the tosser ... the coin was Peruvian). After a revised call of 'un sol', he lost and the rough-looking (but astute) Captain of the Australian team opted for his charges to wield the willow.

Before we begin we should talk about the format of the game...as an Ashes Contest we decided that it must resemble a test match. Innings one would consist of 20 overs a side and innings two 15 overs a side. The second innings batting order must be the reverse of the first innings. No retirements in the first innings but in the second, batsmen must retire at 25...and the opening bowlers in Innings one could not bowl until 3rd change in the second innings. It was to be a long day of excitement.

Captain Hildebrand asked for a pinch-hitter to open with Nick Appleyard....Tim Nichols said he would have a go ('have a go'!!!!). The Australians started in a blaze of fury. Two 4s and a 6 by Nick in the first over set the pace but from then on Tim dominated. When Nick departed for 17 the two Tims (Nichols and Kernutt) were united for a 97 run partnership ... it was mayhem. Credit to the English for a flurry of wickets at the end but the score read 6/188 by the end of 20 overs at which stage Hildebrand declared (according to the rules). Tim Nichols had scored a superb 75 and Tim Kernutt 39. But the Nichols influence didn't stop there. He opened the bowling with Mark Bowie and they had the English struggling after 4 overs for 15 runs. Captain Hildebrand (in his wisdom) then took the openers off and began his search for Australian bowlers Bell and particularly Hodgson then started to make hay ... and the score line ballooned ... particularly after one over of pies from Chris 'Chubbs' Mahoney. It looked as though the Australian's 188 would not be enough. James Robinson bowled with promise ... Australian Consul Daniel Sullivan picked up two wickets and was immediately taken off ... in the end the English pulled up 25 runs short. Hodgson had scored 67 and Tim Nichols had taken 3 for not many.

At this stage huge thanks must go to Dan Sullivan for turning on a fantastic BBQ lunch. It was a fantastic way to celebrate Australia day. The BBQ had drawn a reasonable crowd (although they did not really compare to Bay 13 at the MCG) and all of them loved papas fritas ... because there were none for the players when they were ready to tuck in.

And so the second innings began with Australia 25 runs ahead. Captain Hildebrand, who had intelligently not batted in the first innings, strode out to the middle with the (self-professed) gun Damien Wilkinson. Suffice to say that the Peruvian ex-captain and the self-

professed gun scratched around like old women for half of the allotted overs (15) at a respectable (for old women) run rate of about 4...luckily the rules required Hildebrand to get the hell out of there (the opposition captain rightly suggested he was seeing it like a pea) and Mark Bowie and Chris Mahoney arrived to give some respectability to the score which ended on 4/91 after the 15 overs at which time Hildebrand declared leaving England to score 117 runs in 15 overs to win the game.

The excitement was evident ... the tension so high you could cut the air with one of the plastic knives left over from the BBQ ... not one person from the BBQ had stayed (there must have been better things to do).

Gavin Breeze and Derek Jones strode out to open the innings. Hildebrand, in his (dubious by this stage) wisdom, opened the bowling and proceeded to either bowl wides down the leg side ... or bowl down the leg side and get hit for six. Damian Catchpole who had bowled admirably in the first innings showed in his over that perhaps he was about done ... Chubbs Mahoney served up some more 'tripe' in his over... but then James Robinson came on with his offies and Nick made one of his numerous (four, I think) stumpings and things started to look tough for the English. Then Mark Bowie and Tim Nichols came on for 3 overs each and slowed the scoring to a walk ... the run rate was mounting. Tony (the Englishman who spoke funny) showed some batting form ... after being perhaps the bowler of the day (except for one over) ... but with the run rate mounting, it would come down to a slog ... wickets kept falling ... James Robinson came back on and collected some more ... but this only brought the more dangerous batsmen to the crease ... Soulsby arrived and started whacking it around ... until Tim Kernutt surprised him with a full toss which he duly hit down mid wicket's throat (he had earlier deceived the dangerous Will McKenzie with a similar ball) ... the wheels fell off the English machine, and they were all out in the 15th over for 91 ... the same score as the Australians in the second innings ... BUT 25 runs short of the target. AUSTRALIA were victorious.

The after-match celebrations were most enjoyable. In the Consul's absence, Julian Walter spoke glowingly about the game and, along with Mike Soulsby, the Captain of the English team presented the ceramic urn which will be filled with *Las Cenizas* to the Australian Team.

Until next year!!