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The Island Sports

Friday 18th September, 2009



Sri Lanka captain Kumar Sangakkara holds the Champions trophy during a press conference in Johannesburg, Thursday, Sept 17, 2009 ahead of the start of the ICC Champions Trophy next Tuesday in South Africa. (AP)

Champions Trophy

Sri Lanka happy to be underdogs

"One thing that we wanted to brush up is our fielding. Our fielding was disappointing during the Compaq Cup final. This is a side that has taken great pride in their fielding and if we can raise our fielding standards by 20 to 25 percent, we can ease the burden on our bowlers," - Sangakkara

Sri Lanka are happy not to be among the favourites to win the Champions Trophy. Reuters quoted captain Kumar Sangakkara as saying on Thursday.

Sri Lanka face South Africa, New Zealand and England in Group B, with only the hosts ranked above them in the International Cricket Council (ICC) standings.

South Africa, India and Australia have been tagged as favourites to win the second most important 50-over tournament on the cricket calendar.

"It works in our favour not to be mentioned as favourites because we will be able to operate under the radar and there will not be too much attention given to us," Sangakkara told a news conference. "Playing on

such a great stage will automatically mean teams will be out to show what they can do, and it will be all about the handling of pressure."

Sri Lanka will play the tournament's curtain-raiser at the Centurion on Tuesday taking on the hosts. While the Sri Lankans have been busy playing all forms of international cricket in the past two months, the South Africans have not played any form on international cricket since the T-20 World Cup in England, where they were beaten in the semi-finals by the eventual champions.

Pakistan.

However, Sangakkara felt that form won't be an issue when teams meet under lights on September 22. "Everyone in our team is confident, but our recent wins are not going to count for anything," he said.

"One thing that we wanted to brush up is our fielding. Our fielding was disappointing during the Compaq Cup final. This is a side that has taken great pride in their fielding and if we can raise our fielding standards by 20 to 25 percent, we can ease the burden on our bowlers," Sangakkara added.

Although the conditions in South Africa are generally not similar to those in Sri Lanka, Sangakkara said he had confidence in his squad.

"Fast bowling is now one of our main strengths," he said. "We now have bowlers who can bowl at 140km/h-plus and they have the accuracy and firepower. Coupled with our spinners, Ajantha Mendis and Muttiah Muralitharan, it's an exciting time for Sri Lankan cricket."

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Under-19 cricket

Maneeshan hammers 100 in 54 balls

by Reemus Fernando

Top order bat Gayan Maneeshan hammered a blistering 100 runs in just 54 balls inclusive of 17 fours and two sixes and remained unbeaten on 153 (in 128 balls) for Maliyadeva College to post a commanding 235 for four wickets at close in reply to Dharmasoka College's 167 runs on the first day of the Inter School Under-19 two day match, which commenced at Kurunegala yesterday.



Maneeshan

Scores:
Dharmasoka 167 all out in 49.4 overs (Nilusha Uththamadasa 22, C. Madushan 17; A. Kavinda 38, Gihan Mihiranga 38 n.o; W.D. Danushka 3/17, Nuwan Alwis 2/35, Chamikara Edirisinghe 3/39)
Maliyadeva 235 for four in 36 overs (Vajira Kumara 48, Gayan Maneeshan 153 n.o, Sandun Silva 16;

Richmond on top

by Rukshan Razak

A fine all-round performance by Irosha Samarasuriya and Dhananjaya De Silva placed Richmond College, Galle on top against Kingswood College, Kandy in their inter-school under 19 cricket tournament match that commenced at the University Grounds in Peradeniya yesterday.

Opening the pace attack for Richmond, Irosha Samarasuriya came up with an impressive performance to make the earlier breakthroughs, and later partnered with off spinner, Dhananjaya De Silva to account for 9 wickets, conceding just 53 runs and thus bundle out Kingswood College for a paltry 78 runs.

In replay Samarasuriya made a quick fire 20 while De Silva chipped in with a worthy 34 that took Richmond to 150 for 7 at stumps.

Kingswood skipper and opening bowler, Udara Hettige excelled to capture 4 for 43 with his impressive spell including seven maidens from 17 overs.

Scores:
Kingswood College 78 all out in 39.4 overs (I.K. Rabel 18, Chamila Gunasekara 12, Irosha Samarasuriya 5 for 26, Dhananjaya De Silva 4 for 27)

Richmond College 150 for 7 in 48 overs (Dhananjaya De Silva 34, Kusal Probodha 29, Irosha Samarasuriya 20, Udara Hettige 4 for 43, Lahiru Gannoruwa 2 for 38)

Trinity-Sri Rahula play friendly

by Rukshan Razak

Trinity College, Kandy and Sri Rahula College, Katugastota will commence their annual under 19-cricket seasons with a friendly fixture between the two schools today at the Asgiriya Stadium, Kandy.

Trinity, who had a fine season last year under the leadership of Sri Lanka under 19 player Rushan Jaleel, is led by Sajid Mohamed a top all rounder, while Kithmal Wimalaweera will stand as the vice captain of the team that has many talented players who have also have represented Sri Lanka under 17 and the Kandy district teams.

Meanwhile Sri Rahula this year has a combination of experienced and young players. The team is captained by all rounder Amith Thilakarathne while Gihan Viduranga will be his deputy. Like Trinity they too have many fine all-rounders who have also represented the Kandy district teams.

Trinity College Sajid Mohamed (captain) Kithmal Wimalaweera, Rushan Jaleel, Shameera Wijesuriya, Suresh Wickrama, Akila Jayasundara, Dushan Ranasinghe, Keheliya Atugoda, Kavinda Jayasooriya, Niroshan Dikwella, Tissa Bandara, Heshan Wanniyaratchchi, Chinthaka Gokula, Thushara Gunatissa, Dinuk Weeraratne, Aamil Anaz.

Sri Rahula College Amith Thilakarathne (captain) Gihan Viduranga, Sunimal Dissanayake, Sandun Dilhan, Nimesha Wanasundara, Ruwan Ratnayake, Roshan Subasinghe, Chethiya Amarasooriya, Rajitha Ranathunga, Nimesha Perera, Sameera Madushanka, Dinuka Jayathunga, Akalanka Bandara, Kanchara Thilakarathne, Srimal Madushanka

Under-15 Division I Cricket Final

St. Peter's complete hat trick beating Royal

by Reemus Fernando

Jason Bultjans and skipper Julian de Zilva shone with bat and ball respectively to help St. Peter's College beat Royal College by four wickets in the finals of the inter-school under 15 Division 1 cricket tournament at CCC Grounds yesterday.

Left hander Bultjans scored an unbeaten 67 runs and put on a vital 63 run partnership for the fifth wicket with Ranitha Liyanarachchi after skipper De Zilva impressed with a five wicket haul to restrict Royal College to 139 runs.

Chasing 140 runs to win, Petes lost three quick wickets within the space of seven runs to be precariously placed at 61 for four wickets at one stage. Royal applied pressure with spinner Poorna Aluthge accounting for opener Kavinda de Thissera, bowled for 16 runs, and also claiming the wicket of St. Peter's highest scorer of the season, Lahiru Milantha, who fell lbw for naught in successive deliveries (in the sixteenth over). Leg spinner Harith Samarasinghe had Dushan Hemantha lbw for naught (in the nineteenth over) to put a temporary halt to what seemed an easy chase.

But left handers Bultjans and Liyanarachchi combined for a 63 run partnership, to help the Petes cruise to their third consecutive title. Spinners Samarasinghe and Devin Pathmanathan removed Bultjans' companions later but found it hard to change the result of the

match result as the southpaw remained cool-headed to see Petes win with four overs to spare. Bultjans scored 12 fours in his unbeaten knock. He stayed at the wick-

et for 149 minutes and faced 116 balls. Earlier, deciding to bat first, Royal were heading for a commanding total as opener Imal Liyanage held the top order batting

late order collapse. He had opener Liyanage caught by Thissera for 32 runs to remove the anchor in his second over. Later he wrapped up the tail picking up four wickets including three wickets in his

fifth over (34th over). Royal collapsed from being 90 for 4 wickets at one stage to 111 for nine before Gihan Lakhara got them to their final score with an unbeaten 20 runs (3x4s).

While de Zilva bowled at a stretch, he was amply supported by off spinner Shasheen Fernando and leg spinner Dushan Hemantha who too bowled their ten over spells nonstop. Petes too were helped by two run outs early including a direct hit caused by Ranitha Liyanarachchi to get opener Ronaka Ahangama out for 16 runs.

De Zilva was adjudged the man of the match.

It was St. Peter's third consecutive Under-15 Division I Final victory following victories in the year 2007 and 2008.

Scores:
Royal 139 all out in 43.5 overs (Imal Liyanage 32, Ronaka Ahangama 16, Hashen Ramanayake 19, Gaurav Deva 11, Gihan Kalhara 20 n.o, Extras 23; Dushan Hemantha 2/32, Julian de Zilva 5/21)

St. Peter's 140 for 6 in 45.1 overs (Kavinda de Thissera 16, Jeson Bultjans 67 n.o, Ranitha Liyanarachchi 23; Poorna Aluthge 2/31, Harith Samarasinghe 2/29)



Jubilant St. Peter's College players pose for photographers with their school officials after beating Royal College by four wickets in the Under-15 Division I final at CCC Ground yesterday. (Pic by Nishan S. Priyantha)

