

# SL rugby fraternity rues ouster from HK Sevens

by Ravi Nagahawatte

Sri Lanka losing its berth in the 2010 edition of the Hong Kong Sevens has been viewed by the local rugby fraternity as a disaster.

Hisham Abdeen, former national sevens coach, told *The Island* that it's a pity that the islanders are out of the tournament despite making a strong impact at this year's edition of the tournament.

"The team was peaking and we were slowly making the mark in international sevens rugby. It's sad that we (rugby administrators) didn't think far and do everything possible to improve the country's sevens ratings," said Abdeen who coached Sri Lanka at the Hong Kong Sevens this year.

He said that he had often spoken about Sri Lanka needing more exposure at international sevens tournaments to gain experience as a team and ensure player progress and added, "Sadly this hasn't happened".

According to the International Rugby Board (IRB) official website, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, China, Chinese Taipei and Thailand have booked slots at the 2010 edition of the Hong Kong Sevens, based on their ratings in Asian rugby sevens. Sri Lanka has been rated tenth in the Asian rugby sevens ratings.

It is reliably learned that Sri Lanka's ratings in Asian sevens rugby suffered immensely by not contesting the Borneo Sevens in Malaysia, which is one of two IRB sanctioned tournaments.

Ajith Abeyratne, Chairman National Selection Committee, said that not making the line-up in Hong Kong would definitely have a negative impact on the country's rugby sevens. "Sri Lanka not being there (In Hong Kong) means we lose a lot in the international rugby scene. It's disappointing not to see our team continue playing in the Hong Kong Sevens," said Abeyratne.

Nizam Jamaldeen, a renowned inter-



Sri Lanka's rugby has received a big blow with the islanders being booted out of the Hong Kong Sevens (File Photo)

national rugby referee, said that Sri Lanka would have to work twice as hard as other countries to earn its way back into line-up of teams at the Hong Kong Sevens. "Look at the improvements made by other teams like Kenya, Zimbabwe and Morocco. It would be very hard for Sri Lanka to make a comeback but the authorities must do all what is possible to ensure a revival in rugby sevens, in Sri Lanka. When considering the prestige at the Hong Kong Sevens, Sri Lanka has made a big loss, because nothing comes

close to the Hong Kong Sevens in terms of an international rugby sevens tournament. It's essential now to back the players fully and provide them with all facilities in comparison to other competitive teams in the international scene. The SLRFU must do everything for the game at this juncture, or otherwise the game itself might die," said a concerned Jamaldeen who has both played and officiated at the Hong Kong Sevens.

Sri Lanka is at present preparing to host the final leg of the Asian Sevens

Series. Informed sources said the organizing of the tournament, scheduled to be held in late November, had hit a snag with one of the reasons being lack of finances.

SLRFU CEO Lasitha Gunertane declined to accept that the organizers of the Carlton Sevens had run into financial difficulties but added, "There has been a delay in starting practices for the national sevens team because some of the members in the squad are involved in the ongoing defense services tournament".

## 'SLC Official Website Down and Out'

### Sri Lanka Cricket Clarifies

We refer to your article titled, 'SLC Official Website Down and out' that appeared in the sports section of your newspaper on the 3rd of November 2009.

Please note that our website is under construction. We offered the contract to maintain the website to an organization, who unfortunately did not deliver the substance and the contents as per our corporate requirements.

Subsequently, we spoke to them and requested them to revamp the webpage. However, they instead, decided to close down. At the moment, our website is under construction and hence, the IT Department of Sri Lanka Cricket has no access to the password. This is the reason that we were not able to erase some of the old news items.

We have already called for tenders from interested parties to reconstruct our website and we assure you by January 2010, the SLC website will be the best among the Test playing nations.

Furthermore, we would like to note that you have misquoted the speech of our chairman delivered during the inaugural CEAT-SLC Cricket Awards presentation on Friday.

What our Chairman Mr. D. S. de Silva said was that CEAT and SLC have signed a three year partnership and he hoped that it would continue for a longer period. Mr. de Silva never asked a three year term for him to put right all ills affecting cricket.

The news item also quoted our Secretary, Mr. Nishantha Ranatunga as stating on the 8th of October 2009 that corporate bodies were scared to associate with the game's governing body due to the negative publicity it attracts. What Mr. Ranatunga actually stated was that there was a time period when the corporate world was not very keen to sign up with SLC due to adverse publicity.

However, times have changed and SLC is happy to state that in recent times, the Interim Committee of Sri Lanka Cricket has been able to secure major sponsorships such as, SLT/Mobitel, Reebok, Prima and CEAT.

This clearly indicates that sponsors have faith in the current administration, hence all the negative publicity that SLC received in the past is slowly but surely changing.

We have clarified the status of the webpage of Sri Lanka Cricket and what exactly our Chairman and Secretary stated and we would like this clarification to be published at the earliest possible date, with the same prominence as the initial article.

**Brian Thomas,**  
Media Manager,  
Sri Lanka Cricket.

## Rain reschedules basketball matches

The semi-final matches of the Under-19 All Island Schools Girls Basketball Tournament were postponed yesterday due to heavy rain and will be held today.

The first semi-final was scheduled between Sirimavo Bandaranaike Vidyalaya,

Colombo and St. Paul's Milagiriya while second was scheduled between St. Joseph's College, Nugegoda and Holy Family Convent, Kurunegala at Nugegoda, yesterday but the officials have decided to conduct the two semifinals today at the same venue. (RS)

## Mahanama bats for Adidas



Adidas launched its latest retail promotion campaign titled 'old 'n Alive' at its showroom in Havelock Town yesterday. The campaign provides for customers to receive a 20% discount on new shoes by handing over their old shoes. At the end of the promotion, which concludes on December 6, the old shoes will be handed over to the Athletics Association of Sri Lanka (AASL) to be distributed amongst athletes who are less affluent. Here former Sri Lanka cricketer Roshan Mahanama is seen presenting his old pair of adidas shoes to help promote the campaign. Also in the picture are Prema Pinnawela (Gen. Secretary AASL) and Fouzul Hameed Managing Director Hameedia. (Pic by Nishan S.Priyantha)

## Under-19 Cricket

### Bowlers guide Dharmapala to close first innings win

by Reemus Fernando

Off spinner Hasitha Wickramasinghe and leg spinner Hasitha Nirmal bowled lengthy spells to share six wickets between them for Dharmapala College to record a close first innings victory over Nalanda College in their Inter School Under-19 match which ended at Bloomfield Ground yesterday.

In reply to Dharmapala College's 237 runs, Nalanda who occupied the crease for almost 100 overs, were bowled out for 226 runs before rain ended the match early.

While Wickramasinghe bowled 35 overs giving away 64 runs for his three wickets, Nirmal bowled 29 overs for his three wickets. He gave away just 49 runs.

For Nalanda, Nipun Karunanayake top scored with 54

runs (in 115 balls) inclusive of five fours and one six.

#### Scores:

**Dharmapala** 237 all out in 73 overs (Nipun Pavithara 57, Rasitha Gamage 44, Dilrukshan Jayasundara 36; Nipun Karunanayake 2/28, Dinuk Jayasinghe 2/63, Suranga Tennakoon 2/18)

**Nalanda** 71 for 3 overnight 226 all out in 99.3 overs (Tharindu Vidanapathirana 34, Nipun Karunanayake 54, Primesh Dassanayake 29, Dinuk Jayasinghe 22, Sineth Gunawardena 32; Hasitha Wickramasinghe 3/64, Hasitha Nirmal 3/49, Dilrukshan Jayasundara 2/44)

#### Joes on first innings

Paceman Dinal Dharmarage and spinner Roscoe Thattil shared seven wickets between them to restrict Kalutara Vidyalaya to 132

runs and record a first innings victory in their Inter School Under-19 match which ended at Kalutara yesterday.

In their second essay, St. Joseph's were 72 for four wickets when rain forced a premature end to the match just three balls in to the second session.

#### Scores:

**St. Joseph's** 194 all out in 63.3 overs (Keshan Perera 25, Jaan Jayasinghe 56, Roscoe Thattil 31, Sachin Hewawasam 40; Brian Chapal 2/14, Savith Priyan 4/25) and 72 for 4 in 28.3 overs (Keshan Perera 15, Roscoe Thattil 10n.o, Sachin Hewawasam 13n.o; Brian Chapal 3/14)

**Kalutara Vidyalaya** 124 for 6 overnight 132 all out in 40 overs (Kushan Samithajith 43, Tharindu Uthpala 22, Chamika Madushan 22; Dinal Dharmarage 4/41, Roscoe Thattile 3/14)

## Joseph Vaz wins thriller to bag Bowl Championship

by Roshen Steelman

Joseph Vaz College, Wennappuwa recorded a thrilling win when they defeated Siridhamma College, Galle by one point in the Bowl Championship final of the Under-19 All Island Schools Basketball tournament that concluded at Ananda College courts in Colombo, yesterday.

Joseph Vaz were ahead by five points (33-28) at the end of the first half and they managed to defend their lead in the second half to record their final score of 57 against Siridhamma's 56 points.

Vidura Udyanga, who won the Best Player's Award, was outstanding as he accounted for 25 points for the winners and was well supported by Ramesh Vimukthi (14) who won the award for the Best Defensive Player.

For Siridhamma, Shalaka Madushan scored 20 points while Buddi Yass, who won the Best Offensive Player's award in the final, netted 17 points.

Ananda College, Colombo meanwhile received a walk over from Alethea International School, Dehiwala in the consolation final.

## Six-A-Side Softball Cricket Tournament

(For State and Private Sector Organizations)

Sri Lanka Telecom Cricket Association is organizing an island-wide Six-A-Side Cricket Tournament which will commence on the 28th November 2009 at Shalika Grounds, Narahenpita.

If you are interested in taking part on this tournament, please forward your applications on or before 15th November 2009.

### Prizes and Awards

**Champions - Rs. 50,000/=**  
**Runners up - Rs. 30,000/=**

In addition to this, Man of the series, Man of the match, Best batsman, Best bowler will also be awarded with cash prizes and trophies.

For further information and applications, please contact the following persons

**Mangala - 0714 765 102**  
**Kalum - 0714 210 148**  
**Chaminda - 0714 234 434**