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Episcopi vs Moufflons at Happy Valley, March 2013

Welcome

Welcome to the first CCA Newsletter! As the new season gets underway, we celebrate cricket in Cyprus with a look back to how cricket started here and get your cricketing brains working with some questions from Umpire Mr Bell.

Cyprus Cricket; a brief history

Richard Cox explains how cricket arrived on Cyprus.

Unlike other Commonwealth countries, Cyprus did not take up the game during the years of colonial rule. It was brought to the island by the British military stationed in Cyprus after the Second World War and confined to the British Bases, of which there are four: RAF Akrotiri, Episkopi Garrison, Dhekelia Garrison and RAF Ayios Nicholas.

In the 1980s, the expat community started to flourish and a team formed by them, 'The Moufflons' came into being and played in the then thriving inter-unit cricket. The CCA became an International Cricket Council affiliate member in 1999. In early 2000s, the community had expanded and Asian workers arrived on the island, bringing with them their love for cricket. About the same time, a num-

ber of Cypriots started to return to the island, after the troubles of 1974. They had been brought up in places like Australia and South Africa where they had learnt the game. Thus the Cyprus Cricket Association came into being.

It was not until August 2006 that we made our international debut, finishing as runners up in Division Four of the European Championship. In 2007, the Cyprus Cricket National team competed in the European Division 3 Championships where we finished in 7th place out of 8.

In 2009, Cyprus then hosted the ICC Division 4 Championships in Cyprus which turned out to be a great success for the Cyprus National cricket team winning the Division 4 championship. In 2011, Cyprus competed in the ICC Division 2 T20 Championships held in Belgium where we came 10th place in the tournament, beating Sweden in the play-off game for 10th/11th place and sparked a re-think on the value of the national team given ICC regulations.

The Future

Many challenges lie ahead for the future of Cyprus Cricket including the issue of a permanent Cricket ground and an administrative infrastructure which is realistic and sustainable within the ICC world. With the wonderful weather who knows Cyprus Cricket could become the warm-weather training base of choice in time and the delightful thought of some of the best European cricketers gracing the turf of Cyprus cricket.

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Shot of the Day!

Photographing cricket should be easy; unlike most ball games, you know where the ball is for most of the time; that the bowler's going to bowl the ball and that the ball's going towards the batter. If only it was that easy! **Andrew Pepper** explains why there are three major problems with photographing cricket; the bowler, the batter and the fielder.

The Bowler Problem

When I photograph a bowler, I take a burst of images as the bowler delivers the ball. In most shots, the bowler looks like a day old giraffe, with arms and legs everywhere, apart from one (or perhaps two) where he'll look graceful – and then there's a fair chance that his arm is right in front of his face. It might take 3 or 4 "bursts" – around 20 pictures – to get one where the bowler looks good, the background isn't too distracting, the ball is visible and there's no-one standing in the way.



The bowler as a day old giraffe - note the arm across the batter's face

The Batter Problem

Usually I try and get the batsman's face into a picture and it turns out that that simple aim is ridiculously difficult. The helmet's peak often puts the face into shadow adding to the grill getting in the way.



Arm in front of the face, nice portalo in background

However, what's *really* annoying is the batsman putting his arm in the way of his face. If I change position, it seems he adjusts his shots to make sure it's in the way.

The Fielder Problem

The fielder problem is really the catcher problem. Photographing a catch is the one time where the photographer has to react quickly; the batsman skies the ball and I have to try and spot where the ball's heading and pick the fielder who's going to (try and) catch the ball, focus and zoom to reframe the shot. The problem is doing all this *before* the ball is caught. In fact, that's just one problem – other players and umpires can block the shot, the background might be distracting, if the ball is travelling too fast then it may not be visible. To summarise, if you get a good shot of the ball being caught, there's a lot of luck involved!



The fielder just caught the ball - but as he's facing away from me, no-one would know.

And my favourite of the year?

And this is where it becomes a bit odd; my favourite picture from the season isn't of a cricketer; it was taken during the 6 a side tournament held at Aphrodite Hills. Those who were there will remember we had a storm; as the darkness gathered I turned around and photographed the approaching clouds. I particularly liked the dramatic light struggling to get through.



A Memorable final game for the 2013 season

Richard Boxall looks back to Mustangs v CCA League Select XI – 1 December 2013



The last game of 2013 turned out to be memorable because of the occasion rather than for being a closely fought encounter, as the match was more one-sided than had been expected. There were, however, some noteworthy performances and an insight into why Mustangs had become league champions.

The match was the brainchild of Rudolph Crasto, Mustangs' team manager and CCA committee member. He saw an opportunity to stage a prestige match and at the same time promote the game of cricket in Cyprus. Rudolph advertised the game as a cricket festival with the aim of spreading word of cricket on the island. He found sponsors and arranged buses to bring spectators to the Peristerona ground, as well as food for players and watchers to fortify themselves against the cool weather which made cricket viewing something of an ordeal.

The match was billed as the champions against the rest of the league. Mustangs had comfortably won the league, but there are a number of good players in the teams in Cyprus, and the CCA had assembled a strong-looking line-up for the occasion, captained by the national team skipper Mike Kyriacou.

Mustangs' captain Gabby won the toss and put the League XI in to bat, confident that his team could chase down whatever target was set. Opening batsmen Andy Mulkern and Muhammad made an excellent start with a partnership of 85 in 10 overs, Andy playing the anchor role while his partner attacked the bowling. However, once Happy took a sharp low catch to dismiss Andy off Amjad's, there followed a procession of batsmen to the pavilion and a fall in the scoring rate.

Muhammad was run out for 63 out of 94 scored by the 13th over, and most of the other big hitters failed. The League XI were indebted to Usman for a sensible, controlled innings of 50 which enabled them to bat through their 30 overs. He received

some support from Khurram (17), and a few lusty blows by Ali (18 not out) at the end of the innings brought the total to a reasonable 200 for 9 wickets.

Mustangs were sharp in the field, in particular Afridi and Happy, and well marshalled by Gabby, who set tight fields and handled his bowling resources well. He led from the front by bowling a tight spell of 6 overs for 24 runs at a crucial stage of the innings. The wickets were shared – 3 for the pace of Amjad, 3 for the wily spin of Afridi, and 3 run-outs.

The League XI must have feared the worst at the interval, knowing that Mustangs had a talented top order and that runs can come quickly on this small ground; it was crucial to make an early breakthrough. They did this, Shoaib had Happy caught behind in the second over. This brought together Mustangs' best batsmen; Afridi and Gabby, and they embarked on a match winning partnership of 136 during which they were largely untroubled by the League XI's wayward bowling.

When Gabby departed for a fine 55, Mustangs needed 57 runs in almost 11 overs, with 8 wickets in hand. Joshi rode his luck to add 32, and although Ali, the 7th bowler used, took a wicket in each of his first three overs, Afridi was still there to steer his team home in the 26th over, finishing with an unbeaten 76.

So Mustangs were convincing winners and reinforced their current position as the best team in Cyprus. The League XI were given a lesson in purposeful cricket and teamwork, and on the day too many of their players performed below par.

To round off an enjoyable day, despite the weather, trophies and medals were given to the victorious Mustangs, and Rudolph was thanked for his sterling efforts. With some players expected to leave Cyprus before the 2014 season begins, it will be interesting to see which team emerges as top dogs this year.

You're the Umpire

As we all know, the umpire is always right. Or at least he's always the umpire. For those who think umpiring is easy, **Phil Bell** poses some questions (answers below).

Q1 – A fast bowler comes in at top speed and bowls a full toss at the batsman which just misses the batsman's head. What does the umpire do?

- a) Congratulate the batsman on his escape
- b) Remove the bowler from the bowling attack
- c) Warn the bowler
- d) Send the bowler off the field

Q2 - A batsman sweeps the ball and gets an edge, the ball hits the wicket keeper's helmet which was behind the stumps and rolls over across the boundary line. How many runs are credited to the batting team?

- a) 4
- b) No runs, it is called a dead ball
- c) 5
- d) 9

Q3 A batsman steps out to hit a spinner and misses the ball, the wicket keeper removes the bails, the batsman's foot was on the line, what is the umpire's decision?

- a) Don't know, so benefit of doubt is given to batsman
- b) Not out
- c) Out

Q4 - The bowler bowls a delivery which pitches outside the leg stump. The ball swings sharply and hits the batsman in front of his middle stump. There is an LBW appeal, what is the umpire's decision?

- a) Not out
- b) Out
- c) Dead ball

Q5 - A batsman drives the ball powerfully, it hits the bowler's hand and deflects on to the wickets at the bowler's end and dislodges the bails. The non-striker is out of his crease. What does the umpire do?



For a change, Phil asks the questions

- a) The batsman who struck the ball is reported for assault
- b) Non-striker is declared run out
- c) Call for first aid for the bowler's hand
- d) Declares the ball dead

Q6 - A bowler while coming in to deliver a ball sees the non-striker trying to steal a single. Since the non-striker is out of the crease, the bowler removes the bails and appeals for a run out. The same instance had repeated previously, but the bowler had not taken off the bails but only warned the non-striker. What does the umpire do?

- a) Non-striker is declared out
- b) Not out, batsmen are allowed to steal a run
- c) Since the ball was not bowled, no decision needs to be made
- d) Calls it a no-ball

Answers

Q1 - a, Q2 - c, Q3 - c, Q4 - a, Q5 - b, Q6 - a

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