



NOT QUITE ENOUGH MEAT ON THE STICK

[Reuters] In one of the largest, most enjoyable and star studded Asian 6's Tournaments in recent times, the Kowloon Cricket Club was represented in fine fettle by the inaugural debut of the KCC Commodores.

It was a weekend of extremes, from wet to dry, cold to hot, beer to wine, burgers to burritos, and a veritable buffet of booze, bollocking, bruises and broken toes. One thing was for sure, there were more flying bats than a haunted house. But the chance to match it on the field with likes of Sir Viv Richards and Australian sporting icon Doug Walters MBE proved a big draw card for the event, co-sponsored by every big name in Asia from ANZ to Virgin Atlantic.



WHO COULD POSSIBLY SNEAK ONE THROUGH THIS LINEUP?

Ultimately bowing out in the Semi Finals to the host and eventual Cup

Winner, the Shanghai KBB, the KCC Commodores played valiantly against some of Asia's, and indeed the world's, best cricketers of present day and yesteryear.

Headed up by the inimitable Ravi, the KCC Commodores were under a strong Captaincy, and needless to say, well supported throughout. KCC's cosmetic Manager and perennial ring-in Arnold proved handy behind the stumps, but after a 2nd ball Peking duck whilst trying to hit the adjacent bell tower for the RMB\$1,000 prize, he found a new talent in auditing the scorers who clearly left their abacus at home.

Traditional big guns Mojo and Barney indeed took command in the Commodore's first two successive [victorious] matches by massacring Chesterton Petty's and The Shanghai Dragon's best efforts with little regard or respect. Mojo, surprisingly blocked out one over in immaculate fashion, and then refreshed, off he went again.



RAVI HELD HIS TROOPS TO A STRICT TRAINING REGIMEN.

And in a game where big hitting, tight fielding, and bowling economy is paramount, in the second match the KCC Commodores found themselves in need of a new skill, night vision. If hurricane wind and sideways sleet wasn't making things challenging enough, wrapping the second round win at 6.50pm in complete darkness was indeed glorious.

When the final ball was struck by the opposition, who needed an unlikely 7 to win, it went missing in the outfield with KCC players scouring the dark corners of the oval inch by inch as though Sir Viv had lost his diamond earring.

Only through combined quick thinking by TR [who told the batsmen “you can only run 6!”] **and Farooq** [who found the ball teetering on the boundary and proclaiming “FOUR” saved the Commodores from an early exit!

Sentimental KCC veteran and Commodore spokesman, BG, is best remembered over the weekend for his somewhat candid summation of the new ‘after-dark’ wide rule, “WHAT...? If they expect us to give away 4 runs for a wide with no re-bowling, then if I’m bowling the last over and they need 25 to win, God help them. There’ll be 6 wides and I’ll tell them to go F* themselves!”** Spoken like a true veteran of the game, with the heat and passion to inspire a team of young men to victory.



PRE-MATCH STRATEGY PLANNING AT BREAKFAST

The Sunday finals received top billing, attracting the live cameras for CNN and ESPN, and even an excessively drunk commentator with a loud shirt, and even louder beer-gut, who simply didn’t know when to stop talking!



This was the business end of the tournament, and the Commodores went head to head with favourites, the Shanghai KBB for a grand final berth. In a close match bolstered by Barney slugging 32 off not very many, the Dragons were chasing a modest, but to be fiercely protected, 61 runs.



THAT CRANE CAME IN HANDY TO FETCH MOJO'S & BARNEY'S BIG HITS!

The Commodores kept Shanghai KBB pinned early but despite taking a few early wickets, the Cricketing Gods [two of which were under the Steinlager Tent seen either smoking spliffs, demolishing a keg in frothy fashion and puffing through a carton of cigarettes] smiled on the opposition as they found opportunities to nudge past the Commodores in the final over.

Alas, the commodores went down to eventual champions the Shanghai KBB, who in the final beat Hong Kong’s hard hitting Lamma Island entourage in what proved to be a mild mannered finale with low scoring, incomplete overs and plenty of air shots.

For all but the most combat fatigued competitors, the Shanghai 6’s tournament ran on a 24 hour clock, and no sooner had the daytime activities concluded, the nighttime activities commenced - often only

separated by a quick shower and in BG's case a slap of Vaseline through the hair and a splash of Old Spice!

Sponsors benevolently saw to it that no-one paid a dime for Steinlager, and sampling of this fine brew was at an epidemic level amongst the more serious of the cricketers.



WHO WAS UNDER THE TABLE, AND WHAT WAS SHE DOING?

As the age old adage suggests, **“The team that plays together stays together”**, and the Commodores were a glowing role model for the younger generation in off-field conduct. Selecting dark alleys, unknown pubs away from the bright lights of the big streets and prying eyes of autograph collectors, the Commodores stayed out of the spotlight [and local papers], which is more than the HK Lamma team can say, who tested the might of Shanghai's best bouncers at a local nightspot. From the swollen heads, bruises and stitches the next day, these were not the types of bouncers the HK Lamma crew were used to facing!



MANOJ, RAVI, TR AND SANDEEP WERE GENUINE TOTTIE MAGNETS! JUST WHERE WAS FAROQ?

The welcome Chinese banquet dinner proved a fine Friday night feed, but the gala dinner at the Grand Hyatt Shanghai was a Saturday show stealer. Shaghai's finest was served in no uncertain terms! Tales from the cricketing crypt from both Sir Viv and Mr Walters MBE kept the 200 strong dinner contingent well entertained.



“HEY MANOJ, DID DOUGIE JUST SAY C***T, OR WAS IT BG?”

All in all the Shanghai Sixes was a weekend to test the stamina of Asia's cricketing elite, and it became apparent early that Doug Walters MBE was to be the yardstick by which one defined their upper limits of “lagerism”. So long as there was a cigarette in one of his hands and a beer in the other, then it was ok for oneself to keep pushing on.

Needless to say, the event drew to a close and the brew flowed a lot thinner after seeing Australia's cricketing legend retire before tea...



OK FELLAS, THAT'S THE WRAP FOR THIS YEAR!