

My Dear Friends,

Well nothing much changes in the world even when we are without our Skipper. The trip to Jacana filled many of us with a sense of foreboding. On arrival we were met with a monosyllabic opposition captain and a toretic team mate, who was a lovely bloke but his random yelling of profanities needed to be contextualised for our team mates as they arrived. As is my want I lost the toss and they chose to bat. I had resolved to field in any event notwithstanding the weather forecast, as I had total faith in our bowlers to have them back in the sheds before tea.

We were very grateful to have two youngsters in Coug Junior and Eamonn J to assist in the field. Ashley offered to fill the gloves of the keeper from Prague and became our 5<sup>th</sup> keeper for the year and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cougar to do so. POK and KG opened the bowling and kept them to a meagre score with tight bowling well backed up in the field. KG was his wily, accurate self and got the first wicket when Eamonn took a very sharp catch at backward square where he had just been moved by your scribe. He bowled 6 overs on the trot and finished with 1 for 16. He was relieved by SOK who was a little rusty at first but was able to remove Jacana's second best bat given out LBW. We were impressed that we got the LBW as we had no official umpire and it was good to see a home team umpire raise the finger. We thought nothing of it as the batter seemed to leave peacefully enough. At drinks however, matters were a little fraught, with the other opener threatening his team mate, the umpire, with a charring to the head and the victim of the decision ranting and raving. Calm was restored eventually and full credit to the young umpire for holding his ground.

POK was fast, accurate and devastating in the end. He bowled his 9 overs over two spells with 4 maidens and took 4 for 13. They had no answer. Normie bowled 6 and took 1 for 22 in a very solid effort. I spent much of the day informing my decisions in the field by asking myself "what would Gauch do?" hence I fielded in the slips. I did though go off script to give Juka a bowl and he rewarded the decision with 3 for 12 off 5. Old Hazard may be a good 7<sup>th</sup> bowler in the finals. We got them for 87 which was a good result on a fast outfield and on a very hot day. The fielding was excellent with Eamonn, Surgeon, Odie, SOK and POK the standouts. Coug junior was outstanding behind the stumps and even had a little of the Old Cougar's hand movements.

We started our innings with 6 overs before tea and Possum, with a newly handled Excalibur was in fine fettle. Odie was backing him well, although he seemed in somewhat of a hurry. Possum was out after we passed their score for 41 with 5 fours and 2 sixes. Odie was run out for 18 and they look like a solid pair for the remainder of the year. SOK hit 4 fours in his 17 and was surprised by their spinner. POK batted well for his 23 and was out caught on the boundary. The most notable batting was from the Surgeon who made yet another ton. Sam was resolute in defence much to the chagrin of Jacana who sledged him mercilessly and then exploded to get to his century with 20 fours. He was calm and collected throughout. Another great innings. We finished a long day on 8 for 240 and many of the side repaired to River Boat Joe's Poker night which was an outstanding success.

It is most likely that we won't need to play again on Saturday but I will keep you informed once that has been finalised.

Cheers  
Brett