

Dallas wins 2nd NTCA Championship in 3 years

The Final Game between DCC1 and PCC1 that would determine the Premier League champions of 2009 proved to be worthy of the hype and the quality of cricket played was high. Cubs had reached the final with some convincing victories going undefeated in their last 10 games. DCC had stuttered and stumbled along the way to reach the finals and not many gave them a shot to overcome the Cubs that were playing great cricket to reach here. Vinod Shankar won the toss and promptly elected to bat. DCC had dedicated the game to Adil Malik as this was his last game in NTCA as he was moving from Dallas after the game. Orlando Baker and Adil showed patience and great running between the wickets against some very good new ball bowling from Goutham Morab and Radha. Baker was playing the sheet anchor while Adil hit some big hits to keep the run rate ticking over. At the 12 over break, DCC were 47/0.



Sitting(left to right) – Rahul Kukreti, Sudharshan Chavva, Carl Thompson, Vinod Shankar, Orlando Baker, Adil Malik

Standing(left to right) – Adib Motiwala, Halpesh Patel, Chaitanya Varma, Ashwin Shankar, Charan Gowda, Kartik Vittala, Shail Bhat, Jignesh Desai, Hemant Lalwani

Suprathim bowled a fiery spell after the break accounting for both Adil(35) and Rahul Kukreti. Charan Gowda and Bakes continued pushing DCC total forward and just a couple overs before the next break Charan was caught at the boundary trying to break the shackles. DCC went into the 24 over break with 106/3. Right after the break, Jignesh Desai and Orlando stepped it up and pushed the scoring taking twos and threes and caused several misfields by putting the fielders under pressure. Jignesh(25) was looking to take the Cubs apart when he was very well caught by Goutham with the score around 150 in 30.

Goutham was bowling a great spell with the wind but runs were leaking from the other end, with Halpesh Patel and Carl T playing cameos. Baker was eventually bowled for 80 with just 2 balls to go in the innings. It was a tremendous display of how to pace an innings and how much fitness plays a part in batting. He was running the ones and twos with the same intensity in the first over as he did in the 35th over. DCC ended up with 197/6 after 35 overs.

Cubs started very well in their chase getting to 55/1 at the 12 over break. Jignesh had accounted for Prajwal Shetty stumped by Rahul just before the break but going into the break cubs would have been the happier of the two sides. The next 12 over session saw DCC totally choke the Cubs for runs. Jignesh, Vinod and Shail Bhat combined to give away just 39 runs in the 12 over session picking up the wickets of Arun Jasti and Hemant Jetti in the process. The DCC ground fielding in the session was outstanding as Cubs were 94/3 after 24 overs still needing 104 runs in the last 11 overs.

Adil Malik replacing Vinod went for a few but most importantly got the two big wickets of the Cubs team. Vivek Inampudi was caught by Jignesh and then Rahul Kukreti made tremendous ground running to the 30 yard circle at squareleg and diving full stretched to pick up Gautham. This was easily the catch of the match and the turning point of the game as Goutham was looking to take Cubs home. At the other end, Shail foxed Suprathim with a beauty for Rahul to effect another stumping. Sai Madhavapeddi on one side was playing a lone hand, running hard and getting Cubs closer and closer. After 30 overs the game was still evenly poised with Cubs needing 45 to win in 5 overs. Considering they had managed 60 runs in the previous 6 overs, it did not look out of reach.

Cometh the moment, cometh the big man. Carl T was brought into the attack and boy did he deliver. The batsmen played and missed and then played and missed again. From 45 off 5, the equation became 39 off 4. Seeing the success of pace, Baker was brought on from the other end. Bakes bowling against the wind also only conceded 6. 33 required off 3. Carl T again bowled his heart out conceding only 5 as the batsmen just could not get bat to ball. 28 off 2 overs. If Cubs had to get close, they had to get as many as they could with Bakes bowling against the wind. For some reason, the batsmen tried to play square instead of going with the wind and hitting straight. A suicidal run out and a boundary off the last ball saw Cubs still needing 20 off the last over. Sai was not going down without a fight though as he scored a boundary off the first ball. 16 needed off 5. This upset the big man as he let one quick yorker rip through Sai to leave the stumps shattered. Next ball, Anoop came in but same result, yorked. with 16 to get off 3 balls, it was all over. The Cubs got a couple of 2's and DCC had won the Premier League for the second time in 3 years.



It felt like difference between the two sides was dealing with pressure. The aging DCC team's ground fielding was far superior to the young Cubs. The fielding effort by people like Jignesh who was outstanding at covers, Adil Malik, Sudharshan Chavva and Carl T was unbelievable. The Cubs on the other hand could take a lot of heart from the way some guys like Arun Jasti, Prajwal and Sai batted. Also their bowling was very good. They have a young talented team and its only a matter of time before they win league Championships.

Another great aspect of the game was the spirit in which it was played. Considering it was such a big game for both teams, there were no incidents and both teams played aggressively and yet never crossed the line. A huge credit for this also goes to the outstanding umpiring job of Anwar Shahabuddin and Saby Sanyal.

