

The view from the middle: GCC U11 tournament 23-4 November '13

These observations are mine about what the boys did collectively well, and could work on for future matches/tournaments. For many of the players, this was their first exposure to a cricket tournament. There was a lot of cricket played on the weekend, and from some of the conversations I had with the youngsters (and their parents) they really enjoyed it.

Squad Players:

Arjun Gill	Gianni St Hilaire	Henry Harbottle
Ricky Bucheli	Gregor Wellard	Wilf Chisolm
Charlie Martin	Oliver Steele	Nikhilesh Acharya
Hamish Williams		

Overall: For the tournament we were only allowed to field 8 players per match. But because Zurich and Luxembourg were each a player short, the boys who missed out on a match for GCC got a game for one of these teams. The idea was to give the players exposure to as much cricket as possible over the weekend. I thought that all the boys saw improvement in their skills, confidence and understanding of the match during the course of the weekend. Four matches played, and four matches lost, but each game could have gone either way. Without describing each match in detail, I will highlight on these points below.

There is truly a team spirit that happens over a weekend like this. I thought the boys all played nicely together during the matches and in between. Building this camaraderie is a great thing about team sport.

Fielding: The fielders all ran towards the ball to pick it up quickly, and throw it in nicely. There were a few run outs of opposing batters because of this. There were a number of diving stops which prevented the opposition from getting simple runs off the walls. I think each boy had done well to save runs, and keep the pressure on the batsmen. In particular, Gregor was singled out for his tireless attempts in the field to prevent 2s and 4s from being scored.

Things of note:

- 1) Although there were some nice catches made, there were also a few dropped, which could have been held. These might have been sharp tries, but could make a difference in a match.
- 2) All fielders were doing well to encourage each other in the field.
- 3) Glad to see good use of the long-barrier to stop the ball.
- 4) Good backing up from the fielders to avoid overthrows.

Bowling: Overall, this area keeps improving and I thought all boys generally bowled well and kept disciplined. It is important to keep the ball straight onto the wickets, if the batsmen miss we can get wickets, or at least keep the runs to a minimum. Line and length. In the third match against Basel, the boys were defending a total of 63, and really had Basel nervous with some tight and accurate bowling. This game could have gone either way.

Things to work on:

- 1) It is important for the bowler to be happy that all fielders are ready for the next delivery. Please do not just keep rushing in to bowl when you have the ball in your hand.
- 2) Each bowler should have a plan of what he wants to do with the ball on each delivery.
- 3) To make things much easier on the wicket-keeper keep the ball straighter.

Batting: I thought that the boys generally batted very well. Indoors the bounce is easier to judge than outdoors. I think in the first game (against Luxembourg) the team was able to score only 40-odd runs (and of these only about half came off the bat, the others were extras). By Sunday's 4th match, the team scored over 80 runs. This is a tremendous improvement.

Things to work on:

- 1) The initial stance, the batsmen got back into the initial position before each delivery.
- 2) Wait on the ball and hit it along the ground. There were a number of catches we gave to the opponents. We need to keep working on this.
- 3) Have a look where the fielders are standing and try to hit the ball through the gaps – remember indoors by hitting the walls with the ball you can score runs.

Calling and running between wickets: The calling could have been better; there were a number of runs left on the field. The batsmen need to talk to each other and call loudly and clearly. I think Charlie and Arjun did this particularly well in the match against Zurich.

Finally: It was a good team effort, well played boys. This is just the first step in the journey of your lives in cricket. We have other tournaments coming in the future. Our philosophy is to try and give every player a chance to bowl and to bat, and thus we change the batting and bowling order regularly.

We now know that we have a couple of teams near us in this region, and Cossonay in particular are interested in playing more matches together. This is a great way of learning what needs to be done.

Arnold Bucheli