

ICC World Cricket League Division Five

Guernsey v Nigeria

Played at Grainville, St Saviour

on 24 May 2016 (50-over match)

Toss won by Nigeria who elected to bat

Umpires: AJ Neill (Ire) and JM Williams (West Indies), Tabarak Dar (Hong Kong)

Match referee: DT Jukes (Eng)

Scorers: HAJ Mountford (G) D Young (N)

Guernsey won by 10 wickets (with 187 balls remaining)

'Dominant Guernsey able to enjoy a leisurely lunch' by Rob Batiste

LOS ANGELES and a World Cricket League Division Four challenge looms ever closer for Guernsey, but they won't be getting ahead of themselves. Two of the stiffest challenges lie ahead today and Friday, and, while one more win will possibly ensure them of a place in Saturday's final, they know all too well that a third- fourth place play-off against Nigeria remains a distinct possibility and that the Africans surely cannot be as accommodating again as they were at Grainville yesterday. That said, this was a fine all-round effort by Jamie Nussbaumer's side, victory coming shortly after 2.30pm – and before lunch – with 31.1 overs to spare. Making two changes from the team that also swept aside Tanzania, Guernsey did just about everything right, except win the toss.

The wicket was the same used for the Oman-Jersey game of the previous day and the thought from the Guernsey camp was that it was not such a bad thing to lose the call as the wicket would become slower' as the day wore on and go some way to negating the main Nigeria threat – their pace bowlers. Of course, such was the Sarnians' domination, the wicket saw only 52.1 overs play on it and got something of a rest, as did Nussbaumer's squad, who got most of the afternoon off. The first two balls of the day saw Newey beat Onikoyi all ends up and when the third found the thick edge of his bat, Ferbrache took the catch at waist height without the need to move. Newey so nearly collected another in his second over, with the new batsman, Abdulazeez, flashing hard and edging between keeper Jason Martin and first slip Tom Kirk. Martin might have left it for his colleague, but went for it himself only to get just one glove to the ball and spill the chance.

The first boundary came in Newey's third with a leg glance to fine leg from the diminutive opener Ayannaike, but Nigeria, highly criticised by their own manager after their humiliating collapse against Oman, were very largely concentrating hard and managed to prevent any further losses through the first 10 overs to be 33 for one. The captain introduced himself for Stokes and the 12th over, needing one more wicket for 50 victims. In ICC international cricket and part of a double change, Nussbaumer introduced his younger brother Luke down the hill for the next and with almost immediate dividends. With the last ball of his first over in international competition, he got one to jag back just enough to beat Ayannaike's tentative forward push and there was a huge cheer from the GCB chairman – Dave Nussbaumer – on the sidelines and back-slaps from all his team-mates.



Luke Nussbaumer's impressive debut

Guernseysportsphotography

His next over brought another wicket, this time Adegbola edging to Kirk, whose selection is certainly a big plus for the slip cordon. The debutant bowler was making a much better fist of matters than his brother, who going around the wicket to the left-handed leaked boundaries with loose balls down the leg side.

The captain soon withdrew himself from the attack, Max Ellis coming on from the northern end for the 18th and staying put through to the end. Immediately, he found turn and having nearly picked up a catch at slip off his second ball, he found another edge next ball and Kirk took a good catch. Until now the left-handed Salako Abdulazeez had looked secure, but in Nussbaumer's next over he produced a peach of a yorker to castle him and Guernsey's young tyro had struck a major blow. Nigeria were in disarray and Ellis struck again in the 22nd, finding the outside edge again and Kirk gratefully snapping up another catch.



One of Tom Kirk's 5 catches

Guernseysportsphotography

Briefly Nigerian dug in, paying respect to the loss of wickets column, but it did not last. The same Ellis-Kirk combination again worked a treat five overs later and Nigeria's mini recovery had taken a blow. Kirk then picked up another wicket as the new man inside-edge into his stumps and, soon after, the captain returned at the pavilion end and with a successful leg before shout had collected that prized 50th international wicket.



Max Ellis celebrates another wicket

Guernseysportsphotography

The end was near and although Kirk spilled one sharp chance Ellis, the very next ball Olympio edged again and Kirk grabbed the opportunity with both hands to claim his fifth wicket and give Ellis fine figures of 4 for 9.



Max Ellis during his spell of 4 for 9

Guernseysportsphotography

The Nigerian opening attack of Onwuzulike and Opke are formidably physical pairing, but they sprayed it around enough for Stokes to cash in with a couple of early boundaries to settle the nerves both on and off the pitch. The first two overs produced runs but the quickies soon tightened their lines and both Stokes and Smit were careful to give them due respect. Coming down the hill, Opke was notably slippery, but Stokes played him masterfully, letting anything remotely wide go through to the keeper. Opke got one to climb on to the youngster who gloved it to just short of second slip and to compound the Nigerian's frustration the ball hit the fielder on the head in trying to take the catch and left him in need of treatment off the pitch.



Matt Stokes cover drives

Guernseysportsphotography

Stokes picked up a welcome five as he benefited from four overthrows to add to his scampered single and the new Leicester recruit continued to look at playing off both front and back foot with an air of assurance which his partner lacked for much of the innings. Smit's footwork was leaden he struggled to time anything, but with victory assured he finally found his touch and in one over blazed four boundaries to finish on a high.



GH Smit opens up for another boundary  
Guernseysportsphotography

'A debut to remember for the "Big Austrian"' by Rob Batiste

TEN years after making his senior island debut as a budding leg-spin bowler in a friendly, Luke Nussbaumer made a spectacular full first appearance – when it mattered. The previous evening he had been concerned that he might miss out on any of the action in this World Cricket League Division Five tournament which, thus far, is going so swimmingly for the Greens, but thrown the ball early on in the Nigerian innings at Grainville, he took a vital wicket in his first over and soon added two more to break the back of the top order. Spinner Max Ellis then demolished the lower order and with the help of a succession of catches from first slip Tom Kirk, ended the game with figures of 4 for 9 and the man-of-the-match award with it as Nigeria submitted meekly for just 99.

Eighteen overs and one delivery later, Guernsey openers Matt Stokes (48) and GH Smit (38) had rushed their side to a 10-wicket win, the third victory of the week and puts them back on top of the table ahead of Oman on net run-rate.

Luke, who goes by the moniker the 'Big Austrian', said he had only learned of his call-up 15 minutes before the toss and there was barely time to get nervous. 'I

was more excited, I guess,' said the 27-year-old, who has transformed his game since taking up fast bowling and given up on the leggies. But, as he admitted, he had feared he might not see any action this week. 'I wouldn't say I was surprised that I was playing, but maybe after missing the game at Farmers I was not sure if I'd get a look in. 'I was happy that the wicket came early and I was surprised how early I came on. It was nice to get a newish ball.' Guernsey can now guarantee themselves a place in Saturday's final with a win over Jersey today.