

ICC WCL Division 7 Guernsey 2009

Guernsey v Bahrain

ICC World Cricket League Division Seven 2009

Venue King George V Sports Ground, Castel on 20th May 2009 (50-over match)

Balls per over 6

Toss Bahrain won the toss and decided to bat

Result Bahrain won by 25 runs

Points Guernsey 0; Bahrain 2

Umpires SA Bucknor (West Indies), TC Magee (Ireland)

Referee DT Jukes (England)

Reserve Umpire PK Baldwin (Germany)

Man of the Match Ashraf Yaqoob

MATCH

Guernsey Press

'Guernsey pay the price for middle overs "go slow"' by Aaron Scoones
Guernsey's slow batting problem reared its ugly head again yesterday. It was touch and go on Monday as the Greens took their time reaching Gibraltar's 227 at Port Soif. They crossed the line only in the final over. But after a more positive performance against Japan the day after, when they won by seven wickets at the College Field, they again were too slow when batting against Bahrain at the KGV yesterday. With an imposing total of 257 looming over them the Sarnian batsmen clammed up in the middle overs. They finished 25 runs short.

They have it all to do now and win their two remaining group games with Nigeria and Suriname to make Sunday's final, which will book their place in the Pepsi ICC World Cricket League Division Six at the end of the summer.

"It's very disappointing," said Guernsey captain Stuart Le Prevost yesterday evening after the Bahrain defeat. "Obviously it was a decent total and they batted well. We got a few early wickets but their middle order shored it up for them. We were a little bit too slow in the middle overs. We didn't rotate the strike."

Another criticism that was doing the rounds among the sizeable Guernsey support enjoying the sun was that Le Prevost should have gone in higher up

the order than number six. He scored 47 runs off 40 balls when he came in to bat during the 35th over. But it was effectively too late by then.

Island manager Dave Hearse admitted afterwards that the batting order would be reviewed before today's must-win match with Nigeria. "We're going to look at the order tonight," he said "We thought we were going to get closer, but we left him with too much to do. Probably Stuart should have batted higher. It was possibly a mistake."



Jamie Nussbaumer takes the catch © ICC/CricketEurope

After losing three early wickets to some tight opening spell from veteran swing bowler Mark Renouf and former Hampshire professional Lee Savident, Bahrain's Ashraf Yaqoob and Adil Hanif gave Guernsey a lesson in limited overs batting. The pair proceeded to put on 178 for the fourth wicket. They ran well between the wickets and made sure they dispatched the bad balls with typical sub-continental power.



Not sure if Mark Renouf is pleased to take a wicket or he is signalling a six off his bowling

©ICC/CricketEurope

Yaqoob ended up with a man-of-the-match 101 off 116 balls that contained two beautiful straight sixes off Jeremy Frith's left-arm spin.

Hanif hit 69 before Le Prevost took a sharp catch at short extra cover off Frith and Yaqoob went the following over when Blane Queripel held on to a skier at mid-on off the same bowler.



How did you survive that delivery? © ICC/CricketEurope

Needless to say getting rid of these two was vitally important to the home side as at one point they looked like setting a total of 270 plus.

The Sarnians did well to drag it back in the final overs and they were clearly pleased to be chasing 257. But in reply, with more than five an over needed, they again got off to a bad start as Matt Oliver holed out for 10 and then Savident, who was not his usual fluent self, chipped left-arm spinner Qamar Saeed to Imran Sajjad at mid-on who dived forward to take the catch. But the Rovers man rightly held his ground as Sajjad threw the ball into the air extremely quickly and it was debatable as to whether he actually had control of the ball. However, umpire Steve Bucknor, with more than 120 Tests to his name, was happy and Savident had to go.

With Frith and Kris Moherndl in the middle this was when things started to dry up as they struggled to get Saeed, who was replaced by the equally good left-arm spinner Tahir Dar and Zafar Zaheer at the other end, away. Moherndl ended up with 19 runs off 42 balls before he was lbw to Dar, following one of his many enthusiastic appeals, in the 29th over with the score on 97.

With Ross Kneller coming to the middle, the much needed impetus came about which was helped with Frith starting to execute his sweeps against the spinners.



Ross Kneller drives off the back foot © ICC/CricketEurope

Frith, who had come under criticism for his batting earlier in the week against Gibraltar was the next to go with 65 to his name from 96 balls.



Paddle sweep from Jeremy Frith © ICC/CricketEurope

The score was now on 133 and in the 35th over, the run rate was more than eight an over. Le Prevost proceeded to play some delightful shots but with wickets falling at the other end, the run rate crept above 11 an over with seven overs remaining. It was all over when he departed in the 47th over and with 49 runs required but no one told Queripel who hit a six and a four through midwicket off successive Saeed deliveries.



Ben Ferbrache run out © ICC/CricketEurope

If Guernsey are to win today against Nigeria and against Suriname on Saturday, odds on they will meet Bahrain, who on yesterday's performance looked the best team in the tournament, in Sunday's final.

Bahrain's captain Yaser Sadeq certainly thinks that this will be the case. "We expected Guernsey to be our biggest rivals but it turned out they have a better team than we expected," he said. "It's too early to say, but I'm sure it's going to be a final between ourselves and Guernsey."

'Pressure back on' by Aaron Scoones

Singapore is a step further away for Guernsey after they lost to Bahrain in their top-of-the-table clash yesterday. To ensure they make the top two and Sunday's final, which would see them qualify for Pepsi ICC World Cricket League Division Six in Singapore at the end of August, they now need to beat Nigeria today and then Suriname on Saturday.

Island manager Dave Hearse is remaining positive. "We won our first two games so we're still in a good position," said Hearse yesterday. "It's a big game tomorrow against Nigeria. It's possibly the biggest game in a long time with probably the most riding on it. Today means we've got to win the last two."

Up against an accomplished Bahraini batting line-up that set an imposing 257, their number four Ashraf Yahoob, put in a man-of-the-match performance with 101. Together with Adil Hanif, who hit 69, they put on 178 for the fourth wicket. In reply Guernsey reached 232 with Jeremy Frith top scoring for Guernsey, for the second day running, with 65.

But they never looked like mounting a serious challenge. If Guernsey are successful in their last two group games they will more than likely come up against Bahrain again in the final.

"They are the best batting unit we've played against in a long time," said Hearse of Bahrain.

In yesterday's other matches, Nigeria defeated Gibraltar by 88 runs at the College Field. And there were extraordinary scenes yesterday morning at Port Soif as Japan had Suriname reeling at eight runs for eight wickets at one point. The Surinamese crawled to 66 all out which the Japanese knocked off for the loss of two wickets to record their first victory of the week. Japan's left-arm opening quickie, exiled Aussie Patrick Giles-Jones, had the remarkable figures of 10 overs, five maidens, seven wickets for nine runs.

Today Guernsey take on Nigeria at the College Field, Bahrain and Japan play at Port Soif and Gibraltar meet Suriname at the KGV.