

## **Jubilant Indians win a thrilling semi-final against Balltown Eagles (by Ravi Kandarpa)**

The second semi-final match between Balltown Eagles and Jubilant Indians started at 3 PM on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup>, under ideal pitch conditions and surprisingly cool weather. Knowing the importance of the match, both the teams are ready to put in their best efforts. After the two teams got equal number of votes in the opinion polls, the audience was pretty much sure of a very close and exciting finish.

Umpires Anand and Muthu walked on to the pitch with the two captains Tapan and Sarath for the toss. Tapan, having won the toss for all the earlier matches, made it again in the semis and elected to bat. The openers, Uma and Ganesh, gave a slow start to the Jubilant Indians and managed to get 8 runs in the first three overs. They had to face some tight bowling from Ravi and Senthil. Sekar bowled an expensive fourth over giving 14 runs (2 fours, 2 twos & 2 singles). Venki broke the opening partnership at 5<sup>th</sup> over by taking the wicket of Ganesh at 26 runs. Again in the next over Senthil caused a damage by getting the crucial wicket of Uma with a splendid catch from Sarath Sr at mid-wicket. But, it left 2 danger men Subrat and Vinod in the middle. Sekhar, struggling to get into form through out the tournament, suffered with some huge hits from both the batsmen. Vinod hit a spectacular four on the offside off a short ball from Sekhar in the 7<sup>th</sup> over. But Sekhar took the revenge by getting Vinod out the very next ball caught behind. At the other end, Venky has done some sensible bowling and contained the batsmen. The way he got Karthik on the 10<sup>th</sup> over, with a very slow delivery clearly displays his bowling talent. Sekhar has taken a great catch in the deep. Tapan joined Subrat in the 11<sup>th</sup> over, but could not contribute much and sent back to pavilion soon with a score of 1 run. He was clean-bowled with a deadly inswinging delivery from Ravi in the last ball of the 11<sup>th</sup> over. Sekhar conceded 7 runs in the last over and finally the Jubilant Indians could make 72 in 12 overs.

Balltown Eagles opened with captain Sarath and Rami Reddy. They desperately needed a good opening partnership. But, Sarath got out to the very first ball of the innings, from a full toss from Uma. Then Senthil joined and hit a four in the first over. The second over from Vinod got the wicket of Ramireddy. He never seemed to be comfortable in the opener slot. Unfortunately, Senthil also got bowled from a deadly delivery from Karthik. They lost 3 batsmen by going for big shots in the first three overs at a score of 9. Venky and Sekhar are in the job of repairing the Balltown innings. The 24 run partnership of was broken when Uma got Sekar out on the 5<sup>th</sup> ball of 6<sup>th</sup> over. It was a short ball and Sekhar trying to pull it, only managed to get a top edge and Senapathi made no mistake. Then Ravi joined Venky and started playing some sensible cricket by rotating the strike. Keeping in mind that that he and Venky are the last recognized pair, they were never ready to lose a wicket. Ravi hit 2 fours in an over from Vinod, which brought the Balltown Eagles back into the game. They started scoring 1s and 2s at a rapid pace and particularly their running between the wickets is terrific. With just 9 runs needed of the last 2 overs, the crowd were completely on its feet with full of excitement. Ravi started running for an impossible run and ended up in a tragic runout. And Venky got bowled from a speeding full toss from Uma immediately. This has almost turned the match back into Jubilant Indians' favour. The tailenders Sarath sr, Saroj and Praveen were under complete pressure and could do nothing in the end. The fighting Balltown innings has come to an end at 69, just 3 runs short. A great knock of 28 by Venky and 18 by Ravi went in vain. Some great bowling display by Karthik and Subrat has contributed much to their win.

The match was really exciting and thrilling and would definitely be a memorable event in every TATASCHER's life.