

## Livingston 1st XI fall to Holy Cross

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 22 June 2017 22:01 - Last Updated Monday, 17 July 2017 19:58

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Saturday saw the mighty Livingston 1st XI entertain Holy Cross in a Division 2 match.

Looking at the table, the two teams were separated by mere percentages, both having an indifferent start to the season. The weather forecast was a pleasing one, with sun predicted for the duration of the day. A far better prospect than the previous days. Unfortunately there was a little damage to the pitch, which meant the toss was a difficult one. One perhaps better to have lost. Robert, skipper, decided that should he win, we would bowl, hoping that the pitch would dry out during the day making it easier for batting second.

On paper the team was strong, and saw two returning Livingston players, in Sobi and Jazim, as well as a debut for wicket keeper, Mark Lambson. Robert won the toss, and Livingston took the field for the first innings.

Naveen and Kashif opening the bowling. The opening pair for Holy Cross looked to be on a mission from the beginning, throwing their bats at anything short of a length or wide. In the 3rd over off Naveen's bowling A Bilal flicked a ball off his pads to Hannah at Square leg, and unfortunately the chance was dropped. This proved costly as he went on to score 42.

It is important to mention that due to the Holy month of Ramadan, a core of our players were in the middle of their fast, so the toll was telling. The weather got warmer, and with no possibility of water, it was physically draining. Robert changed his bowling, and chances came. Unfortunately a few (4) catches went down, and as the old saying goes, "catches win matches."

The breakthrough finally came with the score on 41, Naveen tempting the batsmen into a risky shot, and Hannah held on well for the catch. Another 40 run partnership came next until Ramesh got the dangerous A Bilal out for 42. Hamad got in on the act when he bowled T Fishley for 14. Partnerships were key for Holy Cross' innings and another 40 run partnership was finally broken by Ali, A Minto for 42. A good innings by him. Some tight bowling then brought the wicket of O Mahzar caught behind by debutant Mark for 16. Sneaky runs then followed as they tried to go for the slog, resulting in Ali picking up both Jaffrey and Ashraf to finish with 4 wickets in the innings.

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Holy Cross had posted 202, meaning that we needed to bat well.

A much needed tea was taken, Jenny providing a cracking spread.

Robert and Kashif opened the innings and we had good start of the first over. Unfortunately on going for a second run, Robert was run out at the non strikers end. This brought Hannah to the crease, and misjudged the pace of the wicket and drove a ball straight down Mid Off's throat. Scottish wickets are a far cry from the bounce and pace of wickets down under, so understandable that Hannah needs time to adjust to our glorious Scottish wickets.

The fall of the wicket saw Sobi emerge with his whites looking like they haven't been washed since last season (spoiler: they haven't). He survived two close LBW calls, and looked good. Kashif was looking good at the other end until a ball clipped the bails and he was bowled for 21. Jazim came to the crease, and with Sobi looked to take their chances. Jazim was dropped, and could not make the most of the spare life and was then bowled for 10. This brought the in form Ahmed to the crease, and looked good. Sobi was then caught trying to increase the run rate for 17. Hamad came to the crease and with Ali brought on a 55 run partnership. Both players showing good promise with rotating strike and clean hitting. Hamad was then bowled for 17. The weather was now taking a toll on Ahmed, and he was struggling.

Naveen, a powerful hitter, then tried to hit out as the asking rate was over 10 an over now, and he was bowled for 7. The chances were slim now, as the asking rate was over 12 an over. Ramesh joined Ahmed, but couldn't force the result meaning Livingston lost by 35 runs. Livingston finishing on 167 for 7 off their 40 overs.

Ahmed was not out on 67 and Ramesh not out on 7.

There were some positives from the game, but in all honesty Holy Cross outmatched us in all departments.

Hopefully this weekend will see the kickstart to the season that is needed.

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A few honourable and dishonourable mentions:

**Man of the Match** : Ahmed Ali for his 67\* and 4 wickets

**Clown of the Match**: Every dropped catch

**Shot of the day**: Every shot from Ali that went to the boundary

**Ball of the day**: Hannah's later swing that just missed the inform batsmen's edge.

**Stylish player of the game**: Sobi for wearing his trousers, unwashed since last season.



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