

JCA league hits off with victorious Menara

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JAKARTA: The JCA Apple Coal 2011-2012 League began on Sunday with two spellbinding games of the highest order.

Menara CC notched up a massive 272/6 in their allotted 35 overs after being sent in to bat by Indorama CC, at Cibubur cricket ground.

After achieving a respectable 149/5 at the 24-over mark, Menara skipper Mahesh Thadani cut loose with a pulsating 86 not out, the last 11 overs producing an incredible 123 runs. Rahul Thukral (36) and Mohammed Ishaq (25) helped swell the total, while skipper Vishwajit Tripathi (3-35) was the best of the Indorama bowlers.

Not to be outdone, Indorama started their chase in a positive manner and raced to 183/6 (24 overs). Govind Sodhani's whirlwind 98 and a fine supporting knock from Vishvanath Kaushlik (43) kept Indorama very much in the hunt.

However, Menara held their nerve to clinch a 1-run "thriller", with Indorama just failing at the post, ending on 271/9 in 35 overs. Yogesh Malhotra (3-40) and Gajendra Asaliya (2-59) took the bowling honors for Menara.

League debutants TOPI XI took on GMIS XI in what was to be another tooth-and-nail battle.

Taking first crack at the wicket, TOPI XI ran up an imposing 230/7 in their 35 overs at Karawaci cricket ground. Tim Gutsell (71), veteran Robert Baldwin (53 not out) and Kookie Pamnathan (48) made full use of the bone-dry pitch, while Jalaj Chaturvedi (2-33) bowled his heart out in what were arguably trying conditions.

In reply, GMIS XI got off to a flying start in pursuit of their target and were well placed at 111/2 (12 overs) and 188/4 (24 overs), and beginning to sense an unlikely victory. However, the TOPI bowlers bounced back to bowl them out for 228 in the 31st over, a mere 2 runs short of the target.

Zaim Ahmed's masterful century (104 not out), and Shannon Court's 25 runs, proved to be in vain as Kookie Pamnathan (4-45) and TOPI skipper Evan Stead (3-39) held back the boys from Kemayoran with some inspired bowling.