

AUCC Premier Match Report – Saturday 19th October

AUCC v Howick Pakuranga – Colin Maiden Park

Our Men's Premier side suffered their first defeat of the season at the hands of a star studded Howick Pakuranga at Colin Maiden Park.

Saturday's visitors boasted a line up full of International and first class players including Blackcaps Kyle Mills and Colin de Grandhomme and Aces Donovan Grobbelaar and Andrew de Boorder. And, if the odds weren't already stacked against our boys, an injury to 2012/13 season player of the year Vishi Jeet during the warm up certainly did not make things any easier.

Uni skipper Marc Ellison won the toss and elected to bat first and despite finding run scoring tough in the early stages Matt Ansell was able to battle his way through to a half century at the top of the order against an impressive seam attack.

When Ansell was dismissed for 53 Varsity looked in trouble on 96/4 with only 16 overs to go but a quick fire 40 from Chris Dineen upped the tempo before debutant Ayush Rajoura stole the show.

The off spinning all rounder played a major role in the premier reserves two-day championship winning side last season and made an immediate impact on his premier debut. Rajoura struck two sixes and three fours in a quick fire half century before finishing 53 not out from just 46 deliveries.

Rajoura and Warren Barnes (28no from 25 balls) shared an unbeaten 45 run seventh wicket partnership from just 38 balls helping Varsity reach a solid total of 209/6.

Early wickets were a necessity for our bowlers when Howick's reply got underway and Adrian Fong duly delivered dismissing visitors skipper de Boorder in the second over. However it was one way traffic from that point forward as Blackcaps T20 player de Grandhomme showed why he is one of the most feared batsman in domestic cricket.

De Grandhomme was in no mood to hang around crushing a huge six and seven fours before becoming Rajoura's first ever premier wicket with 71 runs to his name.

With the visitors still needing 75 further runs for victory at this stage our boys may have had some hope but PJ Cairns (73no) and Aces all rounder Grobbelaar (34no) guided their side home with 13 overs and seven wickets to spare.

The result leaves Varsity with one win and a defeat from two Jeff Crowe Cup matches. This coming Saturday they face another Auckland Cricket powerhouse Suburbs New Lynn before meeting Ellerslie in a replay of the match which was washed out last weekend on November 3rd.

**AUCC Prens 209/6 (A Rajoura 53no, M Ansell 53, C Dineen 30, W Barnes 28no)
lost to Howick Pakuranga 212/3 (A Rajoura 1/23) by seven wickets.**

Next Match – Saturday 26th October

AUCC v Suburbs New Lynn – Ken Maunder Park