

## **German Club Championship 2008**

### **DSSC Berlin Retain German Title**

**DSSC Berlin, East League champion and reigning DCB champion, secured its sixth German club championship title with a well-fought victory over HSV Hamburg, winners of the North League, at the Mümmelmannsberg ground on Sunday 14th September in Hamburg. This was the third championship win in a row for the Berlin club.**

The DSSC captain, German international Javed Iqbal, won the toss and decided to bat in bright, but windy conditions.

The team got off to the best possible start and were into double figures in the first over, thanks to some strong batting from Dilshan Rajudeen. He carried the game to the HSV bowlers, cleverly keeping the strike, ably abetted by his opening partner Imran Khan. When Dilshan went with his score on 63 and the total 86 for 1 wicket, Asif Khan, coming in at one down, then took over the leading role and while not forgetting his defensive duties, played the HSV bowlers to all parts of the ground. Imran Khan then fell, having made 36 valuable runs, with the score at 152 for 2. Asad Naqvi then joined Asif Khan and the pair pushed on the score to 217 before Asad was lbw for 27 quick runs. At this stage a big score of well over 300 looked to be on the cards.

But though the score had quickly mounted, the HSV bowlers had stuck to their task. It was, however, something of a blow when opening bowler, and one of the HSV's leading wicket takers this season, Barkatullah Masaud, pulled up in his run-up with a strain early on and could only contribute three overs during the DSSC innings. The bowlers were changed regularly to try and make a breakthrough and when the wickets did begin to fall, two of them with the score on 217, the concentration and motivation of the whole HSV team visibly increased, and the last five DSSC wickets fell for 61 runs. Though the final DSSC score of 291 all out was substantial and, in terms of run rate, required HSV to score at 5.84 an over to win, it had everything to play for on the relatively small ground.

HSV, however, suffered an early blow in its reply when their captain, Zaheer Malik, also a German international, was out for 4 runs. The incoming batsmen did their best with a mixture of defensive strokes against some tight opening bowling from Javed Iqbal and Aamir Rafiq and the occasional boundary from a loose ball. After 20 overs the heavy clouds which had been slowly gathering turned into a sharp, heavy shower and three overs were lost to rain. This reduced the total required to 277 in 47 overs. With a wet, greasy ball and now slow, damp outfield conditions were no longer ideal for either team as they had been in the first innings. The batsmen went after the bowlers and for a time with Barkatullah Masaud striking some lusty blows and Shakeel Ahmed at the wicket HSV hopes of an upset rose.

There were a few misfields and dropped catches in the damp conditions to help the batsmen. However, the risks taken by the batsmen with the Tw/20 attitude which they had to take to keep up with the run-rate proved too much for them and HSV were finally all out for 189 in the 37 th over, giving victory to DSSC Berlin by 88 runs.

There were two DSSC players in contention for the 'man of the match' award: Dilshan Rajudeen, who got his team off to such a brisk start, and Asif Khan, who anchored the innings admirably and helped lay the basis of the winning total. There was no batsman with a score above 30 for HSV. Top scorer was N. Nasrullah Khan with 27, while Ali Imran made 22 and Barkatullah Masaud and Shakeel Ahmed 25 each. But Fahad Saeed (HSV), the third 'man of the match' contender, took 5 wickets for 47 in 10 overs and made 15 runs. In the end, the award went to Dilshan Rajudeen for his 63 as opener, taking 1 for 42 runs off his 6 overs and his enthusiastic approach in the field, which included three well-taken catches.

The presentations, trophies and medals, were made by Brian Fell (DCB), Siegfried Franz (DCB), Khalid Rauf (DCB) and Hartmut Stöpel(HSV). Both teams are to be congratulated on the very good spirit in which the game was played. Umpires, K. Thompson and Intekab Alem also deserve praise for officiating calmly and efficiently and having to contend with the wet and at times cold and windy conditions which arose as the day wore on. Thanks go to the host club, HSV, particularly Hartmut Stöpel and Khalid Rauf, and all those who helped with the organisation of the game.

Dr. Brian Fell  
DCB President