



PIX BY KUSHAN PATHIRAJA

Rev. Fr. Marc Billimoria, Warden, S. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia and B. A. Abeyrathna, Principal, Royal College, Colombo receiving the Dialog Axiata sponsorship package from Amali Nanayakkara, Group Chief Marketing Officer, Dialog Axiata PLC. Also in the picture (L-R) Dellon Peiris, Captain, S. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia, Ashan De Silva, Co-Chair Royal-Thomian Organising Committee, Shyam Majeed, Group Chief Corporate Officer, Dialog Axiata PLC, Raj Mohan, Co Chair Royal-Thomian Organising Committee and Pasindu Sooriyabandara, Captain, Royal College, Colombo

Dialog powers 139th Royal-Thomian 'BATTLE OF THE BLUES'

Sri Lanka's premier connectivity provider, Dialog Axiata PLC, has extended its corporate backing for the fourth consecutive year as the official sponsor of Sri Lanka's blue ribbon cricket encounter, the 'Battle of the Blues' between Royal College, Colombo, and S. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia, for the prestigious Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake Memorial Shield, on March 8, 9 and 10, 2018, at the SSC Grounds, Colombo.

In the 2018 edition of the 'Battle of the Blues', the boys from Mount Lavinia will be led by all-rounder/top order batsman Dellon Peiris, whilst the lads from Reid Avenue will be under the captaincy of Pasindu Sooriyabandara.

The Royal-Thomian, has a rich and colourful history spanning across 138 years and is also the second longest uninterrupted cricket series played in the world, second only to the annual encounter played between St. Peter's College, Adelaide and Prince Alfred College, Adelaide, Australia, that began just a year earlier. In 1880, the first match in which only the boys took part was played on the Galle Face Green, the present location of the Taj Samudra Hotel. This was the start to the centenary series.

The playing fields of the 'Roy-Tho' has the distinction of producing cricketers who later became eminent heads of state, with S. Thomas'



The two captains Dellon Peiris (S. Thomas' College) and Pasindu Sooriyabandara (Royal College) posing for a picture with the Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake Memorial Shield with Rev. Fr. Marc Billimoria, Warden, S. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia and B. A. Abeyrathna, Principal, Royal College, Colombo

producing the father of the nation, Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake MP and his son, Hon. Dudley Senanayake MP (1927-1929) as Prime Ministers of Ceylon, while Royal, produced Rt. Hon. (General) Sir John Kotelawala MP (1914-1915) as Prime Minister and the first Executive President of Sri Lanka, the late J. R. Jayewardene (1925).

The tally between the two schools at present stands at 35 for Royal and 34 for S. Thomas', with the highly-debated match in 1885, where Royal College was all out for nine runs with no play on the second day is considered a win by S. Thomas' and

considered a draw by Royal.

Dialog Axiata has also made a pledge to contribute Rs 1,000 for every run scored and Rs 10,000 for every wicket that falls. Last year's exciting encounter contributed Rs 1,036,000 to the 'Play for a Cause' pledge.

The proceeds were directed in consultation with the Principal of Royal College and the Warden of S. Thomas College to support and empower selected deserving schools. Since the inception of the 'Play for a Cause' pledge, Rs 2,959,000 worth of cricket gear was donated to 10 deserving schools.