



Top scorer for S. Thoma's College Sithara Hapuhinna with 34 drives on the outside for runs (Pic by Susantha Wijegunasekara).

INDIKA WELAGEDARA

A brilliant spell of left-arm spin bowling by Manula Perera of Royal College who took five wickets for 43 runs saw S. Thoma's College collapse for 166 on the opening day of the three-day 139th Battle of the Blues cricket encounter played at the SSC grounds yesterday.

By the close however the Thomians had somewhat redressed the balance to a certain extent by capturing three Royal wickets for 33 runs with left-arm pacie Kalana Perera claiming all of them for 16 runs.

Royal trail the Thomians by 133 runs with seven first innings wickets in hand and the game is interestingly poised going into the second day today.

Sixteen-year-old off-spinner Kamil Mishara made the first breakthrough for Royal at 27 when he dismissed Thoman left handed opener Dulith Gunaratne caught at covers by Bhagya Dissanayake for a patient 16 runs.

When the total read 38 Manula Perera caught and bowled the dangerous looking left hander Shalin De Mel for 15. S. Thoma went into lunch at 52 for 2.

After lunch Manula spun a web around the Thoman batting claiming the wickets of Kishan Munasinghe lbw for 13 and captain Delon Peiris caught by Kavindu Pathiratne for 12. Wicket Keeper Sithara Hapuhinna joined by left hander Manthila Wijeratne with the side struggling at 69 for 4 did a repair job by putting together a stand of 46 to frustrate the Royal bowlers. Sithara made a superb knock of 34 off 51 balls that included four boundaries and with Manthila took the Thoman total to some respectability.

Later when the score was on 115, Sri Lanka under15 right arm fast bowler cum Royal opening bowler Kavindu

139th Battle of the Blues

MANULA PERERA (5/43) has Thomians in a spin

PM opens Col FC de Saram Mustangs Tent



Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was the chief guest at the opening of the newly built Mustangs Tent named after former Royal College and Sri Lanka captain Col. F. C. de Saram before the commencement of the 139th Battle of the Blues cricket encounter between Royal and S Thoma's at the SSC grounds yesterday. The Prime Minister at the match with Royal Principal B. A. Abeyratne, Warden S. Thoma's' Revd. Marc Billimoria and Air Vice Marshal Rtd. Paddy Mendis who is the most senior member of the Mustangs aged 85. (Pic by Herbert Perera)

Pathiratne who bowled with sheer speed touching nearly 140/kmph, made the crucial breakthrough when he broke a threatening fifth wicket partnership by getting inform left hander Sithara caught by Gayan Dissanayake off a rising delivery. Soon after another set batsmen Manthila was out bowled by a beauty from left armer Manula for a well made 24 runs inclusive of four fours.

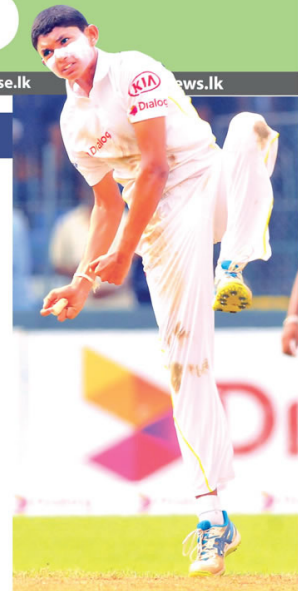
Manula capped a fine match by claiming his fifth wicket when all-rounder Kalana Perera was brilliantly caught at covers by Themal Bandara for 13 reducing the Thomians to 149 for seven.

S. Thoma's slumped further to 166 for 9 when right hander Maneesha Rupasinghe was superbly snapped up by skipper Sooriyabanda at first slip of left arm spinner Themal Bandara for 13 and Thevin Eriyagama was run out by Gayan Dissanayake for 5. At this point the Thomians made a surprise declaration closing their innings at 166 for the loss of 9 wickets.

In reply to the S.Thomas' score, Royal coming to bat soon were in trouble at two wickets down for 8 runs with openers right hander Bhagya Dissanayake (who played for S. Thoma's last year) falling lbw and his partner left hander Gayan Dissanayake brilliantly caught by a diving Shalin de Mel at deep point. Both wickets were snapped up by Sri Lanka under 19 left arm fast bowler Kalana Perera.

Royal fell further into deep trouble when they lost inform left hander Kamil Mishara caught at silly point by vice captain Dulith Gunaratne for 8 going for an ambitious hook shot against Perera.

Royal College vice-captain cum left handed wicket keeper batsmen Kavindu Madarasinghe, who came at the fall of the first wicket, took the responsibility on to his shoulders and put his head down and batted sensibly when wickets were falling around him to be unbeaten on 13 together with his skipper Sooriyabandara on 4 not out at the close.



Royal's left-arm spinner Manula Perera who took five Thoman wickets for 43 runs.

SCORECARD

S. THOMAS' COLLEGE FIRST INNINGS		ROYAL COLLEGE FIRST INNINGS	
Dulith Gunaratne	c B. Dissanayake b Mishara.16	Bhagya Dissanayake	c K. Pathiratne b M. Perera.12
Shalin De Mel	c & b M. Perera.15	Sithara Hapuhinna	c G. Dissanayake b Pathiratne.34
Kishan Munasinghe	lbw b M. Perera.13	Manthila Wijeratne	c Sooriyabandara b Bandara.13
Delton Peiris	c K. Pathiratne b M. Perera.12	Thevin Eriyagama	run out.5
Sithara Hapuhinna	c G. Dissanayake b Pathiratne.34	Pavith Ratnayake	not out.4
Gayan Dissanayake	c de Mel b K. Perera.16	Extras (5b, 5lb, 2w, 4 nb)17	
Manthila Wijeratne	c Sooriyabandara b Bandara.13	Total (9 wickets, in 64.9 overs).....166	
Kalana Perera	c Bandara b M. Perera.13	Did not bat: Shannon Fernando	
Bandara b. M. Perera.13	c Sooriyabandara b Bandara.13	Fall of wickets: 1-27 (D. Gunaratne) 2-38 (S. de Mel) 3-54 (K. Munasinghe) 4-69 (D. Peiris) 5-115 (S. Hapuhinna) 6-128 (M. Wijeratne) 7- 149 (K. Perera) 8-153 (M. Rupasinghe) 9-166 (T. Eriyagama).	
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