

Cricket Kid

Thimath Siriwardana



Pathum stood as still as a statue at the batting crease. He held a tight grip on his bat and stared at the bowler beginning his run-up. This was the biggest day of Pathum's life, the game was a tryout for the South East Division representative team. The delivery was full in length, he stepped his foot forward and drove the ball through mid-on, he ran twice to end the game.

"Ok guys that'll do." Langer, the district selector, with a voice like a tabby cat.

"So we'll read out the names whilst you all eat your oranges."

Hussey, the coach said as he was about to read out the names.

"Nuwan, Asanka, Dinesh, Roshan, Kasun, Indika, Lahiru, Arawinda, Charith, Dunith and Pathum." Pathum leapt into the

air and punched the sky with his batting gloves.

Pathum's team played their first match against Jaffna but lost to a decent 4 runs. They continued to win matches and eventually reach to the grand finals of the Sri Lankan U19 South-East Division.

Pathum approached three of the best players in the Jaffna side, they were even bigger up close. Their captain, Mahesh stepped forward.

"You guys ready to play," he asked as he crushed Pathum's hand in his grip.

"Bring it on!" Pathum answered, his voice like steel.

Pathum won the toss and decided to bowl first. Lahiru opened the bowling and got the third ball of the day to nip back back from the off, the batsmen nicked it with his inside edge, Kasun was slightly wrong footed and dived too late. The ball brushed the tip of his thumb and they ran for two. Their openers built a tremendous stand of 35 before a mistimed drive to mid-on saw Pathum take a brilliant catch and Lahiru received his first wicket. The new batsmen to come to the wicket was Mahesh, and he proceeded to play an excellent innings, handling the pace bowlers with ease. The score exceeded steadily until Pathum's team had a hit of luck. After a mix-up call the non-strike batsmen was run out.

The pitch was playing well and with 5 overs remaining and Jaffna with 184 on the scoreboard. Pathum threw the ball at the team's youngest player the only leg spinner of the team, Dunith. Dunith came slowly towards the crease and released the ball, slightly flighted driving Mahesh in to smash it. The ball pitched and turned away from him and was stumped from the Colombo wicketkeeper, Kasun. Lahiru steaming in and let fly a yorker right at the toes of the newly arrived batsmen, he was beaten for pace and the ball cannoned under his bat and shattered the stumps. Colombo had snapped wickets in a short period. What a tremendous finish.

Lahiru went opening with Nuwan, they were immediately up against the legendary fast bowler, who could bowl up to speeds at 100 km/ph. Lahiru wasn't a great batsman but like many allrounder he had a great eye. While Nuwan batted elegantly, Lahiru took on the bowlers and hit anything within reach as hard as he could. The pair put on a 44 run partnership until Lahiru was caught in the deep. From there on wickets fell at regular intervals, Nuwan continued to bat at an untroubled fashion and enjoyed small but important partnerships with Dinesh and Roshan. The sixth wicket fell 178 they needed 40 more runs to claim victory.

Pathum grabbed his bat and walked out into the middle. Hearing the cheerleaders really helped. Pathum and Nuwan batted well hitting several boundaries , and the total climbed steadily. In this way they need only eight more runs to win the grand final. Pathum was facing the opening bowler of the Jaffna A team. Pathum pushed the first ball to mid on. Four balls to go. 8 runs needed. He slashed the ball with the full face and it rocketed to the boundary. Two ball 4 runs needed. He pitched the ball in Pathum's hitting zone and connected with the ball and the ball sailed as an arrow over the bowlers head for a massive 6. Pathum raised his bat over his head and the rest of his teammates mobbed him and holstered him high on their shoulders. After Pathum's great victory he was selected to play for the first Sri Lankan test against the West Indies cricket squad.



“My story is about Pathum Nissanka and how he progressed throughout his career.”