

Very sore point as historic tie

gives EP victory

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THE SA Cricket Board's Booley Bowl final between Transvaal B and Eastern Province in Port Elizabeth last week ended in a thrilling off the last ball.

But in a highly contentious decision, EP were awarded the trophy on the basis of a 'bonus point'.

The hosts had to score three runs and Transvaal needed one wicket in the last over.

With one ball left, the scores were tied with EP needing one run to snatch victory.

But wily veteran Moosa Mangeri clean-bowled Fickry Toyer.

The tied result was the first in any SACB competition, but the event contained its fair share of con-

troversy.

Firstly the Transvaal team missed the 4.45am flight to Port Elizabeth on the morning of play. They eventually reached the ground at 1.15pm and the game started at 2.10.

The rain that pelted Port Elizabeth for four days prior to the game made for a totally under-prepared wicket.

EP did not hesitate to ask Transvaal to bat, and the beady-eyed visitors were batting on a trampoline. Only four batsmen managed double figures, and when Ashraf Kolia (27) was caught

at square-leg, Transvaal were all-out for 86.

The Vaal seamers then had the EP batsmen in trouble. When bad light stopped play 40 minutes before the scheduled close, the hosts were 44/4.

The following morning, Kolia struck again, capturing another two wickets with only an addition of three runs.

EP were on the rack but when they lost their eighth wicket on 73, they declared their innings closed, thus denying Transvaal a bowl-

ing bonus point which the visitors insisted did not apply to the final.

Kolia's haul of 7/35 was yet another brilliant performance by the seamer who took his tally of wickets in this competition to 32.

Controversy raged. Vaal captain Mohammed Moosajee and manager Abdulhack Bismillah conferred with their counterparts.

The rules of play only state that "the team with the highest aggregate of points at the end of the competition shall be the winner of the competition". There is no mention of rules governing the final.

The Vaal lads had to score a reasonable total, but inept batting and bad running between wickets resulted in four run-outs.

Vaal finished on 131 in their second knock. Only Solly Mangeri's timely return to form with an unbeaten 44 added some respectability to the total.

With EP needing 145 in over 200 minutes and 20 overs, the battle-scarred wicket again responded in nightmarish fashion.

Ashraf Variawa sent four batsmen packing in his seven overs, and with EP on 15/4, Transvaal were in command.

But young Nasser Ebrahim (brother-in-law of Transvaal senior captain Haroon Lorgat) batted a painstaking 240 minutes to deny Transvaal an easy passage.

Athletic wicketkeeper Geronimo Piedt (41) and Ebrahim (36) added 57 for the sixth wicket.

At the start of the 20 overs EP required 52 runs and Transvaal were looking for four more wickets.

The EP batting took on more urgency and the pressure on both teams was mounting. The tail-enders began to find the boundary at regular intervals and wickets fell as well.

Kolia again captured two wickets in quick succession to keep Vaal in the hunt.

Then the famous last over unfolded and though the result was a tie, EP carried off the Booley Bowl.

Ambiguous rules

THE Booley Bowl result is clouded in controversy as EP were declared winners on the basis of gaining one more bonus point. The sad fact is that the rules of play are ambiguous. There is no mention of points determining the result in the final.

The 15 units were divided into four groups and cross-section semi-finals between the four log leaders were determined on the bonus point system.

The semi-final between Western Province and Transvaal was not played with bonus points, as the winner on either the first innings or an outright would go through.

Transvaal began the final in PE under the impression that the same criteria would apply. Then the sudden declaration by EP with only eight wickets down, still 13 runs behind, exposed the ambiguous rules of play.

Manager Abdulhack Bismillah argued that the points system only applied in each group to determine the respective winners and it was absurd to play the final under uncertain and vague laws.

Transvaal's match and registration secretary Shahed Wadwalla, who is also the association's delegate to the SACB, said the result was unacceptable as the rules of play made no mention of what terms the final was played under.

He pointed to the fact that the rules declared the team with the highest aggregate as winners of the competition. He also said SACB units must discuss the issue before the result can be finalised.

SACB match and registration secretary Mr Yusuf Lorgat's view was that the rules were "clearly" stated and that EP had won on the technicality of gaining the one extra bowling bonus point.

Whatever the ambiguity of the rules, the lack of them or the rules as they are written, the SACB must review them to avoid negative aspects creeping into the game.

In fact the trend worldwide is to foster positive results for the game's benefit.

For Transvaal to have led the game all the way and being part of a historic first tie concludes its best season on a rather sour note.

In fact, if the total points of the leaders in the four groups are taken into account, then Transvaal would be run-away winners as they were the only team to record three outright wins.

THE SA Cricket Board selectors have named four Transvaal players in the squad of 12 to play against a SACB invitation team at the beginning of next season.

Western Province's Seraj Gabriels will lead a team blended with a fine mix of youth and experience.

Vaal youngsters Iqbal Khan and Imran Munshi win their first 'caps' and will line up with their provincial colleagues, wicketkeeper Yasin Begg and their skipper Haroon Lorgat.

WP opener Ismail Behardien is the only other player to win SACB colours for the first time.

Jack Manack and Vincent Barnes (WP) and lanky Mandesi Mali (EP) will spearhead the bowling attack, with Lorgat and EP skipper Khaya Majola filling the all-rounders' roles.

Gabriels and Faiek Davids are 'sandwiched' by the three new caps. Munshi will open the batting and Iqbal Khan will bat at four.

EP all-rounder Richard Dolly, tipped to lead EP in the near future, is 12th man.