

TCC notches first international wins for summer 2010

The first of the Transylvania Cricket Club's three fixtures against touring clubs in 2010 was held on Saturday 5th June at the Berceni Reserve, when alumni of the Seale Hayne Agricultural College in Devon, England, pitched up to play. Two 20/20 matches were organised, with TCC stalwarts Kodor, Crocker, Pena and Kanth playing for an undermanned opposition, and Begg and Roberts each taking a turn at umpiring in one match and playing in the other, while ex-Seale Haynian and Bucharest resident Jerry Thompson officiated at square leg. The weekend had been organised by the TCC's main fixer, Roberts. The TCC was captained this time by Lewis, who won the toss and batted in both games.

The TCC was quickly into its stride in the first game, with Agarwal and Hingorani combining well, both retiring after the mid-innings drinks break, Agarwal in particular having cut loose with a confident, free-scoring 59 not out from 36 deliveries. A late burst from Rajput, who ended unbeaten on 42 from 28, pushed the home side's score to a respectable 4 for 153 at the end of 20 overs; the TCC's Pena, with two, and Kanth and Crocker with one apiece were Seale Hayne's only wicket taking bowlers, though captain Pete Younger was unlucky. In reply, Seale Hayne always looked ten runs behind where they should have been in the chase, although Pete W batted with great discipline for his 44, and the TCC breathed a collective sigh of relief with the departure of Kanth, bowled by Rajput, after threatening to impose himself on the game having taken just eight balls to score 22. The bowling spoils were shared amongst six TCC bowlers – Agarwal and Dawkins with two each, and one each to Niculae, Rajput, Asthana and Callow. The final margin showed victory to the TCC by 17 runs; both sides then adjourned to enjoy a superb lunch organised by Rachel Sargent's London Street Bakery (RachelSistravellingnow@gmail.com, 0722 661784).

The second of the two matches was a lower scoring affair than the first, played with ten men on each side, with Begg replacing Niculae and Roberts dropping out of the Seale Hayne lineup to umpire. Sportingly, Lewis reversed the batting order and were it not for a maverick 47 not out from the much-improved Tate, a quick 16 from Asthana, and an extras tally of 38 from the opposition bowlers the TCC's innings could have looked more unprepossessing than its total of 5 for 128. Denzil (2-25) was the most successful of the bowlers. Wickets fell steadily in Seale Hayne's response, batting again with a reversed order, with only opener Stumpy (12), and later Kanth (36), who was the last man out, making it into double figures, as the TCC sealed victory by 20 runs. Bowling honours were shared amongst all TCC bowlers – Begg took three, Dawkins and Rajput two apiece, and Agarwal, Callow and Asthana took one each. After the game team photos were taken and Seale Hayne awarded a best player trophy to Agarwal for his all-round performance, particularly his outstanding batting in the first game. Both sides met again the following afternoon at the convivial lakeside residence of Jerry and Diana Thompson, who laid out a barbecue for local and visiting friends alike.

Cricket clubs from afar are always welcome in Bucharest but, with five of its members unable to make the trip, Seale Hayne performed a minor miracle by deciding against abandoning the weekend. Against all odds, their mere presence at Berceni ensured the result would be of secondary importance. Both games were played in pitch-perfect spirit and it was extremely sporting to see each of the TCC players who took the field for Seale Hayne kitted out in a Seale Hayne club shirt and baggy cap. Seale Hayne left an extremely positive impression with the TCC; we can only hope that its players enjoyed Bucharest as much as the TCC enjoyed hosting them.