



DECEMBER 2017 NEWSLETTER

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS





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Cover Picture

Unleash the quicks: December action at the Gymkhana.

Project Front Foot (India)

Dharavi Cricket Academy

Coaching

After the helter-skelter start to our ninth season, December settled to some solid coaching sessions designed to promote player skills, fitness levels, team awareness and smiling faces. Performance levels at the Gymkhana were ramped up during the month as coaches looked to select the first representative squads of the season. Selective skill sets were introduced to mirror match situations; in particular, running between the wickets, backing up throws, and basic ground fielding and catching drills. Small group games were organised to put these skills into practice and to foster both individual and team responsibilities and expectations.



The final session of the year saw coach Janardan putting the academy players through their paces with a series of catching drills. Fielding at our King's Circle ground remains a lottery due to ongoing construction work. Undaunted, the players stuck to the task displaying commendable agility, good technique, and an eye for a chance.



Matches

Coaches Harshad and Janardan organised four matches during December. Continuing the excellent form of last season, the Dharavi Cricket Academy (DCA) recorded four wins out of four.

With no cricket played in Dharavi schools, and no competitive games other than on waste ground around the slum, the opening fixture for the U12s was never going to be easy. A tense, edge of the seat affair saw DCA win by two wickets against GSB Sports Club U12s. A steep learning curve, the youngsters acquitted themselves well and fully enjoyed both the occasion and result.

With a little more match play experience the DCA U14s eased to a comfortable 23 run victory over their GSB opponents. Zaid proved himself an all-rounder in the making: top scoring with 16 before taking three for 4 with the ball.



Revelling in the cooler December conditions, the mixed DCA U14 & U16 XIs won both their games at Shivaji Park, on each occasion chasing large totals.



In the opening game, tight bowling by Rajesh and Sohail restricted an Indian Gymkhana XI to 149-8 in 28 overs. Undaunted by the chase, DCA remained ahead of the run rate throughout winning by four wickets in 27 overs.

In the second fixture of a busy Shivaji morning DCA boldly inserted the opposition GSB XI. Reacting well under early pressure, DCA bowlers and fielders dismissed the visitors for 164 in 31 overs with Chetan, Sadiq and Harish sharing both workload and wickets.

Timing their reply to perfection, DCA hit the winning runs in the 28th over for the loss of just four wickets with Sadiq (46), Rahul (27) and Zafar (27) taking the batting honours. Excellent results, then, from the first outings of the season with each game providing the coaching staff with food for thought.

Player of the Month Awards

The decision-making panel for the monthly awards comprises of our coaches and assistants. One player per age group is selected from each of the morning and afternoon sessions. Selection criteria include: attendance, attire, helpfulness, attitude, and improved skills performance. The season will conclude with a function in June to announce the DCA Players of the Year.

Age Group/Session	December Winners
U12 (Morning)	Abhishek Palekar
U12 (Afternoon)	Samir Khan
U14 (Morning)	Rajesh Jaiswar
U14 (Afternoon)	Dipak Saroj
U16 (Morning)	Sadiq Ansari
U16 (Afternoon)	Mohammad Kaif



During December the November winners received their certificates at presentation ceremonies held at the Gymkhana. Above, Ravi presents Basha Siram with his U14 morning award, while below left, Paluraj Nadar, fully deserves the applause for his U12 morning award. Reality Gives IT teacher, Shamshad, handed out the last award of the day to afternoon U14 winner, Devendra Solanki.



Academy Attendance

Age Group	Numbers	Sessions	% Attend
U12 (Morning)	10	9	79
U12 (Afternoon)	11	9	76
U14 (Morning)	14	8	69
U14 (Afternoon)	16	9	86
U16 (Morning)	20	8	95
U16 (Afternoon)	13	9	79

PFF Picture Archive

Launched in January 2016 this archive enables us to take a fond look back at the early days of Project Front Foot. This month's picture dates back to 27 November 2009 and is the first ever inter-club match held at Shivaji Park. As the picture illustrates, we had little in the way of clothing during that first season. The yellow shirts and green caps, a much needed addition to that summer's donations, arrived courtesy of Andy Malton and the Market Deeping Cricket Club in Lincolnshire.



The lack of white shirts, flannels and boots detracted little from the occasion as this first intake of players were thrilled at the chance to play a competitive game at the home of Mumbai cricket. From these humble beginnings the project has now morphed into the Dharavi Cricket Academy and is a fitting testimony to everyone's hard work and effort over the last nine years.

Project Front Foot (UK)

Return of the Native

PFF is delighted to announce that October's return to Mumbai – postponed due to illness within the project team – has been rebooked for 14 February. The visit will last for four weeks which, while slightly less than the planned autumn visit, will nevertheless be more than enough time to complete our varied schedule. PFF would again like to thank British Airways for reconfirming the seven extra bags to our ticket allowing us to take 200kgs of donated kit to Mumbai and beyond.

Slough's Secret Santas

In the course of our Summer Kit Appeal we receive donations of junior and adult sportswear unconnected with cricket. In such cases PFF dons the mantle of donor to place these items with deserving UK causes. During December – thanks to PFF's Secret Santas: Tim and Ron – junior sports shirts along with a selection of hoodies and shorts were delivered to Slough Social Services for distribution to foster homes in the area. Three bags of adult shirts, sweaters and tracksuits were then dropped off at the charity, Slough Homeless Our Concern (SHOC). Pictured opposite, project volunteer Ron hands over kit to Sophia at the SHOC centre. Commenting on the donation, Sophia said that Christmas is the time of year when donations of clothing are most valuable and welcome.



Front Foot Forum

For more details and pictures of Project Front Foot's December please click on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/projectfrontfoot/.

Acknowledgements

As always my thanks to our coaching staff at the Gymkhana who continued their sterling work during December and to the staff at Reality Gives who helped keep the project running smoothly. Project Front Foot would like to express its gratitude once more to Allcargo Logistics Ltd for its support, without which none of this would have been possible.

And finally

in penning the Man Booker prize winning novel, *Heat & Dust*, Ruth Praver Jhabvala included precious little cricket in the storyline. So, too, director Ismail Merchant and producer James Ivory in their movie adaptation of the novel. However, had writer, director and producer looked to include just a little leather on willow then they could have done far worse than pop by the Dharavi Cricket Academy. For while deficient in many of the day-to-day cricketing essentials, the project has both heat and dust in abundance. The advance of the tower block along with our 07.30 and 16.30 start times has helped shield players and coaches from mercury's march. However, even before the mandatory warm up is over, beads of perspiration gather. Conscious of this and the tireless enthusiasm of the players, the coaches call for regular drinks breaks. Indeed, part of the coaching structure includes advice on rehydration



While we can combat the heat to an extent, we can do little about the dust that the Gymkhana generates. Unique to the modern game, this is grass roots cricket without either grass or roots. In their place we have brown/red soil that during the monsoon season resembles the Thames at low tide, and at all other times is left to bake brownie hard under an unrelenting sun. Any form of physical activity on the playing surface produces a fine film of dust that coats both the moving and stationary. The attached pictures tell their own story as, at the end of each session, players, coaches and the occasional Englishman are covered in a layer of dust.

Vic Mills. Berlin. January 2018.