

# VPCCL News

## Victoria Park Community Cricket League

### Tigers and Millwall dual the final



Salman Ahmed (left) and Arif Ahmed (right)

It was a tense final that saw league rivals London Tigers and Millwall meet for first time this season in a heavily anticipated decider on pitch 3. With both clubs dominating the league but edging through their own tight semi finals the scene was set for an intriguing match.

Millwall without their star opener Farhan Rahman drew first blood, winning the toss and choosing to bat in what felt like a crucial decision. With Shumon Miah moving up the order from his usual number three Millwall made a less explosive, more steady start to their innings with the pair running well. However, the Tigers finally broke through on thirty-three with Reza Karim caught behind off Mohammed Sobur for ten in the fifth over. Despite the early loss Millwall continued at a steady pace with Shumon and Reza Karim looking defiant against a fierce Tigers resistance. Their partnership, which despite



Shumon Miah in early form

seeing just three boundaries, crucially passed the fifty mark before Salmon Sharif took out the stumps with a superb ball removing Reza Karim for ten and Millwall twelve short of a hundred. Salman M and Shumon added a further fourteen before disaster struck. Firstly Salman M was beautifully caught at the boundary by skipper Salman Ahmed for eleven and then the next over without a run being added Shumon's defiant stand ended when he was beautifully caught and bowled by Mohammed Hassan for 41. At 96-4 off nine overs, Millwall needed to steady the ship for their final assault. That came at the hands of skipper and keeper Arif Ahmed and Masum Ahmed. The pair put on a crucial 44 run partnership and despite only three boundaries

coming from the pair, their quick twos helped Millwall to a solid but slightly below par 140-4. However having already defended 138 in the semi and with the dark clouds rolling in, hopes were high that the Tigers would slip in their pursuit. And that's how their innings started as they lost an early wicket for just six, when in-form Muhammad Ripn Noor needlessly went after the ball and saw his shot athletically caught at the boundary by Saif Khan.



Tigers opener Sauman bowled for 44

Openers Shumon Sharif and M. Farad helped the Tigers keep up with the pace putting on a confident partnership of twenty-four and like Millwall, it was less of the boundaries and more of the running as the pair racked up singles and twos. Farad fell with the score on thirty caught behind off Robiul Karim. Shumon continued to help the Tigers along, this time alongside Hassan Ahmed. Shumon's dismissal with the score on seventy-nine suddenly opened up the game after he was beautifully



Millwall celebrate the wicket of Sobur

bowled by Masum Ahmed six short of a half century. Strike bowler Mohammed Sobur followed the very next ball edging to the keeper Ahmed and now we had a game on, with darkness rolling in and with Millwall's ears up, they could scent victory in the air.

But the Tigers were not to be denied, poor over throws and some beautiful shots from M. Hassan whose innings of thirty-four crucially edged the Tigers closer. As their team-mates and fans stood on the side roaring them on Hassan smacked a beautiful six in the thirteenth over which all but sealed it. With everyone watching on, in the

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Hassan looking superb with the bat

penultimate ball of the fourteenth over it was left for man of the match Hassan to smack a four through the covers, and much to the jubilation of Tigers, and the heartache of Millwall, Tigers claimed their first title in the VPCCL.

London Tigers skipper Salman Ahmed was jubilant; "I was happy after we reduced them to under 150 our bowling was really good because of the one catch I feel that saved us chasing 150 runs. But after we lost four quick wickets I was worried, again," he said. "However I had full confidence in my batsmen, I knew if one of us could stay in and finish the game. Hassan Ahmed and M. Hassan played really sensibly and won the game for us."

Millwall skipper Arif Ahmed reflected; "We certainly had the upper hand at the 8th over while they were batting. We thought we had the match in our grasp but two very resilient lower order batsmen had the last laugh," he said. "We gave it our best shot but the last four overs just didn't go our way I certainly think if we could have added 15-20 more runs to our total we would've had a better chance."



The 2018 champions