

St. Xavier's College Marks 100 Years of Cricket with Successful Centenary Celebrations in Nuwara Eliya



Cricket in Nuwara Eliya dates back to 1856, and St. Xavier's College began its cricket journey in 1925. The College celebrates 100 years of cricket in 2025. The sport was introduced at St. Xavier's under Rev. Fr. Alexander Siriwardene, the College Rector. Throughout the years, several principals, including K.P. Joseph, D. Amos, Noel Nedeson B.G. Bonifass, and the incumbent Principal Mathew Paulraj have contributed in popularizing cricket in the school.



St. Xavier's College in Nuwara Eliya celebrated its Cricket Centenary with a successful Inter-house Cricket Tournament for Old Boys, marking the 8th edition of the event last weekend.

The tournament featured four teams: Beckmeyer XI, Noel XI, Anselm XI, and Alexander XI, led by Gerald Anthony, John Christopher, Tharanga Wijekoon, and UC Emmanuel respectively.

The event was graced by Chief Guest Samwel Samuel, a renowned sportsman from St. Bede's College Badulla, alongside Principal Mathew Paulraj, Vice Principal Mrs. Gunasekara, senior advisors Paul Perera and Milton Ranasinghe. In his address, Mr. Samuel praised the De La Salle brothers and early missionaries for their contributions toward education, emphasizing how sports were used as a tool for personality development. He reiterated that the biggest mistake made by the authorities in 1960 was when well-performing schools were taken over by the government. He noted that this change led to a decline rather than progress.

Principal Paulraj highlighted the College's 166-year legacy, stressing the institution's continuous progress in education and sports. He also shared the history of cricket at St. Xavier's College, which was introduced in 1925 by Rev. Fr. Alexander Siriwardene, marking the start of a century-long cricket tradition. The College has re-registered its youth teams for the 2024/25 season. He thanked the Old Boys Association (OBA) for its continuous support towards the College.

The event also spotlighted Nuwara Eliya's rich cricket history, dating back to 1856, with the first match played in 1892. Cricket has since become a key part of the local community, with notable clubs and players contributing to its development. The Old Xaverians, in particular, have played a significant role in promoting the sport, with figures like Athula Senanayake, Russel Jacobs, Shantha de Silva, Rukmal Fernando, Sunada Ratnasiri, Sanjeewa Weerasinghe, Gerald Anthony and Tharanga Wijekoon leading their teams to success in the past.



Results:

Match No. 1: Beckmeyer XI vs. Alexander XI

In a closely contested match, Beckmeyer XI narrowly defeated Alexander XI by 4 runs. Beckmeyer XI posted a total of 95 runs, with contributions from Sujeevan (16) and Irshad (19). Alexander XI's key scorers were Nadun Buddhika (17) and Wijith (27), but they fell short, finishing with 91 runs. Buddhika 3-16-2, Nadun 3-12-2, Wijith 3-02-1, HB 3-20-1, Shenal Perera 2-15-1, Emmanuel 1-14-0

Sujeewan 3-20-1, Puhaneswaran 3-25-2, Irshard 3-14-2, Gerald 3-19-4, Robin 1-06-0

Match No. 2: Noel XI vs. Anselm XI

Noel XI triumphed over Anselm XI by 6 wickets in another exciting match. Noel XI set a target of 130 runs, with Gokul Kumar contributing 14 runs, Pradeepan Jeganathan leading the charge with 61 runs, and Ilshan adding 21. Anselm XI's reply saw Ramlan Mohomed (14), Tony Paeter Paul (44), and Mohomed Zaky (13) help them reach 116 runs.

Noel XI chased down the target with ease, winning by 6 wickets.

Ajay 3-22-1, Tony 3-29-1, Ramlan 3-25-1, Tharanga 2-23-0, Sudaharan 2-19-0, Lukshan 2-18-1
Setty 3-24-1, Prabakaran 2-18-0, Pradeepan 3-15-2, J. 2-26-0, John CP 2-14-2, Illshan 1-2-0,
Deepan 2-14-1

Final: Noel XI vs. Beckmeyer XI

The final match between Noel XI and Beckmeyer XI was a thrilling encounter that ended in a tie, with both teams sharing the championship.

Noel XI batted first and scored 95 runs in 15 overs. Pradeepan Jeganathan (31) and Wigneshwaran (14) were the standout performers with the bat. Beckmeyer XI's Sujeevan scored 26 runs, but it wasn't enough to break the tie. With the match ending in a draw, both teams were crowned joint champions.

Sujeewan 2-25-1, Irshard 2-5-1, Puhaneswaran 2-18-1, Gerald 2-14-2

Ravichandran 2-22-1, Diwaharan 2-17-1, Pradeepan 2-12-1, John Paul 2-17-2,

Theeban 1-13-1

The organizing Committee comprised President SXCOBA Sanjeewa Weerasinghe, Jt.Secretaries Benjamin Jeganathan & Nilan de Zoysa, Chandana Fernando, WL Chathurika, Rohan Peiris, RM Nawaz, UC Emmanuel, John Christopher, Gerald Anthony, V.Balendran, Tharanga Wijekoon, Ujitha Samarawickrama, Mohomed Zaky, Shantha de Silva, Subash Gorden, Tony Maxwell, Chrisantha Wanapushpa and Robin Anthony , ensuring the success of this milestone celebration.