

## Incredible India Consul Generals' XI and High Commissioners XI Play with Bishen Singh Bedi's U19 Visiting from India

Bishen Singh Bedi was in Australia for 3 weeks in January with his youthful U19 team which included a number of 13 - 17 year old power batsmen & bowlers. Bhavan Australia in association with Sonny D'Carvalho organised a number of matches against Bedi's extra-ordinary team.



Bishen Singh Bedi with the Consul General

This first fixture was setup against Bhavan's own Cricket Masala team at Sir Bradman Oval, Bowral on 15 January 2007. Cricket Masala XI had experienced players including a no of Sydney great and NSW cricket team players. As reported in the *January 2007 issue of Bhavan Australia* The match produced a tough competition and was narrowly won by Cricket Masala XI.

The Consul General of India, Hon Sujan Chinoy organised his own team with the support of India Tourism Sydney and Bhavan Australia. This team was captained by the Consul General himself and consisted of a mix of young and vintage players including Indian and Australian former test players and Sydney Grade players. This match was held on the even of India's Republic Day and Australia Day on 25 January 2007 at St Ignatius College, Lane Cove. Bishen Singh Bedi's youthful team proved too tough for the Incredible India consul General's XI who lost the match. The Consul General was, however, quite happy with the outcome and he expressed his desire to have a similar game on the eve of India's Republic Day and Australia Day every year. Detailed report by Darshak Mehta follows.



Bhavan Australia supported by David De Carvalho also organised the High Commissioner's (of India) XI against Bishen Singh Bedi XI on 23 January 2007 at the Canberra Grammer Oval. This match was also won by the Bishen Singh Bedi's youthful and powerful team.

### Match Report - Incredible India Consul General's XI Vs Bishen Singh Bedi XI

It was a commendable initiative - the first one that your correspondent can recall in the past 20 years - the Indian Consul General in Sydney, Shri Sujan Chinoy put up a team:"The Consul General's XI" to play a cricket match against the touring "Bishen Bedi XI". It was a low-scoring thriller & the Visitors prevailed - just! The CG's team contained some good, "ripe" (a.k.a. experienced or oldish!)cricketers from both the Indian & the Australian community. It was a remarkable blend - as befits our multicultural country. The Match was held at St. Ignatius College, Riverview – a beautiful setting, on a rather overcast day. Shri Chinoy won the toss, smartly decided to exploit the English conditions & opened the bowling himself. He acquitted himself creditably in professional company - both with the ball & in the field, where he was sprightly. The Bedi XI who were on a 6 match winning streak, looked to be in trouble having set what appeared to be a modest target of 153, failing to play out their full quota of 40 overs.

The CG's XI had some BIG names in it. Surely, they would romp home? Gavin Robertson, the former Australian Test cricketer who toured India in 1998 was there. As was Neil D'Costa, a redoubtable batsman who played for Western Suburbs till a few years ago & who has mentored & coached Michael Clarke, the Australian batsman. Though they appeared to be rusty, they guts'd it out (to use the Australian vernacular) - a lesson to all present UTS Balmain's impressive First Grader, Manjot Singh, who played for the CG's side & was compulsorily retired when he scored 40 under the "Rules", agreed prior to the toss. However, Bishen Bedi's young 'uns defended their modest score enthusiastically & they won by 10 runs. A line up of cricketing aficionados came by to see the cricket & have a yarn with the outspoken former Indian captain.

Incredible India Consul General's XI team

Mike Coward, the doyen of Australian cricketing writers was there & he did a column on Bedi in “The Weekend Australian”.

Dan Smith, the NSW wicket-keeper also came by. Shanker Dhar, Director of the India Tourist Office who had co-sponsored the event along with Gambhir Watts of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan were there most of the day. The match was played in Great Spirit - as would be expected - but, at the same time the competitive juices were flowing. A couple of 13 year old spinners from the Bishen Bedi XI impressed greatly & Bedi has high expectations of at least one of them, Angadh Singh, though he cautioned that these were early days. And finally, this writer had a very successful outing with the ball. Modesty prevents him from elaborating further!



Bishen Singh Bedi U19 Team



- Darshak Mehta

