

Saurashtra Premier League- season- 2



Saurashtra Premier League (SPL) Season 2 was a much awaited event after its very successful first edition conducted in May-2019. In spite of all efforts put up by Saurashtra Cricket Association, due to serious pandemic situation, second season of this tournament could not be conducted in 2020 and 2021. The best of the efforts and logistics were planned to hold this tournament even in 2020 and 2021 but eventually considering the safety and well being of the cricketers and public at large the plans were put on hold for 2 successive years. The cricketers of all age of this region, cricketing fraternity as a whole and the people of Saurashtra-Kutch were therefore eagerly waiting for this tournament to resume and take place in the year of 2022 as early as possible.

The current Ranji trophy players and the players who were playing in IPL were also quite keen to get along with this tournament and to do well on their home ground in front of their home crowd at the earliest. I had an opportunity to speak to Jaydev Unadkat and Sheldon Jackson during the IPL and they were quite upbeat about this tournament, about their team combination and how they are planning to do the best for their respective teams. Obviously when the interest and enthusiasm are flowing from the top, the youngsters and upcoming cricketers of Saurashtra were going to be positively affected. Under-19, Under-23 and senior cricketers of Saurashtra began their preparation long before the dates of the tournament was declared. We could see the spark in the eyes and attitude of keenness in the young and promising cricketers of Saurashtra to do well in SPL-2. After all the hard work and deliberation the stage for the SPL-2 was set. The SPL-2 kicked off from 2nd June 2022. Among five teams, each team had to play each other once in the league phase. After 10 keenly contested league games the final was played on 11th June between Gohilwad Gladiators and Halar Heroes where the Halar Heroes won the championship. The Final game saw a whopping more than 15000 plus attendance in the stadium. Live streaming of this tournament also caught a large attention across the globe.

Sorath Lions were the champions in the first edition of SPL, whereas Halar Heroes clinched the title in this second edition. First edition of SPL produced a fresh national talent like Chetan Sakariya and this season also didn't disappoint on that part. The seasoned professionals like Jaydev Unadkat, Prerak Mankad, Dharmendra Jadeja, Chirag Jani not only excelled for their team but also inspired the next generation to do well for their teams. A young fast bowler Navnit Vora (man of the match in final), middle order batsman Samarth Vyas (scored first hundred of the tournament), all rounder Parth Chauhan (with his big hits) impressed the large followers of this tournament.

The objective of this tournament has been very clear since its inception- "to provide a big stage where players of Saurashtra can exhibit their skill and prove their worth". We all can proudly say that the objective is achieved again and the future of this game in this region is in safe hands. Jaydev Shah (President SCA), all the office bearers and Apex Council members of Association and also all match officials, team supports, admin team deserve all the applauds and praise for their tireless efforts to make this event a huge success.

Written by- Prakash J Bhatt
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