

► Shanghai's cricket season gets off to a wet one

A bowl away from home

By Allan Air

Come rain or shine, the life of a Shanghai cricketer is a fun one; a lifestyle in the great outdoors.

"Cricket is a big part of our lifestyle. If you have family, it's very important. The wives get to be involved in what we're doing as well; they're not just sitting at home. And our kids, we get the kids out with us training when it's a nice day. It's an outdoor lifestyle, and that suits me and my family," Denzyl Allwright, President of the Shanghai Bashers Cricket Club, told the Global Times.

Sunday saw the start of the Shanghai cricket season. The forecast was rain, but the teams still went out to get their fix of green grass and cricket. The Global Times met with the Shanghai Bashers to see them in action, and talk about their lifestyles in the world of cricket, in the Shanghai metropolis.



Bashers running for cover as the skies open up.

meet up with a good bunch of people," said first team captain, Ollie Austen.

At the start of the game the weather was overcast, and as the rain started to drizzle, play continued. The sky opened up and the rain poured down,

in the UK. I would have kept playing," said Basher player Lee Henshaw.

"Being an American, cricket is a new sport to me. I only picked it up here in Shanghai. I love it. It's a very social game. It's not just social within the team, but after the game the two teams getting together and having a laugh. I've met a lot of good friends. It's

beautiful to come to Shanghai and meet people from Pakistan, India, South Africa, Australia, UK and places like that. It's a big part of my life in Shanghai," said James McCloud, Bashers player.

There are 18 cricket teams in Shanghai, and more than 350 players. None of the games finished on Sunday due to the heavy rain and will count as a draw. That means that every cricket team in Shanghai is tied top of their leagues. It's a great reason to celebrate the start of the season.

"I've been here nine years. I'm

► A little Shanghai cricket history

Historical archives logged the first game played in Shanghai somewhere in Hongkou on April 22, 1858.

In 1863, the first true cricket ground was bought by the Shanghai Recreation Fund from the Horse Racing Club. The ground was located at a racetrack, which is now People's Square.

The inter-port match between Hong Kong Cricket Club and Shanghai Cricket Club began in 1866 as a series of home and away fixtures that continued up until 1948, just prior to the People's Liberation Army takeover of Shanghai.

With some help from the Hong Kong Cricket Club and Melbourne Cricket Club and efforts from cricketers in Shanghai, the Shanghai Cricket Club was reestablished in 1994. Since then, the game of cricket in the city has gone from strength to strength, more organized and respected, new players from around the world joining in for the love of the game, the love for the great outdoors and the oval they stand in.



most of the day. It's a good excuse to...
"This is the sort of weather we play in

...s sapper) for bowlers and batters.
for us captains," said Glenn Anderson,
Australian Bashers player.

...the club secretary, Mike, soon

Bashers at their clubhouse (Camel sport-bar) after the canceled game, with last year's league winners trophy.
Photos: Allan Air

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