

# 1997 Tour of Malaysia

by Bob Munn

Last year's tour was to Malaysia, a country only recently making its mark as an Associate Member of the ICC and all those who went on it were very impressed with the scenery, the culture and the friendliness of the people.

The standard of cricket was excellent and only three of the twelve matches were won with one draw and eight defeats. The party left on a Malaysian Air Line flight on February 12, leaving the ice and snow behind, and after landing at Kuala Lumpur transferred to Penang for a six night stay at the luxurious Penang Park Royal.

The opening match was against Penang Sports Club, a 35 over match which was lost by five runs after the Forty Club bowlers had restricted the home side to 130-9, Norman Jones 3-15. Next day the Forty Club were dismissed for 93 by the PSC in an all day match on a slow, lifeless pitch and lost by six wickets.

A rest day spent visiting temples, a British factory and a pewter factory revived fortunes and the following day's encounter resulted in a 101 run win over Penang Schools on a turning pitch. The schools could only muster 56 (Tim Johnson 5-11 and Barry Hunter 4-15) against the Club's 157-6.

The next stop was the old colonial town of Ipoh where the match against a Malaysian Schools XI ended in a draw, the Club making 136 and the boys replying with 113-7. Then it was back to Kuala Lumpur for a week. The first three matches there were all lost but the last one, against a Selangor Select XI, was won by 28 runs. Except for the game against Royal Selangor CC when the home side made 256-7 and the Club replied with 154-8, most of the games were low scoring affairs.

The next stage took us to Johore Baharu through some spectacular countryside and the facilities at the Puteri Pan Pacific Hotel were quite outstanding. Our host, the amazing Dr. Harjit Sing, organised four matches and though the first three were lost, chiefly to sides containing Pakistan State and international players, the Club gave a good account of itself.

The final match resulted in an eight wicket victory over a Johore Schools XI in the grounds of the University of Technology. The money from the fines was sent to the Penang and Johore Schools Association. Peter French did a wonderful job as captain, stepping in at the last minute, and was well supported by the squad. Despite the heat and humidity, the players fielded, batted and bowled well and the hospitality was excellent throughout. We were indebted to the first class service from the umpires and scorers.



Peter Salisbury in defensive mode against Royal Selangor.