



## PROJECT FRONT FOOT NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2017

### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS





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## Cover Picture

A key member of Team PFF during October and November: Hanuman the Monkey God.

# Project Front Foot (UK)

## Medical emergency leads to postponement of Mumbai trip

October 25 should have been PFF's first full day on Indian soil. However, a late change of flight plan sixty hours before saw Bombay swapped for Bangkok. A medical emergency an hour out of Bangkok saw PFF's best gal rushed from the airport to an Intensive Care Unit at a nearby hospital. Thanks to speedy work by BA ticketing staff it took just nineteen hours from receiving the Bangkok call to walk into the Intensive Care Unit at Samitijev Hospital.

Charlemagne wrote that to have another language is to possess a second soul. So it was with the good doctor who proceeded to conduct complicated discussions with her neurosurgeon and neurologist in Thai and, for good measure, to chat happily away with the nursing staff and physiotherapists in both Thai and Lao. When not charming hospital staff, she switched easily to German when speaking to friends back home. PFF, meanwhile, continued to get by (just) in English.



One of the first jobs after arrival was informing friends and colleagues of the situation. From this point on good wishes poured in from all parts of the globe including our good friends at PFF's partner NGO, Reality Gives. There was a string of visitors too who, passing through Bangkok en route to Laos and Vietnam, went out of their way to visit the hospital. The outpouring of good wishes and healing energy played a crucial part in the dramatic early recovery which has continued apace.

As a final piece of alternative therapy, the last item I packed before the airport dash was a small, brass figurine (see cover page) of Hanuman the Monkey God. Blessed with extraordinary strength, Hanuman is capable of lifting and carrying any burden for a cause. Constantly facing difficult odds, where the adversary or circumstances threaten his mission with certain defeat and his very existence, Hanuman always finds an innovative way to turn the odds. In short, the perfect support for the coming weeks and months.

At the time of going to press, the good doctor is safely back in Berlin and about to embark on an intensive three-week course of physiotherapy. In many respects, the ideal preparation for Christmas and the New Year. On a more serious note, the good doctor and I would like to thank the specialists and nurses at the Samitijev Srinakarin Hospital for their kindness and caring over the past weeks.



## Return of the Native

PFF returned – Bangkok to Berkshire – on 13 November. The first job at basecamp was to get the bags of kit off the concrete floor before winter. There being nothing worse than heavily frosted pads or (heaven forbid) icicles on your batting box. Memo to the ICC: chilled batting boxes should be considered as an aid to increasing run rate, while brushing a layer of snow off pink balls might just increase the Test match over rate. With the kit in hibernation, the Mumbai Survival Pack of nuts, oat cakes, soup, coffee, and Marmite was safely squirreled away enabling PFF to return to Mumbai at very short notice.



## Belgian Queen Deputises for PFF



Currently missing in action from the Mumbai cricket scene, Project Front Foot found a suitably able deputy in its absence. Pictured left, Queen Mathilde of Belgium takes the accompanying representatives of the press through her front foot repertoire. New to the game, King Philippe at backward short leg shows he needs just a little more time with the fielding coach if he's looking to progress. The King and Queen of Belgium follow a growing list of European royalty keen to strut their stuff on Mumbai's maidans.

## British Refugee Council

On 27 November PFF spoke with a representative of the British Refugee Council. The topic of conversation: a cricket project run for displaced Afghan teenagers in the south of England. Early in January PFF will travel from basecamp around the M25 to Croydon to deliver a package of much needed kit. Project Front Foot: reaching those projects that others cannot!

## Front Foot Forum

For more details and pictures of Project Front Foot's November please click on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/projectfrontfoot/](https://www.facebook.com/projectfrontfoot/).



# Project Front Foot (India)

## Dharavi Cricket Academy

The new season for the Dharavi Cricket Academy – our ninth in Mumbai – began on Monday 16 October. It proved a heady mix too with the cricket combined with school holidays and Diwali celebrations. The continuing construction work around the Gymkhana plus the havoc from the recent monsoon detracted little from the occasion as kids and coaches soon got into their stride. My thanks to the Gymkhana Cricket Committee for sanctioning our earliest ever start to a new season.



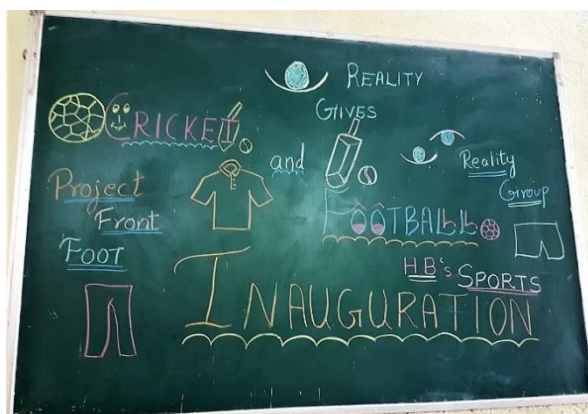
A mixed age-group practice to start, thirty-three turned out to shake off the rust of a heavier than usual monsoon season. Coach Janardan took the assembled through some gentle drills to awaken muscles and remind hand and eyes of the expected level of coordination. An encouraging start, then, and one that bodes well for the weeks and months ahead. My thanks to Ravi at Reality Gives for more nifty work behind the camera.





## Inauguration Day

Saturday 4 November brought the Inauguration Day for both the Dharavi Cricket Academy and the Reality Gives Girls Football team. For the first time, both have been sponsored by our friends at Allcargo Logistics. On the cricket side, this is a third season under the guise of the Dharavi Cricket Academy and a ninth year for Project Front Foot in Mumbai.



The ceremony involved motivational words from coach Harshad along with Reality's Asim and Ravi. Executive Director of Reality Gives, Lethy, pictured above right was on hand to present the various kit packages of shirt, flannels and boots. Once again, huge thanks to all at Reality Gives for organising the event and to our main sponsor in Mumbai, Allcargo Logistics, without whom none of this would have been possible.

## Coaching Format

Our coaching schedule remains unchanged from last season. We continue to coach three days a week – Tuesday, Thursday and Friday – during the October to May season; morning sessions are from 07.30 to 09.00 and afternoons from 16.30 to 18.00.



As in previous years, fitness tests are conducted for all age groups at both the beginning and end of the season. One to one player-coach discussions will be held mid-season to chart the players' progress. The much coveted Player of the Month Awards will continue along with an end of season function in Dharavi where the Player of the Season will be announced



The new intake of academy players began their season with basic batting techniques centred upon grip, stance, and taking guard along with elements of front and back foot play. Bowling featured the importance of a measured and balanced run up together with the key ingredients of line and length. Small inter-project games were held to assess aptitude and levels of ability

The returning project players worked on drills for front and back foot play. To appeal to their competitive instincts, target bowling drills were introduced, at the heart of which lay the cornerstones of line and length. A feature of play among the Dharavi kids is their fielding skills. This was again to the fore during November as our coaches worked on a variety of catching and throwing drills







No matches were held during November due to the unavailability of grounds. Our coaches have a brief to arrange competitive matches each month during the season, one for each age group and, where possible, to enter PFF representative sides in local tournaments. The intake for the 2017-2018 season was set at 85 children.

### Player of the Month Awards

The decision-making panel for the monthly awards comprises of coaches and assistants. One player per age group is selected from each of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Age Group/Session	November Winner
U12 (Morning)	Paluraj Nadar
U12 (Afternoon)	Faiz Ansari
U14 (Morning)	Basha Siram
U14 (Afternoon)	Devendra Solankhi
U16 (Morning)	Pirmal Nadar
U16 (Afternoon)	Ravirajan Giri

Selection criteria include: attendance, attire, helpfulness, attitude, and improved skills performance. The season will conclude with a function in June to announce the Dharavi Cricket Academy Players of the Year.

### Academy Attendance

Age Group	Numbers	Sessions	% Attend
U12 (Morning)	14	8	96
U12 (Afternoon)	13	8	97
U14 (Morning)	11	9	95
U14 (Afternoon)	12	9	94
U16 (Morning)	17	9	98
U16 (Afternoon)	13	9	95



## Rural Schools Initiative

While the Dharavi Cricket Academy remains our flagship project, there is little doubt that the growth area within Project Front Foot is our Rural Schools Initiative. With the help of our partners, we look to deliver kit packages to schools and projects in the inner-city and around country Maharashtra. In providing these packages, we look to bridge the gap between work and play, in the process assisting the all-round development of young children.

### FemaleCricket.com

Congratulations to Vishal and Srinath at our partner organisation, FemaleCricket.com, who have stepped out of their IT comfort zone and into the heady world of grass roots cricket. On 2 November they opened their first cricket academy at the spiritual home of Mumbai cricket, Shivaji Park. With an initial intake of sixty girls and young women, they hope to add to their numbers following India's success at the recent women's World Cup.



Project Front Foot has already played a small part in this venture by providing a bag of pads from last autumn's Kit Aid shipment. Kit has already been ear-marked for the academy from a consignment we will be taking in our soon to be arranged spring visit. In the meantime, we wish Vishal, Srinath and their cricketing trailblazers all the best in their inaugural season.



## PFF Picture Archive

Cricket, as a game, is not given to the literal. Third man, for instance, has nothing to do with either Harry Lime or Orson Welles. Slip cordons, while prone to slip-ups, rarely if ever slip. Point may occasionally point or make a point, but only occasionally and gully has few if any connections with a channel formed by the action of water. There are, however, some exceptions. Short leg, for reasons of both agility and self-preservation, is more often than not populated by those with short legs; while long leg, the parking position for tall fast bowlers, is similarly peopled by those with inside leg measurements that the small of stature can only but dream. Which brings us neatly to cow corner; a hitting area much favoured, since the emergence of T20, by both top order and tailender.



Not listed in the MCC Coaching Manual, yet known to cricketers worldwide, cow corner relates to those wide beckoning acres between deep mid-wicket and wide long on. Keen to claim, where possible, the literal as our own, PFF is one of the few projects that has cows in cow corner. No different to many a Mumbai suburb, Matunga is well populated by the bovine brethren. When not foraging the streets they will occasionally wander into and onto the Gymkhana. The outfield, while offering little in the way of grazing (PFF being grass roots cricket with precious little grass or roots) does provide shade around the perimeter along with the occasional discarded entree or main. When not munching or mooching they are prone to settle in their very own cow corner between, you guessed, deep mid-wicket and wide long on.

## Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to our coaching staff at the Gymkhana who continued their sterling work during November and to the staff at Reality Gives who helped keep the project running smoothly. Project Front Foot would like to express its continued gratitude to Allcargo Logistics Ltd for its support, without which none of this would have been possible.



## And finally ....

to end as we began. The third Centurion from the right in this unfolding drama, PFF soon adopted the role of “alternative” physiotherapist. So it was that just four days in the Intensive Care Unit and nurses and visitors passing the good doctor’s room heard strains of the *Macarena* or our version of the *Rehabarena* issuing from within. The first six elements to the dance, focusing on hands and arms, proved the ideal reintroduction of brain with the partially disconnected left side.



Cricket too played its part with a simple fielding drill for slip cordons ideal for promoting brain/hand coordination. In our version, however, the ball was replaced by small furry animals to wit: a six inch sheep, three inch badger, and smaller still Christmas moose. Above left, the Samitivej Three take a well-deserved post-physio timeout. Now safely back in Berlin, the good doctor’s recovery continues apace with a spot of indoor cycling.

Third Centurion from the right. Berlin. December 2017.