



## ISRAEL WIN ICC EUROPE DIVISION 3 CHAMPIONSHIPS



For the first time ever, the Israel senior team returned victorious from an official ICC tournament, having won the ICC Europe Division 3 Championships held in Spain earlier this month. A revamped and youthful Israel team, captained by Herschel Gutman, went to Spain keen to give themselves a chance to reclaim their Division 2 spot lost in 2007, which, as winners, they will have an opportunity to do in a play-off match, against Croatia, next month in Zagreb.

### Miracle win after top order collapse

Israel began their tournament with an almost perfect display in the field, dismissing Belgium for just 116 with Yaniv Razpurker taking four wickets.



However small targets can sometimes be trickier to chase than bigger ones, and when 71 for four became 76 for eight Israel were in serious trouble. However lower order batsmen Shailesh Bangerra and Isaac Talkar refused to throw in the towel, taking the total to 101 before Bangerra fell for a vital 12. Last man Eliezer Samson then joined his Ramla teammate, and together they nervously edged towards the target. There were leg before appeals and a clear run out opportunity missed before, with just three balls left in the game, Talkar edged a drive inches over the head of short third man to complete a great escape of Houdini proportions. Talkar had scored 15\* from 94 balls and Samson 7\* from 29.

### Batsmen make merry in big win over Malta

Israel were far too strong for Malta in their second game, as Bangerra, promoted to open the batting, Raymond Aston and Gabi Schachat all scored half centuries in a total of 263 for 6, before the bowlers, including Adrian Vard who took two for six, celebrating his first international wickets, dismissed Malta for just 90.

### Miracle win after top order collapse 2

Game three against the Isle of Man was always expected to be the hardest match of the week. Israel suffered a huge setback when Aston had to withdraw suffering from a suspected hernia. Talkar provided the early breakthrough after the Isle of Man had chosen to bat, before a brilliant piece of fielding by Steven Shein at point resulted in the first of four run outs. Samson and David Massil both conceded less than one run per over, and Shein wrapped up the innings with three for 13, as the Isle of Man managed just 80. Sequels normally take a while to come out after the original movie, but memories of the Belgium game played just two days earlier began flooding back as wickets began to tumble to very good new ball bowling, and almost unbelievably Israel had slumped to 21 for 6. With the score on 31 and runs seemingly impossible to score, the momentum of the game suddenly changed as two full tosses were punished by Gutman for boundaries, although he fell for 20 soon after with the score on 57. With 24 runs still needed that man Talkar strode out to join Massil who had added 32 with his captain. Talkar further established his status as the best finisher in international cricket since Michael Bevan with a calmly played 11\*, and with Massil not out on 12, Israel completed a three-wicket win with two overs to spare.

### Spain end Israel's winning run

Israel's next challenge was the host team Spain, who were also expected to provide stiff opposition. Batting first having won the toss, another top order collapse left Israel 32 for four. Two of the three U19 players in the squad, Safania Nagavkar (17) and Schachat (28), stemmed the flow of wickets. Although scoring was once again very difficult, a total of 109 was well below par. The bowling wasn't quite as good as previous games and chances were also missed in the field, as Spain claimed the victory by four wickets.

### All to play for on final day

The final day of the tournament began with any of three teams - Israel, Spain or Isle of Man - able to win it. Spain knew they probably would win it if they could defeat Isle of Man as their run rate was better than any of the other teams. Isle of Man needed to defeat Spain by a large margin and hope Portugal either defeated Israel or Israel won by a narrow margin, whilst Israel needed both a big win against Portugal and an Isle of Man win over Spain by not too large a margin to take the trophy. Samson led the Israel attack with three early wickets, a Gutman slower ball removed Portugal's best batsmen, two run outs, one of them a brilliant direct hit from point by Nir Dokarkar, and Portugal were all out for 112. Meanwhile Isle of Man had recovered from 25 for 3 to post 211 against Spain. Israel knew they had to score their runs as fast as possible, and Aston (26), playing despite his injury, launched a couple of big shots, Gutman (38) found the boundaries regularly, before Razpurker (14\*) finished things off inside 18 overs.

The ICA Chairman and Board wish all our players, officials, staff, supporters and their families a Shana Tova and well over the fast.

### The waiting game

The statisticians plugged in the numbers, and the equations became quite simple. Isle of Man would have to bowl out Spain for less than 78 runs to have a better run rate than Israel, Spain would need to win. At that stage Spain were 63 for 6. When news came through that Spain had passed 78 Israel began mild celebrations which picked up a few notches when the result was confirmed that Spain had been bowled out for 111.



Israel will be hoping the team, whose success was built around a strong team spirit and fighting attitude, can maintain their winning ways in the play-off match in Zagreb on October 11, and reclaim their spot in Division 2.

### Man of the Match Winners

Yaniv Razpurker v Belgium  
Shailesh Bangerra v Malta  
David Massil v Isle of Man  
Herschel Gutman v Portugal

### Top run scorers

Raymond Aston	117 @ 39.00
Gabi Schachat	95 @ 23.75
Herschel Gutman	78 @ 15.60

### Top wicket takers

Eliezer Samson	8 @ 12.50
Steven Shein	7 @ 9.00
Herschel Gutman	7 @ 11.14

Scorecards, match reports, statistics and tournament photos can be found on [www.icc-europe.org](http://www.icc-europe.org)

## MIXED SUCCESS FOR U19'S IN BELGIUM

The Israel U19 team returned home with mixed results from the ICC Europe U19 Division 2 tournament held last month in Belgium, with victories against Germany, Belgium and Gibraltar, canceled out by defeats to the Isle of Man, Italy and France, resulting in a disappointing 5<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 7-nation

