

# Bledlow Ridge 1s v Buckingham 3s

Home : Saturday 18th August 2018

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**Ridge Win Love-In with Buckingham**

**RidgeBears are Compared to a Bunch of Flowers**

**Allan Reveals secret Behind Catch-of-the-Season**

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Buckingham: 111 all out (32.3overs)

BRCC: 113-2 (21.1 overs)

**Result: BRCC Won by 8 wickets**

At 12.20 for a 12.30 start we were one short. The peace was disturbed as a large kitbag crashed in followed by its suave owner.

“Bloody Hell Birdie – you told me it was a 12 o’clock start” mumbled an out-of-breath BenDog who had at least three hairs out of place.

In our house this sort of thinking is described as “Pretzel Logic”. One can only imagine that if Birdie had said “12.30 start” BenDog would have arrived sometime before midday. He had after all travelled all the way from Henton for this match, a journey which is clearly harder to time accurately than a trip from Cornwall - see two previous match Reports where four hour journeys each way resulted in scores of 2 (in a victory) and 103no (in an abandoned match - ha ha).

Everyone was on their best behaviour owing to the events of nine weeks ago. I sometimes think that all it takes is a bit of aggro for everyone to get on famously. Three years ago, after the then CCL Committee abdicated responsibility over the behaviour of East Oxford in a home match, we almost had a love-in over at their’s. They were a good deal stronger than us the second time around though and we’d have lost by more than five wickets had it not been for a fine spell by the usually-invisible Cooperman and a fine catch

by that rare species, the legendary Harry “Rolfe: you make very funny jokes” Balakrishnan, both of whom are rarer to spot nowadays than a Cuckoo in Spring.

Everyone was polite. The Buckingham umpire gave the impression at first that he might be rather officious but proved to have a good sense of humour (GSOH – LOL) and a soft glove. He and Graham Hillarious had a good day.

The ump should have lent his soft glove to SamDog first ball of the match. “Slip catch coming, first ball” whispered RolfeDog to BirdDog in the slips, and Captain Birdseye ran in and induced an edge from Michael Taylor. As our keeper had not been directly included in the conversation he acted surprised when the ball came to him in the air – as you do when keeping wicket - and... well... shelled it.

With the score 23-0 Raj Lali hit one off Birdseye to Junaid who snaffled it and he wasn’t even wearing gloves.

The second wicket took a while to arrive. Junaid replaced Dakes to the sound of Birdy twice cooing “Boooootiful” after fine deliveries. “Too many Boooootifuls” complained RolfeDog. “Fantastic” cooed BirdDog to the next delivery, this being the new word he had learned the week before.

With the score at 46, and Mike Statto Gillett now bowling at the other end (“**G - I - L - L - E - T - T**” he told the scorers clearly at the start of his spell in case they had been reading match reports and put him down as plain old Statto), Anant Peshavaria flicked at one down the leg side off Junaid and was adjudged caught behind.

And with this came the one tense moment of the game. We genuinely believed he was out and Graham thought he was too.

The batsman said something as he departed. “Whatdidhesay” asked Captain Birdseye. “I think he said we’re a bunch of flowers” replied Brooksie. “**No!**” replied the batsman “I said ‘You’re a Bunch of Idiots’ “. Grateful for this clarification we gathered ourselves into a bouquet while Anant, in a moment of remorse, went to great lengths to explain that it was us he considered to be Idiots and not the umpire and in no way did he consider the umpire to be anything less than a very fine gentleman.

This seemed to become more important than the dismissal itself and he walked off quite briskly without smashing any furniture with his bat.

For some reason in all this, I asked Allan Loxton where he had been on holiday as he had missed a couple of games. Alan explained that he hadn't gone away, he'd simply spent some time with his wife.

I mean... what's that all about?

We were about to find out, after all Men are usually from Mars and Women from Venus

Buckingham were well behind the clock and Taylor was trying to push the score along when he flicked a ball from Junaid in the air, behind square, (see what I did with the rhyme there? ... ah, 'there's' another rhyme!).

It's hard to do justice to a catch in writing, but the facts are that the ball had gone over Allan and past him on its way to the boundary when he leapt backwards and sideways and performed a double-reverse somersault in the tuck position (See Olympics - Diving, 2016) before combining this with a Fosbury Flop and emerging with the ball in one very outstretched hand. For good measure it was his 'wrong' hand.

Perhaps I should just tell you that the Buckingham Umpire said: "You'll *never* take a better catch than that" and James Hickey called out from the boundary: "That was better than your catch last year RolfeDog". RolfeDog made a note never to sign any more autographs for him.

Whatever training the Loxton's had put themselves through during Allan's time off cricket had paid dividends and several players asked Allan for a copy of the manual. "We spent our break doing catching practice" said Allan.

Moments like that inspire a team and that was the start of a regular flow of wickets. Vichal Valambhia lost patience and edged to SamDog who by now was clinging on to everything hurled at him which eventually included the grand sum of 20 wides out of a total of 111.

Junaid with 3-30 off 5 (strike rate 10 versus Dakes' strike rate of 36: just saying) had ripped the heart out of their middle order and as BirdDog had run out of adjectives, Junaid had to come off. He (Junaid not BirdDog) was replaced by Ben Hillarious while Gilet (strike rate infinity: just saying) continued wheeling away from the bottom end.

Talking of 'wheeling away', it should be noted that BenDog has now developed the Gilet Dutch Windmill Underarm Method of returning the ball from the field to the wicketkeeper in the method pioneered by Gilet (see match report:

Horley away). BenDog used this method after several chases in a sort of Banker-Does-Statto Tribute Act, while pretending to save his really powerful overarm throw for later.

To cut a long story short, and this is already a long story, Hillarious, who was wearing all his own kit, took five of the next six wickets including Caught and Bowled off consecutive deliveries, something which even Statto could not even remember happening before, in August. BirdDog said "Boootiful" several times and reached for a dictionary just as Statto called for a smart phone.

Then, just as he was saying "Boootiful" yet again, BirdDog was hit in the heart by an edge from Thomas Buggey, via SamDog's soft glove and clung on in case a defibrillator went off anywhere.

As Gilet was too busy checking economy rates on his smart phone, he was replaced by Allan "Can Do No Wrong" Loxton. A little asterisk here: Allan did in fact perform one forward roll over a moving ball that evaded him, which just proves that like Andy Carroll, he is much better in the air.

'That's "C -A- R- R- O- L- L" thought Statto, imagining how he would call out the bowler's name for the scorers if Andy Carroll was playing. Which he wasn't as he is always injured.

Allan bowled 17 fine deliveries in three overs and dismissed Brijesh Valambhia with a full bunker, snaffled by Dakes (what are the chances of that?). Allan ended with 1-6 off 3 overs and an economy rate of 2.00, the same as Gilet, 8-2-16-0 who was by now thumping all the bowling stats into his smart phone.

Hillarious had the stubborn Tim Riley caught by SamDog before castling Matthew Dipple's off stump and walking off with figures of 5.3-0-20-5 which caused the wicketless Gilet, to stamp on his smart phone in disgust.

It was only just past 2.30 so we did not take tea straight away and in any case Roz wasn't fooled this time so hadn't put the kettle on.

RolfeDog hit the first ball for four: what are the chances of that? And the fourth too (although the ball, a lifter, kinda hit him for four). As the bowler Matt Dipple arrived to bowl the fifth he pulled up and got in a bit of state over Hamsah advancing down the wicket at the non-striker's end in a rare case of backing up. Dipple then got in a right tizzy for the same reason before the sixth "You are taking the piss" he explained (or "taking the pith" as they say in Spain) only this time Hamsah's bat was still behind the crease which was even more annoying.

To cap it all RolfeDog hit the last ball, when it was finally bowled, for four. Three in an over: what are the chances of that? To put it in perspective Wycombe Wanderers have not yet managed one league goal in the whole of this season, let alone three.

Hamsah tried a few batting pyrotechnics in the second over delivered by 'Spraggy'. Opening bowlers don't like it when a batsman tries to smash every ball out of the ground and Hamsah was clearly causing offence. Then he faced Buggy and hit balls one and two for six and four and it got a bit quiet.

"You've got a higher strike rate than me" said Hamsah in-between overs. "Nothing to be ashamed of" said RolfeDog.

This might have been the reason why, next over, Hamsah was then bowled by the nice Spraggy who had just said "All we want is a friendly game of cricket" and gave Hamsah a send-off starting with "f" and ending with "off" for which he abjectly apologised on being reminded by the Buckingham umpire that he is supposed to be the nicest man in the team.

BenGod arrive at the crease at 32-1, adjusted his hair and started smashing it around. The ball that is, not his hair. It was 49-1 at tea of which there was a lot.

When BenGod, who must have had too much cake, skied a full toss off the leggie Andy Humphries to the boundary it looked safe but Matt Dipple somehow caught the ball one-handed while off balance, performed a mini-salsa and miraculously remained within the boundary rope. "You'll *never* take a better catch than that" said the umpire.

"That's the only time two one-handed catches have been taken near a square-leg umpire on the same afternoon. In August" said Statto, who was repairing his smart phone.

Dipple's mood reduced from angry to grumpy.

SamDog joined RolfeDog with the score at 74-2 and generously allowed RolfeDog to make nine of a partnership of 39. SamDog hit a six to the short boundary: "How can that go for six?" chuntered the bowler Michael Taylor who hadn't quite grasped the concept of a boundary rope. SamDog moved on to 25 not out.

The game ended slightly anticlimactically with some wides especially as wides are *our* speciality. Everyone walked off clapping and shaking hands just like they did at a happy-clappy open-air service I once went to.

On the patio, ShakEy WhatsApped the whole world but failed to mention that Brooksie again won the “Thanks for Coming” Award although to be fair he did provide a glorious assistant who provided a glorious tea, which was mentioned with admiration by Buckingham after the game, in the mood of general bonhomie.

Twyford and Challow won so we now need 17 points from two games. Captain Birdseye announced he would be at a wedding next week involving two similar people and we wondered if Hari would be marrying Cooperman so they could both do fielding practice together and make a comeback.

BenDog said “Sorry lads, I’ve got to leave straight away” as if this was anything new. “Birdy told me the game would end at 7pm and it’s already 5.15”.

*No one from Bledlow Ridge CC is on holiday in Cornwall this week.*