

Bledlow Ridge 1s vs Challow & Childrey 2s

7<sup>th</sup> July 2018

# **Ridge smash their way to Top of the Table**

## *Gilet 7 for outshone by perfect spell from Brooksie*

## **Dakes 78 outshone by patient 16 from Keeps**

### **“No-ball gate” continues**

BRCC            313-9 dec (51.3)

C & C            130 ao (30)

BRCC won by 183 runs

There was indeed a lot of shining going on as the top 2 in division 6 met at Meadow Styles, not least the glint of the div 6 championship trophy (assuming such a thing exists). It may be early in the season to be talking about league deciders, but given the records of the 2 teams concerned up to this point, it was hard to avoid the conclusion that the winners would have the League to lose.

By a vagary of the British weather and the out of date Cherwell league rain rules (if only we knew someone on the committee who could get something done about that), BRCC went into the match unbeaten, having already played Challow, but in second place, 12 points behind them. The normal response to winning the toss in Challow's position would be to bat, the pitch having been generally agreed to be looking as flat as \*\*\*\* (to use the technical terminology), so Dakes could barely contain his surprise (and pleasure) when having called correctly, Alex Lynch opted to bowl.

So we all slathered on a litre of Hazmat grade sun cream and headed into the middle.

The hero of our tale was umpiring at square leg (Oi! If you want to be the hero, you write the bloody report) and as opener Luke Cheshire whizzed a couple past a slightly bemused Lloyd, he was starting to think it wasn't a bad decision to bowl. On ball 5, Lloyd reckoned he had finally managed to get a thin nick on one, however the other umpire disagreed and given that it had thumped into his pads plumb in front, he was on his way. Keeps made a slightly better fist of leaving the last ball and we were 0-1 from 1.

In the second over, Brooksie at least got the runs ahead of the wickets with a lovely cut for 4 to point, followed 2 balls later by a nicely timed 4 to square leg. On neither occasion did he take so much as a step out of his crease, which may have been an expression of his confidence in his timing, combined with the lightening quick outfield, or it could have been a statement of intent to get absolutely nowhere near the end Luke Cheshire was bowling to. Keeps hopped about a bit, hit a few back to the bowler and after 9 consecutive dots decided enough was enough, got a scruffy edge on one and used the powers invested in him as Lord of whatever to command Brooksie through for a single. Two balls later, the pitch

showed itself to be slightly duplicitous and as Phil went to clip the ball through mid wicket, it just stopped on him a little and he was caught at mid on off a leading edge.

As they were waiting for the incoming batsman, Keeps cheerfully commented to our hero that we were 12-3 when he had to rescue us the last time, so actually 13-2 for was a step in the right direction.

Actually it should have been Enter Gorgeous George, but for a “wholly acceptable reason” GGG had arrived at the ground late, which was reason enough to be grateful that Taggart and Rolfie were 15 miles apart as they would have then spent the next week discussing whether Penalty Time was applicable. But if Gorgeous isn’t available, there’s only one man you can send in without disillusioning the opposition to the notion that you are the best-looking cricket team in the CCL. Enter Hollywood!

Hollywood is a big lad and 32 degrees is a hot day, even for someone who looks like he spends his entire life on a sun bed, so he decided that running was definitely not a sensible option. His first scoring stroke was a 4, as were his next 3. In fact, by the time he had got to 41, he had run just 3, and collected the rest in a series of brutal boundaries. He bullied the other opener out of the attack and traumatised the first change bowler, while Keeps held down the other end. Ever the giver, this prompted Keeps to comment once again to our hero that “It must be brilliant for Hollywood to be able to play freely, knowing that there is no chance of a wicket going down at the other end.” 6 balls later, gone for 16!

They had however put on an invaluable 70 partnership by this point and the moment all the ladies were waiting for had arrived. The handsome twins were batting together! It was all too fleeting but not without incident. In particular, GGG may have been lucky to survive a run out appeal, having smacked the ball extremely hard, directly at Taggart’s head. The bowler, much to the disappointment of all Ridge regulars, actually got a hand on it to deflect it away, however our hero had already headed boundary ward and downward in search of sanctuary. GGG had set off on a very dicey run and the ball was thrown at the stumps, but by the time Taggart had surfaced from his trench with a severe case of PTSD and a tin hat on, all he saw was a broken wicket and a batsman in his ground. He explained that he was too busy watching his entire life flash before his eyes to notice the point of impact and to be fair to C & C they accepted the decision with good grace.

Perhaps blinded by all this shining handsomeness, C & C took off all their seamers and introduced a variety of spinners. Hollywood felt the beginnings of a bead of sweat and as sweating puts him in breach of his image rights contract he was forced to hole out for a savage 55 (11 4s, 1 6). George wasn’t much more sympathetic to the bowling and made 52 in a partnership of 86 with Dakes, and then Samdog got the biggest cheer of the innings when he hit a boundary and didn’t get out next ball. His partnership of 94 with Dakes meant that when he finally went just 5 short of a 50, we were at 273-6 off 46, and C & C were really really fed up.

Dakes was struggling to believe what was being offered up and was hitting the ball to all corners. He got particularly riled when Taggart sent him back for a leg bye on the basis that wafting the bat in vaguely the same hemisphere as the ball did not constitute playing a shot. The batsman declared the decision ridiculous while the bowler congratulated the umpire on the decision, declaring that batsman get away with far too much. He wasn’t quite so sure however when Dakes, in a fit of pique, smoked the next 3 balls to the mid wicket boundary for 4 to bring up his 50. The bowler shuffled off mumbling something about it being the umpire’s fault.

Hamz was pushed up the order for quick runs, but this theory proved flawed as it took him 13 balls to get his 29. There was hint of collusion when Dakes and Hamz met in the middle of the pitch to discuss who they were going to let C & C run out (Dakes (78) went on the basis that he was knackered) and when Hamz finally holed out 3 balls into the 52<sup>nd</sup>, we were forced to declare on the basis that Gilet wasn't prepared to change his shirt for 3 balls. 313-9 however looked pretty decent on a pitch that was starting to pop a bit.

It was suggested at tea by someone from Challow that perhaps we had spoiled the game by not declaring at 260. He forecast at that point that it was going to be a really dull draw but it's funny what 300+ does to your mindset.

A typically superb Roz Moran tea was accompanied by several attempts to delay the resumption on the basis that there was footie on the telly, however it was decided it was easier to ignore Keeps continued insistence that his 16 was actually the backbone of the innings, on the pitch than in the changing room so out we went.

We're running into a third page now, so I'll make this bit quick.

Dakes was knackered and bowled 6 overs off half a run. 2-16 with one wide. Just saying!

Hamzah took 3 wickets, but Taggart nicked 2 of them back on the basis that you need to bowl off 22 yards, not 21.

Al bowled better than his figures suggested, but sent down the obligatory 2 full tosses so had to be replaced by Keeps (what were you thinking?!?) who did the same in the next over and had to be replaced by Brooksie, who returned the near perfect figures of 0.1-0-0-0.

Gilet bowled well, but couldn't match Phil's economy rate, going for 35 off his 10.3 overs.

He did however take 7 wickets, and thus won us the match (if you don't count Keeps' quite brilliant 16).

So having smashed Challow twice, and beaten everyone else in the League (barring rain and one wicket against Minster Lovell), we are top by 7 (we really need to find someone to talk to about that). Football is coming home but England aren't and you can get a very decent curry in Chinnor at 11pm on a Saturday night.

We've had worse days.