

Sharon's Shenshational Tea Outshines Shtroppy Shaky

BAZ FLUKES CENTURY

BRCC 2s 226-7 dec; 40 ov (Sports Retailer of the Year 108, Doug 40)

Buckingham 138 All out (McTaggart 3-32; Shaky No E a very lucky 3-41)

BRCC won by 88 runs

Yes Shakey had a shtrop. Well about seven shtrops in all but they all faded into insignificance compared with one of the top ranking teas ever. He must be sheriously shpoilt at home.

This was a great performance under pressure, from Sharon. Aware that the club has now introduced a marking system for teas, a broad array of sandwiches was supplemented by so many mini sausage rolls, pork pies, scotch eggs not to mention choc rolls, swiss rolls and fruit to kill for that Darren Biggs and Egg Beattie may yet be attracted back to the club.

She scored 7 out of 10 by the start of the second innings, there being shushpicion that Jude Macindoooo's presence in the kitchen indicated collusion. But it transpired that Jude was shimplly taking notes – they are very competitive these cricketers' wives - and so when Sharon produced roast potatoes and scones at the bar after the game her shcore shoared to a maxim 12 out of 10 and with it an invitation to repeat the effort before long.

Mention must be made of the efforts of Carrie in support; Carrie looks a good bet to be the next Chairman of the club or ChairPerson or, oh whatever. Mention also must be made of Dickers managing to resist getting his tea before the opposition got theirs:: an act of significant self-denial.

At some stage a game of cricket had broken out. McTaggart confirmed his status as a useless tosser so we batted. RolfeDog could not hit a banjo with a barn door, or a cow's arse with a ukelele for that matter and made 4. And Baz made 108 which is all rather boring as he got a century last year too so it is getting rather repetitive. Dainty Doug made a dashing 40 but all paled into insignificance compared to the dismissal LBW of Shakey who felt the opposition umpire might have made a mistake.

Dan took up the same theme being LBW two balls later and it was interesting to witness the way his helmet bounced around the dressing room walls before dropping neatly into a kitbag, suggesting he has the sort of talent required to play snooker, or squash, or indeed just to propel a helmet interestingly around a dressing room.

Shakey made 24 but luckily Delightful Doug and The World's Best Dressed Sports Retailer, Baz "Piranha" Hawkins more than compensated for Shaky (no E – nearly forgot that one!) so McTaggart got his 30 as required from the top four batsmen.

There was a bit of huffing and puffing later on including a dismissal for Andy Walters who is due a score of at least 150 sooner or later, and including 13 by Malkolm the Sahib (see last week's report) who hit a six clean through a slat of the sightscreen at the top end. This feat was last achieved in 2008 by Ben Humpage of Abingdon and I only mention it because it was off Paul Brzezicki who is our

captain this year and he dropped me so he deserves to be reminded. Brezza it was: six: through the sightscreen. So there.

We got to 226 off 40 of our 45 overs permitted and then a remarkable thing happened. The mean, dour, dogged, dugg-ed, give-em-nothing Captain McTaggart declared in enterprising fashion giving them 50 overs to win. Or to lose.

We had done our homework. We had looked at the statistics of scores at The Ridge over the years and discovered that never in the last seven years had a team batting second scored more than 200 to win after eating a tea consisting of more than five savoury options and seventeen different choices of cake.

Thus weighed down, Buckingham struggled ever to get going and the Miserly McTaggart got into them first. We got three wicket including one for Saeed and a run out for Shakeeey (lots of E's).

One of McTaggart's wickets prompted an incident involving Dan. Dan, who could sometimes start a fire in a lake, managed to wink at a dismissed batsman in a particularly aggressive way, prompting much climbing down and much humble pie and the most interesting incident since Alan Brooks as umpire advanced on Dan with a stump in 2009.

But in all this time there was no wicket for Shakynowee who felt picked upon for having four appeals against the same batsmen turned down, especially as the umpire confided in this batsman that he had been out on one of these occasions.

Even Dave Bird came on and got a wicket. Much to the chagrin of Disappointed Doug who wondered why he had been overlooked in favour of Dave's pie-throwing. Surely Sharon had not served pies?

To make it worse the umpire joked to Shaky how funny it would be if the new bowler (Dave) came on and got an LBW. He then promptly gave an LBW to Dave.

In fact much of the interest for the remainder of the afternoon was focussed on whether Shaky (No E if you haven't got the message yet) would ever get a wicket again having had a catch dropped on the last ball of his first spell, and being overlooked in favour of the captain for another spell, before finally coming back and having another catch dropped.

We all laughed: "Better chance of Dave Bird getting his first run-out of the twenty-first century than of Shakey getting a wicket today" someone remarked. Just then their captain who had offered strong resistance was run out by Dave Bird. Just as Lord Lucan rode by on Shergar. As the night wore on, in the bar and under the influence of Sharon's roast potatoes, Dave's hand gesture suggesting the movement of an arrow through the air to demonstrate the speed of his throw, became faster and faster. God knows how fast the throw would have ended up looking if Sharon had provided burgers.

This opened the floodgates for Shakey who finished them off including a quite shenshational one-handed return catch with his wrong hand, all while balancing a glass of red in the other and juggling a beach ball on his nose.

So: "We are top, top of the league" and other chants reverberated through the bar as extra food was served after the match and Sharon was seen holding a seminar for Jude and for Caroline Bird on how to prepare and serve an award-winning tea.

Mention must be made of the Skipper's memorable remark when in a huddle after a wicket had fallen: "If you are not happy about the Field, just remember it might not be the *right* Field, but it is a Field". Well that's that sorted then.

Man of the Match was awarded to Andy Walters for fielding excellently, for taking a good catch, even though not off Shaky's bowling, and for being a thoroughly good egg in his attempt to emulate the great Keeping Lord of Bledlow's fine run of no runs in 2007.

And so, on top of the league we face a completely new challenge next week: a league match not situated in Bledlow Ridge or Bledlow Village, and with it a new kind of tea. Will there be scones, will there be roast potatoes and will there be enough for Dickers?

Roffedog