

Ridgebears 1s v Dinton 2s – Home, Saturday 25th May 2013

Dinton 2s 234 ao (52.3 overs)

BRCC 160-8 (47 overs)

Match Drawn Out - sorry, Drawn

Well it's hard to be funny when you're not winning – as I've said before.

The answer to all our woes was to win the toss and bowl first apparently. We did that and bowled Dinton 2s out. Mind you it was for 234, bowled out in their last over but, hey, we bowled them out.

When I say "we" I mean Dakes with some help from his mates, Matt, Brooksie and Russ who were allowed to share the bowling at the bottom end while Dakes the Whirligig operated all afternoon from, yes you've guessed it already, the top end.

The drama started before that when SamDog rang at 11am to say he was too ill to play. Taggart and I discussed how we would turn 20 players into 22, I considered kidnapping Sniff who was mowing the 1s wicket before leaving for – wait for it – Wolverton-upon-Grand-Union-Canal (more of that later) but I rang BenDog of the useless hamstring who said if there was no one else he would arrive in time, stand at slip all day and bat 11.

Once Sniff had got away there was no one else.

Birdy was too unfit to keep wicket. That was until all his education at Risborough Grammar came into play and told him that our bowling shortage meant Brooksie would have to bowl so BirdDog kept wicket after all.

I can't remember the detail really, me being captain and all, but Dakes bowled all afternoon. Well he bowled every other over and slept every other other over on the boundary if you see what I mean.

After Matt bowled six overs on came Brooksie. This prompted the first of Many Helpful Suggestions About Bowling. "Midsy" said Dakes, "Try Midsy, he's a good bowler".

It was not clear at this point whether this was to replace *him* – I could have tried this and watched the reaction I suppose – or whether it was a direct affront to Brooksie's bowling, or most likely, to my thinking.

Well my thinking was that as Midsy had not bowled this year... or last... perhaps it was best after all to use bowlers who were used to the job. Last time I bowled Midsy (and I do agree he has been/can be/ might be/ might have been, a useful bowler) it was in a 2s game and he got panned.

Keep bowling Dakes. And keep bowling Brooksie.

Brooksie is getting so used to this bowling lark that he is beginning to think he really is a bowler and should act like one. So when the oppo captain reversed-swept him with great force he took offence moaning among other things that "if he'd have missed it, it would have hit middle stump". But it didn't. And it went for four.

Anyhow, he carried on the Merv Hughes body language and bowled a high full toss next ball accidentally of course as at that moment he could not be held responsible for his actions, being of doubtful sanity at that time. The necessary warning was given, however it was pointed out that at the pace he bowls the ball is unlikely to reach the stumps let alone damage the batsman.

Phil calmed down. I asked Conor for an update as to the state of *his* sore shoulder and whether he could bowl. It has come to something when the under 25s are also crocked. He invoked the Many Helpful Suggestions About Bowling response and told me that Russ Turner was a good bowler. This was not an answer to the question I had asked and I remained more interested in Conor's potential to bowl, however it did give me some indication of what he thought about Brooksie. Poor Brooksie.

Conor counted himself out. By this time we had taken a few wickets but it was all a blur to me. Brooksie's time was up but Taggart later in the week helpfully pointed out that his 2-56 off about 3 overs was the second best 1s bowling performance of the season (God help us).

While Dakes continued to propel himself downhill, occasionally sending BirdDog and his Zimmer Frame diving painfully down leg side, I announced the intention to bring on Russ Turner at the bottom end. Suddenly I found myself confronted by BenDog who had hitherto been confined to a wheelchair. Not surprisingly he wanted to add to the Many Helpful Suggestions About Bowling.

He had a Helpful Suggestion. 'Who did he propose?' Answer: himself! Remember this is the geriatric who kindly became available on the basis he could at best walk and who was unavailable, for the reason that risking tearing his hamstring now, could put him out for the whole season. Yet here he was with eyes the size of saucers, miraculously proposing not only to bowl, but to bowl in the style of slow left arm which he has not bowled or practised since 1973.

So much for his opinion of Russ who came on to bowl anyway and before long was in agony from fielding a powerful return drive. Bliss.

My blur continued but we bowled them out. In the last over. For 234. Dakes 27 overs, 2 maidens 5-80. Russ got 1 as well as Brooksie who had calmed down by now and there were 2 run-outs, one of which was down to Conor... with that bad shoulder, remember!

Tea was great.

Why did I mention that Wolverton Grand Union Canal thing? Well did you know that Staines is now known as Staines-upon-Thames? The mind boggles. That would make Shoeburyness, "Shoeburyness-upon-Thames-Estuary". I couldn't help noticing that The Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, Dame Sarah Goad, was responsible for officially changing the name at Staines. That's an even better name than "Lord Keeping of Bledlow".

Well I digress, as always.

We struggled to 160-8 off our 47 overs and the opposition were understandably fairly bored near the end. When we were too far off their score they brought on some bowlers to bowl full tosses and to account for Russ who was caught on the boundary from one. Dakes went in and played the same shot in the same place and was caught in the same way.

BirdDog who top scored with 35 despite being warned more than once for running his Zimmer Frame down the wicket, told Rolfey about a bowler's late swing and Rolfey was out to that bowler's first ball at him. It swung late.

There must have been a bit more to our innings than this but I am losing the will to live. I do recall that Dutiful Doug hit 10 off the last over to give us an extra bonus point and that Matt Donnelly hit a couple of boundaries at the other end.

Maybe we should reverse the batting order next week. This would make it more easy to give all those who don't bowl, a bowl, just in case next week's captain doesn't receive Many Helpful Suggestions About Bowling.

Talking about next weekend, as ever we are faced with selection issues based on injury and infirmity. The great news though is that one of our regulars who has been unable to play at all this year will be available for the first time. How come? He is no longer required to wear his security tag and to be at home by 7pm.

Oh joy.