

## Bledlow Ridge 1s vs Banbury 4s

Sat 28<sup>th</sup> May 2016

BRCC            251 ao

Banbury IV    128 ao

Won by 123 runs

Having been rained off from a reasonable position 7 days previously, and robbed of 25 well-earned points from the week before, the Ridge found themselves travelling to Banbury rock bottom of the league with just 10 points. This seemed to come as some encouragement to Banbury who were just 4 points above us in ninth. So much so that they had sent a large quorum of players off on a stag do, leaving only a group of players who were either too young or the wrong sex to participate.

Toss duly lost, we were sent in to bat. As Rolfedog scratched around marking his guard, A Badger ( Alex Badger and as this is not a Rolfedog report, there will NOT be a succession of animal, stripes or cull puns forthcoming) appeared to have had enough already and was walking off. As it turned out he was pacing out a run up so long that Welcome Break had started negotiations on the patch of land halfway to the wicket. He only looked about 8, and they were second bottom of the league, but clearly they had a demon fast bowler to open. He charged into the crease, attacked the delivery stride and released ..... a lollipop. Unfortunately for Rolfedog it was a straight lollipop, and so beguiled was he by the anticipation of facing a proper quick delivery that he didn't even bother to play round it. He just didn't play it and trudged off to round off a miserable week. Doug jogged to the middle, hopping, skipping, stretching. He looked positive, focussed, determined. Fended at the first one, nicked it and nearly caught Rolfey up on the way back to the pavilion.

0-2 off 0.2. For anyone who was wondering how on earth we were bottom of the league, there was a faint light starting to dawn. Samdog came to the crease, making his 1<sup>st</sup> appearance in the 1s in 2016 and got off the mark first ball to deny Badger a set hat trick. There was an audible sigh of relief from those Ridgebears not at that point looking for a suitably sturdy branch to sling a noose over.

For the next 20 overs or so however, the runs came almost as fast as the wickets had earlier, and when Brooksie, who had opened but avoided the opening cull carnage, swung round a straight one trying to bring up his 50 with a 6, he and Sam had added 114 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> wicket. A change in bowling brought Chloe Hill on and despite her mother, who was organising the delivery of a thoroughly splendid tea, giving us her name, Shaun still felt compelled to shout out to the middle "Bowler's phone number please." Sam continued on as Dakes and Sniff made small cameos, until joined by Scott, who speeded up the running between the wickets and made a very handy 22. When he departed, Sam looked a sure bet for a ton until he got impatient and charged down the wicket to Steve Partington and was stumped for a fine 86. This later got him a Biffens nomination from his father on the basis that he should have got a hundred, which is clearly a much bigger faux pas than getting undone by an opening bowler who makes Taggart look quick and could conceivably be his grandson. At 187-7 (after Saad had briefly come and gone), a realistic target seemed to be just over 200, and looked like it would be enough. Shaun and Hamzah however had other ideas. Shaun played a very mature innings when facing and tried his best to start a fight with the opposition captain (who was not entirely blameless) when not. His final total of 9

belied the value of the innings as at the other end Hamzah was attempting to hit every ball into a different county, and coming close. The ninth wicket produced 51 runs.

In the meantime, as the total was climbing rapidly again, Taggart got out a computer and did some calculations which he then emailed to the London School of Economics, Prof Brian Cox, Stephen Hawkings and the Govt Institute for Fiscal Studies, all of whom confirmed that if he declared at 46 overs, he COULD bowl 18 overs in the second innings. Most agreed that he shouldn't, but he COULD.

Suitably reassured, he went into bat with Hamzah, declared quick singles strictly off limits and tried to help the young man to 50. Unfortunately, Hamzah went after one too many and got caught off the first one he hadn't middled, departing for 46 (off 27 balls), leaving the total at 251.

The second innings was relatively uncomplicated, with Taggart and Dakes both making early inroads, however Taggart then got confused as to whether he had bowled 7 or 8 and thought it best not to risk anything so made way for Hamzah. Doug replaced Dakes and bowled some cunningly deceptive balls (description from the 3 batsman who got out to him) or filth (description from fielders) and Shauny came on at the end to clean up the last wicket with still 19 overs and 123 runs in hand.

After the match, Rolfe reported that as he had some time on his hands he had borrowed Taggart's computer and worked out that the sum total of our ages, multiplied by the number of years the club has been in existence, minus the number of enrolled juniors, divided by the number of runs we made last year **was** in fact divisible by a perfect prime and under the conditions of law 15.2.6.13 sub paragraph 4, the result may be in some doubt. We await the League committee's decision with baited breath.

But what of Biffens? There were undeniably a number of contenders. We had a diamond duck, a golden duck and a plain old duck. Shaun had tried his best to start a fight (because we really need another interaction with the League Committee), Taggart it later transpired had failed to even appeal for an LBW that the umpire (big thanks due to Graham Keens of Bledlow Village, who umpired for us whilst injured) described as stone dead out and Sam for being just great rather than god like.

Except..... 2 overs from the end, the skipper told Scott that if we didn't get a wicket in the next 2, he could come on for a bowl. A few balls later, the no.11 hits one straight at him. It goes in. A glint appears in his eye. It goes down. Slam dunk boy. Get the T shirt on!!!

Rolfedog is currently away at residential counselling.