

# BRCC 2s v Kimble 2s

Away – Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018

## **Eleven Ridgemen fall to the Nine of Kimble**

**Cool diplomacy as Captain Chesh and Umpire Graham  
quell moments of dissent**

**ShaunTrap absconds with proceeds of Summit Meeting tickets  
(pursued by a Bear)**

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**Kimble** 240 all out (40 overs)

**BRCC** 53 all out (27 overs)

**Lost by 187 runs**

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An empty Kimble ground on a sunny day half an hour before the start of a cricket match is rather an attractive if lonely place.

As RolfeDog and the Kimble captain surveyed the scene, the arrival of David Saint was much like the first sight of another human being by survivors on a desert island.

Players trickled in but very few of them belonged to Kimble whose captain said he had lost four to the firsts that week or that day or even that hour.

The sound level increased with the arrival of Hillarious and the non-arrival of most of his kit which, he revealed, was in the boot of his dad's car which was in a garage for repair. One assumes the car rather than the kit was in for repair.

Mysteriously Ben could only relate this to one item of kit at a time so firstly he texted all and sundry at about 11.45 that he would need a shirt and then, an hour later while changing, announced that he did not have any trousers.

RolfeDog obliged with the shirt and Jovan with the whites and Ben decided he would audition for a remake of Madness' *Baggy Trousers*.

HairBear had once played at this ground wearing Dickers' whites – or “tent” as we liked to call it - but today he spent the pre-match deliberations complaining about the ongoing heat and that he was already “40 degrees”. Being a Ginger he may indeed have been hotter than anyone else.

We assembled, ten of us ready to field, for another of Captain Cheshire's rousing Churchillian motivational speeches.

In the event this was more like a Parliamentary Brief with every potential aspect of the game covered except for the fact that the opposition might blast 240 with a team of only nine men. Suddenly an eleventh Ridge man appeared at the door in the form of Malik whose promptness with two minutes to spare would put Saeed to shame.

Had we opened the match with a hat-trick the game would have been over there and then but for the one run required for victory. As it was, during the second over a trail of opposition cricketers, ready-changed walked across the car park at approximately 10-yard distances to bring the Kimble contingent to nine.

We had already managed quite a few wides by the time in the fourth over the ShaunTrap bowled one of the openers. “Great reward for pressure” enthused the irrepressible Chesh. This prompted a brief debate after which the team concluded that with the score at 24-0 off three overs and with a chest high full toss having been despatched for four the previous ball, the wicket was more a reward for complacency than for pressure.

This brought in the diminutive Kimble No 3 Ateeq Ahmed whose shirt design, rather unusually, sported a large dark rim under and around each armpit as if someone had swapped his can of Brut with a spray can of dark creosote. Either way his arms were well oiled and after a sighter or two he smacked a decent ball from Hillarious into the field and shortly another, against the sightscreen.

RolfeDog was in best ball-searching form chiding anyone who was looking for the ball somewhere other than where RolfeDog was standing. The field had been planted with peas which – I had never seen this – grow on stalks meaning

that you can see the ground below, rather unlike the wildflower garden which is developing on the 'Keeping' side of Meadow Styles.

Chesh made a poor joke about being 'peed' off and then repeated it when nobody reacted. Everyone was peed off with RolfeDog however when the youngest member of the opposition, aged 13, found the ball nowhere near where RolfeDog was looking and made his discovery with the now traditional remark "I've found a nice shiny looking Cherwell League ball, just a few overs old, in the place where I thought it went in, but I don't know if it is the match ball."

With recent match reports in mind RolfeDog was keen to quash at birth, the possibility that aliens were randomly dropping nearly-new match balls into fields surrounding the Kimble ground just as they have been at The Ridge and confirmed that the probability of it being the match ball exceeded 100% so we carried on with the game.

Unfortunately, although he quietened down a bit Mr Ahmed had rather a good game. Chesh rotated his other bowlers, Vajid, Junaid (3-60) and Farhan and the wickets gradually game, one held by Junaid who is a Good Catcher, another by Chesh who is also a Good Catcher. The wickets which fell, fell at the other end however, until Ahmed eventually 'walked' for a nick behind caught by Jovan off the Real Saint (appreciated by the fielders) for 88 making way for Raza Shah and Nisar Ahmed to have bit of a blast at the end until we bowled them out needing only to take eight wickets to do so (Kimble having just nine men).

The only other incident of note had been an unrequited appeal for LBW by The Real Saint which ended with him lying on his back doing a "dead ants" turn, for which he was awarded 8/10 for style + 1/10 for needlessly drawing attention.

We found that England were 1-0 up in the WC Quarter-Final v Sweden and the absence of any loud cheer from the pavilion at this goal was explained by the shortage of Kimble players together with the need to provide an umpire to support Graham and a scorer. There had therefore been only three people watching the game at the time Harry Maguire rose above all the Swedish defenders and scored, bringing to mind "*McGuinn and McGuire couldn't get no higher*" (Mamas and Papas, Creek Alley, 1967)

It was agreed that if the openers padded up in advance we would watch the end of the match and RolfeDog was rewarded by someone walking in front of the telly just at the moment Deli Alli scored England's second goal.

Buoyed by England's 2-0 success we found ourselves 16-7 off about 15 overs, then Farhan scored our second boundary off the last ball of the 19<sup>th</sup> over and it was at this point that the top scorer exceeded 5.

HairBear, a Gilet-Statto trainee, because obsessed with low-scoring records in the Cherwell League (CCL) and was delighted that Farhan's boundary took us out of the lowest ten scores in CCL history, the lowest ever being exactly 10.

The brevity of our innings up to the point that Hillarious, batting No 10, joined Farhan at the crease is impossible to match with sufficient brevity in words, so I say no more about the first eight wickets, except for a strange discussion that took place after the loss of our 7<sup>th</sup>.

By this time, Captain Designate S.Niff was on the field kindly doing some voluntary square-leg umpiring and Captain Extraordinary, Chesh, was scoring. Chesh was forced to do so while answering rapid-fire questions of a critical nature from Malik, starting with the batting order.

Some would argue that Malik's dismissal bowled, while pirouetting 180 degrees on one leg trying to hit a regulation delivery to Glamorgan, had done little to advance his case for promotion up the order. Malik however saw it differently, then moved on to captaincy, bowling and field placing, before moving on again to Brexit, climate change and the Meaning of Life.

Captain Chesh dealt with this with the cool of an experienced diplomat, promising that he would attend to the matter when not having to acknowledge signals from the umpires and generally watch the game. A Summit Meeting was offered at which he was prepared to 'drill down', 'take it to the next level', 'run it up the flagpole' and 'peel back the layers of onion', an event for which Shaun began to sell tickets.

By now RolfeDog had taken over at square-leg and Hillarious and Farhan, batting with exemplary defence, were showing some resistance and hitting the odd boundary giving us hope of survival, although we were only 23 or so overs into the innings.

Umpire Graham chided both batsmen for chatting for an unnecessarily long time between overs and keeping the fielding side waiting: "But there's plenty to talk about" responded Ben. One couldn't help thinking that of the two batsmen involved Ben was probably doing rather more of the talking and Farhan, more of the listening. There's also not a lot to talk about when your score is 40-8 with twenty overs more to play out and most of your kit is in the boot of your dad's car in the local garage.

It was against this backdrop that a minor umpiring incident emerged as the – until now – quiet and thoughtful - Arun Singh, fielding at mid-off, demanded of Farhan that he be ready to bat.

This might have been a reasonable request a) had he been an umpire and b) had Graham not been dealing with a recalcitrant stump at the bowlers end where he was trying with only partial success, and no help from mid-off, to secure the stump and replace a rebellious bail.

This cut no ice with the fielder who chose Graham as his next target then took his reprimand with poor grace, continuing to do so after the next wicket when Farhan fell to a very fine diving catch for a plucky 17.

Order was restored just about, though one sensed that it might have been easier for the Kimble skipper if he had been more familiar with all his players. As far as I can remember, Kimble had not supplied a match umpire – a point which eluded some of the opposing team - whereas Graham umpired the entire match at the bowler's end on behalf of both teams, in searing heat.

We had also provided another non-playing official at square leg for a number of overs during the second innings.

With Farhan's dismissal we had the exciting prospect of ShaunTrap batting with a runner on account of a recurrence of a hip injury. We were spared the fun however when Ben was bowled and in scoring 53 we had lost by 187 runs, Nisar Ahmed taking 6-25.

HairBear announced with great excitement that our score was not in the lowest 200 totals in CCL history and for that we were grateful and we could not wait to inform Gilet who had probably made a wireless connection to Kimble anyway.

Malik was no longer around when Chesh convened for the Summit Meeting and an angry mob gathered demanding their ticket money back from ShaunTrap who was nowhere to be seen either. Goodband gave chase.

A discussion followed about the 1s victory by an almost identical margin (183 runs) v former league leaders Challow and the absence of some of our bowlers in the coming weeks. "Gilet is bowling very well but not taking many wickets" someone remarked as the news came through that he had bowled Challow out almost single-handedly with 7-35.

RolfeDog was the last RidgeBear to leave and could see no other signs of life. He reflected that an empty Kimble ground on a sunny day half an hour after the end of a cricket match is rather an attractive if lonely place.