

MATCH REPORT

BLEDLOW RIDGE V KIMBLE (Away)

Friendly Match: Saturday 2nd May 2015

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NEW CLUB DOCTOR OPERATES AT HIGH SPEED

TEAM FOUND TO INCLUDE CHEERLEADERS AND HONEYMOON GATECRASHERS

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40 overs match – Lost by 9 wickets

BRCC	232-5 (40 overs)
Kimble	233-1 (38 overs)

They say it's better to travel than to arrive – that's debatable when you are travelling from Hornsea on the East Yorkshire coast to Kimble in South Bucks, to play as an emergency in a game you are not available for.

Four hours in the car including the dog break, a quick unpack and an urgent drive to Kimble where no doubt the whole team would be desperately awaiting my appearance to get them out of trouble, actually resulted in a rather anti-climactic arrival.

No one took any notice. The score was over 180-4 and there was no chance of getting a bat so I reflected that, as a non-bowler, the journey was likely to be the high point of my day.

A smallish batsman in a multi-coloured Jazz-hat was hitting the ball everywhere and running between the wickets like a greyhound on speed; a slightly larger figure in a helmet and about fourteen sweaters was trying to keep up. For the latter, arriving at the end of a run was clearly more fun than travelling.

Yes Luke Willliams, future surgeon to the great and decrepit was in the 90s. A quick look at the scorebook indicated he had come in at No 6 and had scored over 90 while Brooksie at No 4 had scored about 10 in the same time.

Tragically the future doctor was surgically removed from the wicket for 96 just four short of a club debut century. It did at least mean that Brooksie's heart rate could come down a bit and that the likelihood of artificial resuscitation receded.

Later, Phil gave Luke a mini-lecture on how to play for your hundred. In Phil's case this involves blocking out from 50.

The story was, that James HairBear (will he still be given this name in his sixties when he looks like Ed?) had briefly threatened with the bat. A further look at the scorebook and it appeared that Scorer Tom was under training for Morse Code.

This turned out to be Lloydy's innings - a typically boring 35-odd made with plenty of dots, before he settled into the armchair outside the pavilion. In contrast Luke's innings looked like an arithmetician's convention.

I noticed one or two of us had got out to a Rose or someone by any other name.

Following the departure of the whirling surgeon, Brookside was joined by Ian Kerrigan who made nearly 10 before giving way to Simon Martin (otherwise known as "Fats" although the similarity to Fats Waller is not obvious).

Taggart had a brief arithmetical blind spot when he could not work out who our 11th man was... it turned out to be Geoff who was on the pitch umpiring, far beyond Taggart's field of vision. Geoff was no doubt giving the opposition the benefit of his unique brand of.... erm...well his unique brand.

We ended up with 232-5 off 40 overs. Plenty. Dominic Gabrielle was the unlucky batsman who would have gone in next. I noticed the scorers had him down as Gabriel.

We devoured a fine tea, Scorer Tom munching a couple of plates and a wooden chair and trading in his payment for 36 extra chocolate cakes. Lloydy took tea wearing several sweaters and a scarf as he will be modelling the front cover for the reprint of "Fatty Batter".

Captain Taggart stressed how important it was to set high standards from the start and Geoff responded by making his first two fielding attempts with his right ankle. An early wicket and a Rose was joined by a McRae.

It is remarkable how one fielder can make an entire side look good and Luke was doing just this. It should be pointed out that his cap's many colours are shaped like bits of orange peel and the colour scheme looks remarkably like the 3-tone batting grip that a certain Rob Hawkinsport recently supplied me which seemed to have been designed around the Italian national flag.

When bowlers Taggart, Fats and Ed had got Kimble so far behind the required rate that they could not win, a few bowling changes were made. The Angelic Gabriel being one. It was only a couple of days later that Dom revealed by email that his daughter Eva would be taking part in a cheerleading event on the following week. Looking back, it is obvious now that Dom has been training with her.

Once this training wore off Dom bowled a few good ones and there is definite potential... as a Cheerleader... (no just kidding, cheap gag) and was eventually replaced by the Surgeon, while Ian bowled at the other end.

We began to do a lot of ball chasing, much of this at high speed by HairBear in Dickers' trousers... clothing which had never before got above a slow jog. There's no reason now why James should not go the whole hog and wear size 15 shoes and a waistcoat. At one point his biggest challenge was to retrieve the ball from the field and get back on to the pitch before Luke bowled another one. He didn't quite make it; the batsman, having spotted the gap temporarily vacated by James hit the ball into it, where it was pursued by James who had by now re-entered the field of play and hared ('haired'?) into said field again at a hundred miles an hour.

Around this time a couple of seemingly crippled old men arrived on their Motability scooters and walked around the ground together. They had heard of the presence of a budding surgeon.

They turned out to be Jelly and Birdy which sounds like some kind of Instant Dessert mix. They had been up to a most interesting carpet cleaning convention in Crewe, so you can imagine how fascinating their conversation was. Words like "30% polypropylene", "fine weave" (remember them?) and "shag pile" wafted across the pitch only to be absorbed by Dickers' trousers. They had both recently qualified as Students of Universal Carpet Cleaning and English Rugscrubbing or SUCCERS for short.

Back to cricket. About to bowl, Luke got rather confused by the sight of a man in a white coat hopping on one leg signalling a leg-bye, and tried to perform a vasectomy on him. This prompted Taggart to reveal that with good availability this season Luke could relieve the club of the need to have any qualified first aiders. He is certainly likely to play in any team that has Taggart, Geoff, Brooksie, Birdy and Rolfey in it. The club may also need to sponsor him for training as a psychologist.

The match? Oh we lost by nine wickets as Kimble's arrival was as good as their travel. Rose – by any other name – made 102no and McRae was unbeaten on 99. So Luke, who amused us all in the dressing room by saying he played rugby as a flanker, somehow ended up third highest scorer in the match. Mind you, add the runs he saved in the field and he must have been nearer 130.

But it was fun, there were good performances and if we can just start to catch we should do quite well this year.

After the match Brooksie confirmed he was allowed to stay out for a drink or two. "I gave Roz twenty quid today". Just a word in your shell-like, girl: you might like to up your price a bit as we think Brooksie's getting away with murder. I'd say that someone who has offered to do at least five teas this season must be worth more than a £20 note. I'd have thrown in a couple of bottles of Cola at least.

Taggart admitted to having gone on his best friend's honeymoon. Bearing in mind his past marital situation someone enquired if it was as a threesome or foursome. This seemed to me to miss the point as I am not sure that in the same situation, if I was that way inclined you understand, Taggart would be my first choice.

With this thought I drove home to a mild rebuke for my day's timekeeping, prompting me to again reflect that it was slightly better to travel than to arrive.

On the telly, Gabriel was bowling for the West Indies. Looking much like a cheerleader.