

Bledlow Ridge 1s v Banbury 4s

Home : Saturday 1st September 2018

**Ridge Win Again Despite Presence
of Non-Playing Captain**

**Planets Realign as Dakes, RolfeDog, Gilet
(and Taggart) Resume Rightful Roles**

**HairBear 'Goes Indian' and
Celebrates Season Mostly in
Horizontal Position**

BRCC: 286 (50 overs)
Banbury: 171 all out (36.2 overs)

Result: BRCC Won by 115 runs

And so, in the last match of a long and successful season, order was finally restored.

Captain DakesEye became a Sloth again, RolfeDog, with more runs on the day than BenDog returned to his rightful position of top run-scorer, Lloyd spilled a dolly, we had a proper 'keeper wearing scuba gear, Hollywood had a bowl and Gilet was back in the wickets; Henry and Doug were watching on the sidelines and Geoff turned up to remind himself of former glories.

Talking of which, BenDog needed just 18 runs to beat Middy's record of 753 league runs in one season, made back in 1933 – and did he string it out or what?!

We opened up with the now-traditional Hamsah firework show. Opening bowlers just can't stand it (see MR two weeks ago v Buckingham) as they expect opening batsmen to pat the ball back in the traditional manner.

No team has used a pinch-hitter up the order as we have done in 50:50 matches and if I didn't know Captain DakesEye better, I'd say it was an inspirational move; more likely he got the idea from a discarded cigarette card lying on the patio floor somewhere.

Banbury players all got into a state watching Hamsah launch some air-shots, air-shots as in air-guitar: great play but without contact with the instrument. When Luke Wetherill offered him some advice from square leg then dropped him next ball, Hamsah was up and running and it all went very quiet. In fact there's not much running involved when Hamsah is batting (thank God) and when he was bowled by a low one from the aforementioned Luke Wetherill early in the fifth over, his scoring sequence had been 1,4,4,4,4,4,6 = 27: 41-1 after 29 deliveries of which RolfeDog had blocked at least nine.

Mr Wetherill responded with "that's enough of that filth" and RolfeDog at the other end was inclined to return the compliment but didn't, instead saying there was no need for a send-off and this caused a bit of a hissy-fit.

Under instructions from Middsy, RolfeDog tried to run BenDog out a few times alas without success. BenDog was focussed and determined and certainly determined not to be run out.

Just after drinks RolfeDog was himself run out at the non-strikers end when in an act of revenge BenDog struck the ball back so that the outstretched finger of bowler Seb Finch deflected it on to the stumps with RolfeDog out of his ground. Out for 62, one short of his age, a score more and more difficult to reach as the years pass by.

Not so hard for BenDog (aged 42) who expired on 43 not only caught by a Badger but also bowled by a Badger. Well O. Badger actually.

His total runs for the season? 779. Geoff Tombs' season's record for a RidgeBear? 780... OMG!... LOL...albeit in the South Mid Bucks Short-Ass Wine-Connoisseur's U16 League, back in the 70s or 80s.

Great news came through from the 2s at Kingston Bagpuize: Chesh and Taggart were both out for 0, having we understand, managed to meet midwicket and effect the first ever double runout off the same delivery, the umpires adjudging them both dismissed in order to save time. Back at our place, Hollywood was undone by a full toss from a Badger and Allan joined Middsy on 167-4.

Where was DakesEye?

Answer: in a trance on the boundary occasionally shouting "We want 400" on the basis that if RolfeDog can make 50 then batting must be a piece of cheesecake.

The person most likely to get us somewhere near 400 was the person on the boundary shouting "We want 400". Not even padded up, hardly even dressed. "We want 400... get on with it.... we want 400".

Middsy knew better, judging the wicket too slow to take inordinate risks. Allan, being an animal lover briefly took kindly to the Badger before being dismissed for 18, becoming his third victim and completing Badger's set, as it were.

Lloyd joined Middsy and decided Middsy was a good judge of the wicket and built up the score steadily, immune to cries of "Get on with it Lloyd" from Captain DakesEye who occasionally flung his beard on the floor in frustration.

Eventually Middsy ran passed one and was either stumped or run out – hard to tell - which brought Junaid to the wicket for a cameo in which he struck the Badger against the sight screen and the RSPCA was called. He too was stumped by Alistair Short, short of his ground, then with the score at 226-7 out hopped Birdy and with it any chance of the sort of ridiculous total that DakesEye, now putting his beard back together, was mumbling on about.

He and Lloyd took the score up to 286-7 which was reached with a final boundary from Lloyd who will be 50 in two months' time. Lloyd ended 47 not out, as if to demonstrate how difficult it is for some of us to make a score which matches our age. Birdy with 24 not out did at least match his maturity in terms of years. We ended the season 7-down with Lloyds and BirdDog at the wicket with DakesEye due in next. Not to mention Gilet who has hit at least one boundary this year.

Sheri Loxton made a good attempt to knock Roz off her lofty perch and there were warnings of Tea Wars to come. She did however receive a reprimand from Gilet for not shopping at Tesco and thereby depressing the share price.

BenDog, an investment banker with a house the size of a small country and a car which turns into an aeroplane, was heard to say in a severe attack of irony that football is a great game but spoiled by all that money. RolfeDog spilled the contents of an egg mayonnaise sandwich all over his bib and had to be wiped up. "Who's coming to RolfeDog's funeral?" asked BirdDog who went to put on his spare body parts in preparation for a spell behind the timbers.

Not only had DakesEye not batted he had decided not to bowl. Finally, finally, therefore, our best bowler, Mike Statto Gilet was given the chance to open and to bound down the hill, the first time this has happened on the first day of a month. He extracted two LBWs from Umpire Graham something that no other Ridge bowler has achieved all year, at least not on the first day of a month.

Adnan Ahmed who had caused us a bit of bother with 70-odd at their place achieved a first for the day, namely a bit of action from DakesEye. He had tried giving a catch to Lloyd earlier but gave up on him and hit one to Dakes who back-pedalled at mid-on to take a catch meaning another wicket for Gilet.

Then Short was caught short, caught by Hamsah and they were 75-4 all dismissed by Gilet.

Dakes did the only thing possible at that point and took Gilet off. Hamsah at the bottom end had been replaced by Junaid who bowled Kieran Churchill and had Luke Wetherill caught by Matt Hollywood. Allan replaced Gilet and had to bowl a lot to the aggressive and effective Andrew Prior. Non-Captain Dakeseye played a tactical blinder based on an old Chinese Board game wherein he removed a playing piece, in this case a fielder, every time Prior hit a boundary, just for the hell of it, mostly to annoy the Dog family.

Allan removed Richard Wetherill (aka "Dad" by his captain) caught by Junaid. Junaid's final bowling figures were 6-1-23-2. He was replaced by Matt "I can't bowl" Hollywood who eventually removed 3-year-old Seb Finch who had batted stubbornly for a while.

Talking about "stubbornly", Dakes was by now mentally "curled into a ball in the fork of a tropical tree" which Google says is where sloths mostly live. **NO**

he wasn't going to bowl, **NO** he wasn't going to change the field, and at the moment RolfeDog hurled his eyebrows onto the ground in frustration, DakesEye exclaimed "I am going to do the **opposite** of **everything** RolfeDog suggests".

RolfeDog suggested DakesEye *shouldn't* run off and put his whole head in a large ice bucket and DakesEye became suddenly deaf.

There was a tight run out chance which went begging, prompting RolfeDog (who has never kept wicket in a league match) to give BlrdDog some wicketkeeping advice. "How long have *you* been playing cricket?" asked BirdDog which was probably the wrong question to ask RolfeDog. At the next opportunity RolfeDog threw the ball in when the sun was right in BirdDog's eyes and thought it very funny.

All this was the perfect build-up to a sharp stumping attempt off Brighthollywell. As BirdDog has been playing cricket for less than fifty years it was rightly rejected out of hand and this resulted in a tizzy-fit from BirdDog whose mantra this season has been "It is what it is". Except when it isn't presumably.

That BirdDog was clearly in a state of mental collapse became evident when he celebrated Junaid dropping a difficult skier (thinking he had caught it, obviously). By now Gilet was in a stage of panic with four wickets to his name and only two wickets left to take. Fortunately there was yet another Wetherill available to bat and Captain Joseph obliged by hitting one up in the air to Allan who caught it comfortably because he mistook it for one of the many cup cakes we had had for tea. BirdDog kept silent as by now he had lost all idea of when a batsman is out or not out, but Gilet made a delightful little skip, known as a Pique Turn in the world of ballet, the first time this has been performed by a Wycombe Wanderers supporter taking his fifth wicket. In September.

Finally Wellbrightholly got someone out who was aged more than three, Junaid taking a Skier off Prior (geddit?) to general celebration for the end of a season in which we had broken and established various club records. Statto's figures were 9-2-31-5 and at last he had the best average (6.20) and best Strike Rate (10.80) in a match. Is there a future for DakesEye we pondered having won without him again as it were. For his part we had won by 115 runs despite moving all the fielders out of the way and watching the game from high up in a tree.

No doubt Statto and Taggart will lock horns and produce the season's statistics. As far as our league status is concerned we came second by just three points to Challow, who also won on Saturday. They had no games abandoned for rain during the season. We lost a potential 19 points in each of three games abandoned, so we might well have won the league by a clear 54 points. No other side in the top eight divisions had three matches abandoned.

We lost one game, v Twyford at home. Only Oxford Downs 1s went the season unbeaten and they were promoted into the Thames Valley as Division 1 Champions. Charlbury 2s who won Division 8 were the only other team in ten divisions to lose just one game.

Our evening petered out quietly except for the five hundred or so cans of lager and numerous jugs of beer which were consumed over the next six hours, and except for the full evening of karaoke and except for Indian food ordered by Sharon, for fifteen people, which by now included HairBear.

Bear asked that nice man Hollywood for advice about what to have and accepted the recommendation of Phall which within the hour had almost killed him and which he somehow blamed on RolfeDog on whom he threatened revenge between bouts of exceptional nausea and lying on the ground.

BenDog proved he not only holds the record for The Ridge League Aggregate Run-Scorer, he also won the season's award for Worst Ridge Karaoke Singer Ever. RolfeDog got occasional stick and was able to retaliate by grabbing the mic and asking the audience who the 1s top scorer was that day. ShakEy arrived and had some red.

The world therefore, was back to normal. Lloyd left for another party dressed up as something like a Mermaid (or was it a Dolly?!), HairBear was laid out on the floor, the girls were dancing to the music (except when BenDog took the mic), the blokes were gathered in a small group somewhere else telling blokey jokes, finding everything funny, bursting into laughter and making "aaaaarrrrggghhh" noises for reasons which could only be blamed on alcohol and a general lack of education.

The 2s returned at some stage.

Taggart described his second consecutive duck in some detail. His 91 not out seemed a long time ago. He said he would be bowling again next year as he could see no future as a batsman.

Normality had indeed returned.

James Goodband is currently unavailable for comment.