

## BRCC v Eynsham Away

Saturday 2nd June 2018

### Gilet goes wicketless but finds his trouser cord

Brooks takes five wickets – conspiracy suspected

### Hammy strains his Hammy

BRCC: 223-8 (50 overs)  
Eynsham: 106 all out (37.2 overs)

**Result: BRCC Won by 117 runs**

The weekend started when the 2<sup>nd</sup> Team Payer of the Year Trophy for 2015, which had sat on RplfeDog's office table for three years, was handed over to Taggart to give to the newly returned Hari who was playing at home for the 2s..Hari responded by taking four wickets.

This bright news contrasted strongly with the appalling events that followed at Eynsham where Phil Brooks had his best bowling analysis in a league match as he scuttled five Eynsham batsmen and with it, their reputations and our sense of justice.

The Eynsham pitch had been underwater only 36 hours before the match so their wicketkeeper James Merrill was taking no chances. As the Ridge openers walked out to bat, Merrell's headgear, goggles and snorkel showed he was ready for deep-sea diving should it be required at any moment. Jacques Cousteau turned in his watery grave.

His first dive resulted in his first appeal and this trend continued most times he caught the ball. On the first occasion RolfeDog enquired whether we might be awarded a wide, not realising this would prompt an unceasing babble of what might loosely be described as sledging or more accurately described as verbal water-skiing without the right equipment, for the next hour.

Although a lot of work had been undertaken to get the game on, the wicket behaved much as might be expected in the circumstances and batting was hard against the bowling of Ben Weller and Thomas Gerken.

RolfeDog was particularly careful not to be bowled by a Gerkin but Brooksie did get bowled by Weller because he was laughing at a sledge that described RolfeDog as his father. Were this the case, the good-looking genes had been withheld, obviously.

SamDog, possibly Brooksie's half-brother, joined RolfeDog. SamDog tends to play away games as there are not so many red kites about looking for carcasses. He hit two blistering drives before being undone with a half tracker that hit a mine and looped with the trajectory of a softball in space before landing splash on the base of his off stump on the second bounce.

Up to this point RolfeDog had convinced onlookers how hard batting was but then Gorgeous George came out for the first time in two or three years, did a little assessment, decided batting was easy, and dispensed with RolfeDog's services, RolfeDog not being in the picture frame when the throw to Cousteau Jnr came in, owing to his difficulty running in wellies.

Out walked the second best-looking man in the team, Hollywood, to join the first. Hollywood deferred to Gorgeous' ascendant looks by kindly allowing him to score all but 8 of their valuable partnership of 42 before he was replaced by Dakes after chipping one to mid-off.

Dakes showed patience as a batsman. That's worth repeating: Dakes showed patience as a batsman. It was needed, as batting was mostly harder than George made it look before he too was out. There was a lot to do when Birdy flew to the wicket even though the chirping from the fielders had long stopped.

Nothing much exciting, interesting or funny happened for a long while unless you include the over from Captain and Head Sledger Sam Jones in which Dakes was beaten four times but survived. What he and Birdy did do was build the score up so that when Dakes sunk for a hard-earned 41, the stage was set for Hamsah.

He obliged and created quite a splash. "I want go get 50" said Hamsah. "Just bat" said Birdy. Hamsah soon hit a six. "Don't try it again said Birdy" so Hamsah hit the next ball for six. These two put on 59 in 7 overs. While batting Hamz told Birdy he wanted to know how many runs he had got. Birdy forbade such action so it was nicely synchronised that that both of them ended with 39, their runs eventually coming in waves.

This allowed Ben Hillarious a few balls to face without running himself out and then Allan too, who hit his first one exceptionally hard only to see it trapped by the bowler with a first touch that we are unlikely to witness from any England players at the forthcoming World Cup.

SamDog had been scoring for a lot of the innings and needed a bit of help adding up at the end and with the help of differential calculus we ended up with 223-8 – a fine total on this wicket.

Dakes and Hamsah did not get a wicket in their first spells and they were probably put off by some very shallow sledging from Brooksie who was told to "Shut up you tart" by RolfeDog who wanted to get that in before the opposition.

Allan swooped at midwicket and opened our account by running out Ben Smitten who looked even older than RolfeDog. Then came a strange period when, with a ripple effect everyone decided they were too injured to bowl. Dakes started it, then Hamsah decided he had a bad hammy (Hammy's hammy?).

Luckily Hillarious did not feel this way until he had splashed out with a couple of wickets. Gilet came on at the other end, declared his knee unfit for bowling after his first over (water on the knee?) but on hearing that his replacement would be Hollywood who is always too unfit to bowl, Gilet's knee injury miraculously disappeared.

Gilet was very boring but Allan was this week's unlucky victim of the ruling that if you bowl two chest high full tosses you can no longer bowl in the match even if they were not dangerous and were hit for four by a youngster. Captain Jones seemed particularly keen to have him taken off. The ECB need to look at this one again (this is Division 6 after all). Twenty miles for nine balls: it's almost like being a batsman.

We had run out of bowlers. Dakes looked around but everyone looked away except Brooksie so he got the ball. And with it a cricketing miracle or Tsunami depending on your point of view. He must have signed some kind of suicide pact with the batsmen who found various ways of hitting the ball in the air into the hands of Buckets Hollywood (seven catches this year) Bucket sBird (3 catches in the match) and Buckets Georgeous who managed to make an easy catch look difficult.

By the time Gilet had ended his spell wicketless, Brooksie had four. At least he could count, as on being asked innocently of course, how many wickets he had taken, Gilet lifted one finger, rather menacingly I thought, even though the answer was zero. For those of you with statistical inclinations like Gilet, his figures were 5-5-10-0 of which the 10 included one Narrow, so it was a reasonable spell. And he had proper cord keeping up his trousers.

He was replaced by Hollywood and although Eynsham had lost wickets for as long as Jones was at the crease they were in with a chance but he was Brooksie's fourth victim.

And then, a difficult moment: with Brooksie having four already Mark Weller hit the ball in the air roughly in RolfeDog's direction. In a flash RolfeDog imagined the terrible scene: Brooksie with his fifth wicket and worse, the prospect of the bowler running to embrace him in much the way Fez had done so years before, although hopefully this time, without tongues.

The only smart thing to do was to drop the catch but sadly instinct took over and Brooksie had five and chased RolfeDog all over the field, arms outstretched.

At number 10, wicketkeeper Merrill came out to bat: scuba diver's helmet, goggles and shirt down to his knees. He did not face however and watched No 11 Tom Gerken who had

injured his ankle while bowling, limp to the wicket and be surprised that the only ball he faced kept low and bowled him like a dambuster bomb.

There then followed the unusual scenario of Merrill giving Gerken a rollocking for wasting Merrill's chance of winning the game singlehanded despite wanting 118 runs to win and being only armed with a snorkel.

We returned to the Ridge some of us, happy to celebrate some more. RolfeDog cleared up and found the 2015 2<sup>nd</sup> Team Player of the Year Trophy in the home team dressing room.

It now sits once again, on RolfeDog's table in his office. Brooksie might win it next year.