

## **BRCC v Didcot 2s (H)**

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2019

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### **Ridge in WideFest as Brooksie Gets Diving Practice**

Middsy Catches a Stunner and Maybe ANother

### **Rain Intervenes as Match Well Poised But Keeps Keeps His Hair Dry**

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Dinton 187 all out (46.5 overs)

BRCC 103-5 (18.4 overs)

#### **Match Abandoned - Rain**

Yes, on his return to the side Middsy took three catches - or was it four? – we await further news.

Our game was one of only two in the league to be abandoned due to rain. A week previously, Challow had bowled almost no wides and chased a small total by 5.15pm. This week we bowled 44 wides and conceded 54 extras against weaker opposition, but the total was too large for us to reach before the game came to an end ... yes ...at 5.15pm. There may be a lesson in there somewhere.

Without Birdy playing we needed someone to talk rubbish and Keeps said how much fun it must be to play cricket in different continents. No sooner had he said this, than with great irony, incontinence struck (geddit?). At the fall of the first wicket he ran off and baptised a large tree. This he did in breach of a TPO and his case comes up next week. The tree withered and died during the game.

The aforementioned first wicket was taken by Cooperman courtesy of Middy's hands at slip and for forty minutes The Wandering Minstrel Cooperman and Dakes beat the bat regularly only to find that Didcot were hanging in there at 50-1.

There followed a tactic of the most dastardly kind. Those who played for the team ten years ago will remember how RolfeDog was placed regularly at short-leg or silly point in the hope that his endangered species would be rendered extinct.

Due to boredom a plan was hatched for Cooperman to bowl a no ball so that when the Free Hit followed, RolfeDog's mortality a few feet away at short leg would again be endangered, there being no field position changes allowed for a Free Hit, and all that.

His teammates had not allowed for his quick thinking and general cowardice, however. To words of encouragement like "You Wooss" and "You Wimp", RolfeDog fled to the far side of the boundary before Cooperman bowled. He gave thanks to Graeme Swann who had once set the precedent by doing the same at Old Trafford in an ODI. At least on that occasion an umpire had sent him off out of concern for the player's safety. At the Ridge, the player's safety was of no interest to anyone.

We had to break the partnership so Dakes did the only logical thing by taking himself off and replacing him with Hillarious. Middsy then caught a Stunner, low one handed at slip. Two wickets, two catches for Midds.

The afternoon then continued as a WideFest with Gilet at the other end dropping his standards sharply towards the end of his 53 ball spell by actually bowling a wide himself just as Lord Lucan rode by on Shergar.

There was another Free Hit and RolfeDog, who was by now stationed safely on the boundary was asked by his very amusing teammates if he would feel safer on the other side of the rope for this ball.

Keen to restore his popularity, RolfeDog reverted to fielding close and went into juggling mode at second slip when offered a chance by Kieran Beasley off Hillarious. He generously palmed the ball on the third attempt with great accuracy into the empty pocket of Middsy standing beside him. This has not been done before during a game at home to Didcot in May. Or so Gilet-Statto informed us.

Three catches for Middsy ... *so far*.

There followed a sequence of runs, wickets and runs and lots of diving around for Brooksie. The surprise of the day was Hamsah "Tesco" Ahmed who talked his way on as a left-arm slow bowler and bowled 8 overs 2-14. It does help that he fields like a Jack-Rabbit and has a quicker ball that is probably quicker than when he runs up over 25 yards. He wants to revert to seam after Ramadan (or Ramadam as Brooksie calls it) but permission may be withheld.

He has one unusual characteristic for a slow bowler: that of a tendency to sledge himself for his previous delivery while running in to deliver the next: kind of like listening to Sky TV working 5 or 6 seconds in arrears.

Talking of Brooksie, as we were but which we try to avoid, he got very excited when he took one from Hamsah and, imagining the batsman had nicked it, hurled the ball high in the air to the mid-wicket fielder while doing a little Nobby-Styles jig down the wicket. All to complete silence from his teammates.

Andy Griffiths caused us a bit of bother and thrashed 49 before being caught by Hillarious. Dakes had taken a catch off Gilet a little earlier to general surprise, and Gilet had got his mobile out and updated his career average.

We finally bowled them out when the other part of our Tesco double-act, Gilet-Statto bowled Rob Green, who usually plays for Chelsea Reserves.

Gilet announced that he now only needs 3 wickets for his 100 in the league and we are all very excited about this.

Sheri Loxton provided our tea and Allan pretended to be useful in the kitchen. The standard of the tea was so high that Brooksie was soon on the phone to Roz to ensure she does not become complacent. This time Gilet did not ask Sheri whether the food had been bought at Tesco, so RolfeDog did it instead and the answer was 'no'. This put Hamsah's job at risk, which is a good thing as he always tells us he needs to go early from cricket to work.

He certainly batted as if he needed to leave early and even outscored RolfeDog. When Hamsah was caught for 31 (RolfeDog 6no), Keeps strode out in a nice warm cardy but was well caught by the diving Luke Higgins who may be the son of Professor Higgins of My Fair Lady fame - on the other hand he might not. The suspicion was, that Keeps saw the rain coming and did not want to get either his cardy or his wavy hair, wet.

Keeps left to comb his wavy hair and was replaced by Midds who looked good, even without wavy hair, but played on to one that bounced a bit. RolfeDog (by now 8no) watched all this with some surprise and also watched Matt BrightHollyWell launch a few boundaries as drops of rain started.

There then followed a Bizaare Decision. HollyWoodWell appeared to nick one, but off his body to the keeper. "Howzat" eleven Didcotians politely enquired of their umpire. Just when we thought the umpire had nodded off, up came the finger to which HollyWellBright remarked "Oh! - I'm out then" followed by the canny observation "But I didn't hit it". The umpire considered this for a moment and told everyone that as the batsman was pretty certain about this, he was no longer out.

This could be a significant new development on future treatment of "Howzats". As the Didcot players politely pointed out, things are unlikely to work in the fielding's side's favour if an umpire asks a batsman if he thinks he should have been given out. What a career RolfeDog, with all those LBWs, might have had if that precedent had been set 50 years earlier.

So BrightHollyMatt remained, but the drops of rain became more steady. Faced with a Duckworth-Lewis situation RolfeDog, then Hollywood, did the only thing you shouldn't do, and both got out.

In the circumstances RolfeDog was unlucky. Given out LBW he advised the umpire that in his honest opinion he did not think he was out and that he would like to carry on batting, if you don't mind, and mentioned that he was just as reliable in these matters as his batting

partner at the other end. Maybe he did not say this with the same conviction as HollyBrightWell had and to his disappointment, the precedent set only five minutes before was overturned. RolfeDog was shocked to learn later that the decisions were based on how good looking the batsmen were.

By the time that Brightwell (I'm tired of wordplay) was bowled for 19 we were playing in a monsoon which brought to mind the ten drops of rain which took Minster Lovell off the pitch and denied us victory last season.

Dakes advised the umpires that in his opinion it was too wet for canoeing let alone cricket and swam off.

The rest of the afternoon was spent wondering when the game would be abandoned and watching Man City thrash Watford in the FA Cup final. With the score mounting to 6-0 we wondered when that game would be abandoned too, because ShakEy and Shaun who were at Wemberley, would be psychologically damaged (as if we'd notice).

Hamsah watched the football having called in with a sicky, at which point Tesco's shares dropped sharply.

Eventually we said goodbye to the friendly Didcot team, but not to all of their kit, much of which was collected by Andy Griffiths the following Wednesday.

For Middsy, back in the team, the evening had only just started.

After RolfeDog had smoothed the way with some outstanding small talk, Middy introduced himself to the rather attractive lady-friend that Sheri had brought with her. "My name is Melanie and I live near Sheffield" she told him, to which Middy, ever ready with a smart chat-up line was heard to reply: "I'm Martin and I scrub up pretty well too".

She was mightily impressed that he had "played on for 8", whatever that meant, and there was suspicion that phone numbers may have been exchanged so that he could explain this and other forms of dismissal in more detail later.

We may never know whether Middsy pulled off another stunning catch. If so, he would have told her that she was his fourth catch of the day and hopefully mentioned that RolfeDog had kindly contributed to both the third and the fourth with a combination of juggling and smooth-talking that others can only marvel at.

We await the truth about Middsy's evening with interest (in the same way as we can't wait to find out if Hamsah is still working at Tesco).

RolfeDog has Middy's Size 12s which were left behind at the club and is holding them hostage until the truth comes out.

*Jacob Rees-Mogg is quite tall*