

Bledlow Ridge 1s v Leighton Buzzard 2s

Saturday 27th July 2019 – Home

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Ridge Take Moral High-Ground in Points Deduction Fiasco

BenDog hits rock-bottom – well lumpy chest

Buzzard Get into a Flap while Taggart Spits Feathers

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LBCC – 132-9 (37.1 overs)

BRCC – 101-6 (20 overs)

Result: Match Drawn

Forecast poor. We had no Gilet (umpiring for the 2s) to put us straight on rain rules. The moral is: always know the rules.

Sure enough the start was delayed. We provided the Leighton Buzzard team with tea and coffee. Wayne Tyas made grumpy-Taggart seem like a Chuckle Brother on speed: “We are going to sit here all afternoon watching it rain, then go home”, so...

...the rain cleared and we started a 38-34 over match. Opener James Raine who, in the first match had been sitting uncomfortably on a few ducks and was quite brilliantly run out by an octogenarian for another before throwing his bat around and going home, was loudly applauded by his teammates for getting off the mark. Junaid then bowled him for 2. Junaid bowled Andy Smith too in another fine spell.

Grumpy Tyas had decided to play and threw the bat for a while, holding us up before a very fine edge from Cooperman to Alex saw the umpire’s finger raised. This was followed by a little temper tantrum and bat throwing-for-real this time. Perhaps it is a Leighton Buzzard tradition. Unlike Mr Raine in May however, he did not go home.

Matt Gurney and Ella Claridge held us up for a while. Yes, Ella is a lady and what a moment for The Ridge. The blue portacabin was at last brought into play and she had it entirely to herself. All Brooksie’s digging, all that plumbing and all those electrics, put to good use at last. Its purpose was no longer target practice for Hugo’s batting.

For once, Captain Dakeseye was wicketless. He had replaced himself with Cooperman. The Thespian had entertained us regally the evening before with a set of Buddy Holly and other 60s numbers. (Is there anything this man cannot do?) Now he terrorised the opposition and

eventually accounted for Miss Ella and Ant Bell, whose name must have a joke in it, but I can't think what it is.

Before these dismissals however we were treated to two visions of BenDog doing impressions of a mermaid in a strong gale.

Deftly brought into a close short leg position by Captain Dakeseye he was immediately given the opportunity to take a catch, but instead of using the old-fashioned catch-it-with-your-hands method, lunged towards the ball and chested it down in finest Harry Kane style. The result was sufficient bruising to justify a new 38" Double D rating at the nearest ladieswear store.

We needed to get Matt Gurney out. When he obliged by hitting one in the air towards our mermaid-in-a-strong gale, the mermaid responded by flapping vaguely and diverting the ball one side of Hollywood who gathered and threw a beautifully inaccurate throw to our latest Captain.

Yes, as well as Captain Dakeseye we now have a Real Captain to go with The Real Saint. It is Captain Alex who serves Queen and Country and takes wayward throw-ins yet throws the stumps down while facing the wrong way and ending up on the ground Cooperman-style. It is the only way to get things done. This runout was credited to Captain Perry despite the comedy involvement of Hollywood and BenDog whose new garments hadn't arrived yet.

With Gurney's departure most of LB's resistance faltered but it took a catch by Sooperman off a powerful blow to mid-off (off Hillarious: more anon) to ensure Austin Jones did not last long. (Is there anything this Sooperman cannot do?) More remarkably, SooperCooperman took the catch without ending up on the ground, no not for a moment, the role of perpendicular fielders having been taken over for the day by the aforementioned Captain Perry and BenDog the Mermaid-out-of-Water.

Rain curtailed the innings 11 balls early at 132-9; Junaid 2-30, SooperCooper 3-42 and Hillarious 3-36 off 9.1 overs. Remember that: 9.1 overs.

Rain extended the tea break. Tea was provided by Carole Dakin with a fine debut by Steph. No wonder Dakes is a lot chunkier than Hugo who may once have been put on a starvation diet in a failed attempt to turn him into a child jockey.

Rain rules were read and re-read, but what was this? The Leighton Buzzard scorer (who may have been kin to the Abingdon scorer of in our forfeited match of 2015) had sensed an opportunity and challenged Hillarious's 9.1 over spell on the basis that a 19 year-old is limited to 7 overs only.

Buzzard went for the jugular, if that's what Buzzards do. Was this really the club we had supported in 2016 when the CCL made them forfeit a match for a similar reason against Great Brickhill but in direct contradiction of the verdict against us at Abingdon in 2015? They have short memories - perhaps all Buzzards do.

The first indication that they were not that well informed was when Andy Smith asked to see a Handbook only to be advised that Handbooks had not been produced for a couple of years. The moral is: keep up to date. Everyone started playing with their mobile phones instead: where was Gilet when we needed him?

Regrettably we were also guilty of not having a forensic knowledge of the Playing Rules. At one stage Buzzard decided we had to forfeit the entire match, and I wished we had not provided them with coffee or tea. In the end it was agreed that Rule 5.15 applied (more fool us): 30 runs were to be added to the LB score of 132 and we would lose 9 points (a 10 run penalty and a 3 point deduction for each over or part over exceeded). So much time had been used up phaffing about over this that we only had 20 overs in which to get the runs.

RolfeDog went out to bat after receiving a short broadside from Mrs Scorer for no apparent reason, accompanied by Real Captain Perry, (RolfeDog was accompanied by Captain Perry not Mrs Scorer) and was promptly caught on the boundary for 1 which must be some kind of a record. Keeps played-on first ball. How we all laughed. It took us back to 2007 when he got even more ducks in a row than James Raine: a number somewhere between 6 and 8. He has pointed out that two were not league matches meaning it was only five consecutive league ducks-in-a-row – phew! Brooksie cannot bag that many in one shoot.

Anyway BenDog later described his performance as “perhaps my worst contribution on a cricket field in 35 years” and believe me, that’s saying something.

Once Unreal Captain Dakes had departed in the attempt, Pythagoras was employed to calculate that a more realistic target was 86 which would give us 7 winning draw points for faster run rate.

Unreal Captain Dakes trotted back out to advise Real Captain Perry of this cunning plan whereupon The Real Captain chipped one up to mid-on and departed for a stylish 26. Hollywood made 12 and Hugo spared the portacabin with 1. It must be said that Hugo had looked decidedly groggy all day – his eyes were rather blinkered in fact – owing to a night of romance aka horseplay, inspired by the Buddy-Holly-Look-a-Like. So Cooperman inspires romance too. (Is there anything that man cannot do?).

Less of Hugo and Cooperman (two **giants** of the game). Junaid came to the boundary to check our target with The Unreal Captain, saying that Buzzard were only interested in stopping us reaching 100. This was the second clue that Buzzard did not have a good grasp of the Rules (there’s a moral in there somewhere). Junaid then took us past 100 anyway, and to an extra bonus point, with a fine 36 not out with Brooksie on 12 not out at the other end.

Mrs Scorer announced with some glee that we had scored minus 2 points but the one thing we did get right was that seven draw bonus points took us to plus 5. RolfeDog did get some kind of a response – if only a grunt – when thanking her, without irony, for scoring, but it took two attempts and Buzzard did not hang around long supporting the bar, like we had at their place.

When Taggart learned of the events in his car on the way home he spat feathers. In fact he made Wayne Tyas seem like the Chuckle Brother on speed and grumpily pointed out that the run and points penalties only apply when a bowler exceeds 1/3 of the total overs available. There is nothing in CCL regulations about penalties for exceeding ECB Young Fast Bowler Directives.

He then realised what we should have all known: the ECB directive also only applies if a wicketkeeper of the same age would not stand up to his bowling. Alex had stood up to him. OK The Real Captain is 31, but any competent 19 year-old would Chuckle at the thought of Hillarious being a fast bowler - would think it, well Hillarious, and would stand up.

End of story. Nine points returned and 14 in all. Up Yours (Delors)! as Mrs Thatcher was once erroneously quoted as saying to a French politician. Had we been sharper we might have had more than 20 overs to go for only 132 not 162, but in the end it felt like a moral victory.

And we are very proud of our morals at BRCC.

Boris Johnson is holidaying in Europe