

Striving constantly in the development of young talent, this week we assigned a new young writer to step into the shoes of giants and report on the 2nds game. Below you will find his first effort, and the comments of his invigilator on submission.

In his enthusiasm to show you how literate he is however, he forgot to put in the actual match result, or even who was playing. Don't be too hard on the chap, he did his overly educated best.

Kimble 2 vs Bledlow Ridge 2

Saturday 13th July - Away

BRCC: 175-9 45 overs

Kimble 176-7 39.5 overs

Lost by 3 wickets

One night, William Shakespeare had a terrible dream. Aghast, he rushed to his writing desk, took up his quill and penned these words of his masterpiece, Hamlet:

“Brevity is the soul of wit”.

You see, the nation's favourite playwright had had a vision of a cricket club's website crammed with dozens of long and convoluted match reports, filled with impossible insider references, questionable puns and very few details of each match in question. Alas, the true meaning of his words was lost over the centuries that followed, and that website did come into existence.

Reader, I am here to save you and tell you clearly and concisely what happened when Bledlow Ridge 2s travelled to Kimble on Saturday 13th July, and to do Bill Shakespeare justice at last. Less is more. Or is it less? The game that ensued may help you decide.

Captain Martin Harris (no nicknames please) lost the toss which was less than ideal for us, but Kimble only had ten players, which was less than ideal for them. Fellow opener Paul Cheshire, an honourable man, declined to take advantage of a weakened opposition and blocked out the first ten overs. I have no such morals. I flatter myself that it was all going rather smoothly, and I was just wondering how to describe my century in this match report, when I forgot that I first needed to achieve said task, and was bowled.

Kimble were up to strength, but Shaun Dryden pushed the scoring along. He was timing the ball extremely well, so well that he tapped one down long-off's throat. Paul and Jovan Sahota played more circumspectly through to drinks. They had to be particularly careful because the game was interrupted by a swarm of bees... I'm sure John Rolfe would crowbar a pun in there somewhere. Anyway we were 88-2 off 23.

It probably should be mentioned, for economy with words need not mean economy with truth, that Kimble were very upset with a couple of appeals for caught behind turned down. The match was quite spicy at times because of it. That seemed unnecessary to me (it almost always is). So we shall move on without details.

Things did not go so well after the break. Paul took the handbrake off, accelerated, lost control and was bowled around his legs. New recruit Mo Waqar suffered the inevitable on a Ridge debut and was run out. Jovan,

perhaps impressed by Shaun's dismissal, tried to play a similar shot to a ball that otherwise would have been called wide. Success! Like Shaun, he was caught.

Wickets tumbled: Charlie Carter and Marcus Angell got good deliveries; man-in-form David Saint couldn't replicate recent efforts. Saeed Ajmal joined Captain Martin. He began with a bold political statement by planting a length ball into the field of wheat that forms an attractive backdrop to Kimble's ground. Unable to find our PM – seriously where is she these days? – he settled for bashing an unbeaten 31.

He did not hit shot of the day however. Number 11 Taj Angell was called into action with 7 balls to go, needing to make sure Saeed got one more over. To cheers from the crowd he played a spectacular leave, that front-on arms aloft Kevin Pietersen "I AM LEAVING THE BALL AND I MEAN BUSINESS" kind of leave. It ensured we finished on 175-9. That was less than the 200 we had hoped for at drinks, more than the 150 we had flirted with in the latter overs, in summary something defensible.

Post-lunch we had mixed fortunes. While Saeed wheeled cheerfully away at one end, Mo bowled a threatening spell with occasional loss of radar but had their best batsman and wicketkeeper caught behind, the irony of which was evidently not lost on him. Shaun saw off their no.3 and all seemed well.

Like Kimble, we faced a period with less than 11 players when Charlie had to leave the field. This also accounted for our scorer Robbie, who generously taken on the role, so we had less than 2 of those too. Their scorer manfully and manically managed 2 books until he too had to leave his post, no doubt with hand cramp, and owing to a seeming lack of interest amongst teammates we had less than 1 scorer, which of course is none, and he had to be summoned back. At which point less was enough.

However, despite good spells from Taj, Marcus and David – not to mention Saeed, Mo and Shaun again – the rate at which we chipped away with wickets wasn't quite enough, because edges wouldn't go to hand and we gave Kimble a release valve in the form of too many extras. In the end we lost by 3 wickets, with much credit going to Kimble's opener Mike Beaumont who carried his bat for 46, following the ancient wisdom that if you bat long, you will get a good total. They reached ours with 5 overs to spare.

When it comes to scoring runs and taking wickets, less is less, unless you are Kimble in which case more is more. But we still have more points than they do, so in terms of the league things were no more and no less different to how they were, more or less.

Whatever the outcome, when it comes to writing match reports, less is more.

Until next year,

Very truly yours,

David

[Editor's Note: This has got to be the longest brief match report I have ever read... are you sure this guy read English? I guess we'll just have to ask Rolfedog or Tags back – better the devil you know.]

Invigilator comments

Dear Mr Maunder,

Well done on getting your assignment in on schedule. Nice flow, decent punctuation, spelling acceptable.

Your piece starts well with a direct jab at previous authors and the Shakespeare reference adds a nice condescending 'I'm smarter than you' tone. Well done there, but sadly it peters out a bit from that point.

Your first mistake was the use of actual (real) names. Readers will be confused as to why Chesh, Sniff, DOEG, The Real Saint, Super Shauny and Test Match weren't playing and this may disenfranchise them early in the piece.

However to be frank, I can't see this new and radical 'actually reporting the facts' style catching on. It has been tried before in less significant publications (The Times, Wisden) and has never really gained any traction.

Chesh blocking out for 10 overs; definite missed opportunity (in narrative as well as runs), swarm of bees taking the sting out of the innings, creating a buzz around the place etc etc, these may seem obvious and cliched to your young idealistic mind, but things become cliched for a very good reason: they work!

Nevertheless, a fair start and I feel there is some potential here with some work.

Overall grade B-