

## Bledlow Ridge 1s v Cropedy 2s

Saturday 3rd August 2019 – Home

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SooperTrouperCooperman to The Rescue in Nailbiter

Waspish RolfeDog at risk of Lyme Disease

Landlord Runs Out Lodger Who Has Kit Washed Elsewhere

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**BRCC** – 247-7 (53 overs)

**BRCC** – 236-9 (47 overs)

**Result:** Match Drawn

Six-hitting was banned due to the risks of contracting Lyme Disease from the adjacent field, which has more ticks than Big Ben (see what I did there?). There were warning notices all over the place that no one should enter the field without a shellsuit.

In fact Big Ben was in Cornwall on holiday, having driven down alone except for a car-full of toys listening to Test Match Special (Ben that is, not the toys), while Hermione drove a car-full of kids screaming “are we there yet?” and “where’s daddy?”

We batted first. Midds got one that stuck in the pitch in the first over so Wellsy and RolfeDog with youth on their side, had the task of building up the score. There was youth on the other side too of which Elliot Ferris had a lot to say for someone who bowled a lot of wides, including a send-off 50 overs later for Dave Wells on bowling him off his pads for 114. Maybe “see you later” was a way of inviting him for a drink.

RolfeDog survived some early scares including a rather menacing Red Kite above and a ball that reared off a length which he gloved down from in front of his face. “That’s what helmets are for” announced Mr Ferris who came in to bat at No 10 at 7.15pm and opted to wear his helmet on his head rather than on his hands.

Ferris wheeled away for a while (geddit?). After a while RolfeDog left a ball from his replacement Jake Walters, which came back slightly and brushed the pads; he was given not out. A general discussion followed, the gist of which was “but he did not play a shot”. Eventually RolfeDog, who was quite chatty, pointed out that the most important criteria had not been met. That is, for an LBW decision the ball has to be hitting the wicket and it does not matter how much of a shot you don’t play, if the ball would not have hit the wicket.

Anyway at the end of the over, someone described RolfeDog as “Waspish” and RolfeDog asked who it was. Whoever it was (Ben? Hugh?) who fielded like roadrunner all afternoon, said “Me Sir”. RolfeDog almost said “Don’t you mean ‘I Sir?’”, but did not want to be called a “SmartAss” as it was bad enough being compared to a Wasp especially with all those predatory birds nearby.

All this time Wellsy was keeping his counsel and smacking the ball around. At 68 (runs total not years) RolfeDog was adjudged and was not honoured with a send-off.

The next task was to fetch a six by Wellsy from the field. Joe Coggins got as far as the fence but remembered those notices in the dressing rooms about Lyme Disease. He kindly ushered the older man into the field without a shellsuit, and to a life fighting tropical diseases.

RolfeDog got his revenge at the drinks break by denying orange squash to Ferris (too much to say), to Ben or Hugh (who called him “waspish”) to Coggins (who gave him Lyme Disease) and to Walters (who got him out). So there.

Jai made 14 then Wellsy did for his lodger, Hugo, running him out comfortably for 1 as he had not cleared away his breakfast that morning. Hollywood hit Joe Coggins (17-1-55-1) over mid-off so Joe cunningly dragged one down and Hollywood mishit the long-hop and was caught. Just as well as Fliss needed a bit of help with organising tea.

Enter Brooksie wearing the usual five sweaters, all hustle-and-bustle to Wellsy’s smooth-and-cool. Brooksie provided the acceleration and hit a Huge six while Wellsy progressed smoothly to a classy hundred and beyond until Ferris kindly offered to buy him a drink later, as described above. After Junaid (2), Dakes went in to smash a few balls, including a rather high-pitched delivery which proved to be the last ball of the innings with our score 3 short of full bonus points at 247-7. Unfortunately, BirdDog did not get in to bat which meant we all had to listen to him all afternoon.

During a top tea which included some particularly rich chocolate cake, we were treated to a football exhibition by two of Jess’ friends one of whom had played for QPR ladies. Some of the guys called out “Go on my daughter!” out of respect for the women’s game.

After tea we were looking at the wrong side of a result until Jai, with his off spin finally broke the first wicket partnership when Middsy took a high one-handed slip catch with a rather dainty ballet-hop in the baroque style of one of Hugo’s dressage fillies, and removed Sam Coggins for 35.

Jai got another then Walters threatened to win the game rather quickly until an enormous hit down the ground saw Brooksie take a very good catch whereupon in his excitement he threw the ball over the boundary and down the road. RolfeDog waspishly called for a six to be signalled but to no avail so Walters had to go. Cropedy got carried away and even applauded some of Brooksie’s fielding but RolfeDog told them to stop it (“cease forthwith”).

The rest of the innings was cat and mouse but with the cat (Cropedy) mostly a little ahead of the mouse (Bledlow Ridge). Gilet had arrived and was calculating run-rates on a continuous newsfeed. He was Absent Injured or possibly Absent Concussed. This issue had been a matter of some debate during the week and it had been decided that if you say you are not concussed then you probably are - this is otherwise known as a Conundrum.

At Great Brickhill some years ago George (fast bowler) had tried to maim David Maunder (wicketkeeper). The ambulance arrived and its staff administered morphine to David who was soon asked whether it had 'kicked in yet'. It was impossible for anyone to tell from his behaviour, but as soon as he said it hadn't, we knew he was under the influence. You may be interested to know that George broke the replacement 'keeper's finger with his very next ball (which was about half an hour later). Gratifyingly the finger belonged to Dismal Doug.

Jai got George Deeley the opener for 62 but Gayan Sirimanne was winning the game single-handedly. Dakes replaced Jai (5-76, his first five-for for the 1s). Then Hollywell was introduced into the attack at the top end. He reduced the run rate, removed Jennings and Leather (sounds like Hugo's saddlery company) but with Sirimanne still there Cropedy were going to win.

No-one had reckoned with Cooperman however. Wellsy has been offering £5 to anyone who takes a catch on the understanding he gets £5 from anyone who drops one. This has had a significant impact on Cooperman's fielding.

The Greatest Mid-Off in the World (ie Hollywood) or so we thought, was bowling. In the 45<sup>th</sup> over of 47 with 17 wanted, Sirimanne launched the shot that would have won the game. No, not a shot potentially worth 17, but a boundary now and with him still in, and it would be curtains.

Hail the new The Greatest Mid-Off in the World. He had snaffled a bullet last week; this time he gave chase to a skier round the boundary. Cooperman has a great ability to never look like he will take a catch (notice what I did with the split infinitive there) yet always takes it, so I wrote a poem.

*He moves through the air  
With all absence of ease  
Takes a wonderful catch  
And ends up on his knees ...*

*...as usual*

Refrain....

One more wicket and they ended up 12 short of victory, 9-down, another game where we narrowly failed to dismiss the last man or two.

The 2s however had won a stunning victory with Carlton and The Mighty Sniff putting on 40-odd for the last wicket to win off the last ball. One of them batted like a reborn Collis King, smashing sixes and fours and making 43no, the other one blocked out. We'll leave the reader to decide which was which, or who was who.

Arriving home, RolfeDog washed some kit including some rather long whites he did not recognise. In a modern case of "The Wrong Trousers" it transpired that Hugo had put his whites into RolfeDog bag and zipped it up as part of a cunning plan to get someone else to wash out the grass stains. Hugo is going to look rather daft in RolfeDog's kit next week.

Finally, Brooksie celebrated a fine match with his usual brew: "lager with a dash". No one had told him how dangerous a dash of Lyme can be. He has now replaced his five sweaters and in future intends to play in a shellsuit.

*Lord Keeping is on holiday in Cornwall*