

BLEDLLOW RIDGE 1s v CHEARSLEY 1s – Away

Saturday 18th July 2020

First Defeat in Pandemic League

Ridge Performance Posh-But-Dim

Middsy in Ball-Heading Drama

BRCC: 239-7 (40 overs)
Chearsley CC: 240-2 (32.5 overs)

Result: Lost by 8 wickets

As if frozen in fear by the prospect of our first game in the hastily-arranged Cherwell Pandemic League we batted well but failed in the field.

This despite welcoming back two players: firstly, Ben Keeping, The Greatest Investment Banker in the World (TGIBW) returned to increase the team's poshness level and secondly The Real Captain (TRC). With him came his extended his family, including weeks-old and very posh Tristan John Scarisbrick Perry, which is devastating news for RAJ who is now only winning by a hyphen or two. TRC has already put in planning permission for an outdoor net for Tristan. We should pick him as soon as he can field.

RAJ countered with the news that he, Robert Oswalt Pennant Armstrong-Jones (silent hyphen), has occasionally played for Menai Bridge Cricket Club just down the road from Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch.

There was concern over RAJ's mental health (all the rage nowadays) as he had been devastated when he worked out that he would be batting at No8 after his impressive 1 in two balls last week (shades of Malik eh Chesh?!). Who was going to break the news that he would actually be No10?

Gilet was just working out the last time a Ridge X1 featured an Old Etonian who has played for Menai Bridge Cricket Club just down the road from Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch batting at No10, when the man himself arrived and proudly showed off a new headband.

Yes, following last week's match report and the appearance during the week of the England Alice-Band X1 v The Windies on telly, this was a magnificent response.

In fact, RAJ bowling down the hill with a headband and Hugo bowling uphill with an Alice-band in the second innings, was probably our greatest success of the day and one that sent Gilet into contortions.

The other feature was the batting of Captain Perry at No3 once RolfeDog had been dismissed LBW after three attempts to run himself out up the Cheersley slope and two by Hamsah to do the same. Hams started off in typical fashion smashing the ball all over the place, before being bowled for 29 and bringing the in-form TRC to the crease.

It may have been his The Real Captain's outing but RolfeDog had bowled him into form on Thursday and Midds and Captain Perry began to build a partnership. No doubt Captain Perry was buoyed by his imminent promotion to *Major* Perry. This news of The Future Major (TFM), Major Perry (very posh), presaged a Major Disaster as Midds tried to head-butt a beamer and retired hurt and miffed for the rest of the innings as well he might, until his mum Paula appeared and raised all our spirits with some chocolate cake.

TGIBW, Keeps, spent some time regaling lesser mortals about the differing characteristics of driving a Porsche or a Tesla and we all tried to imagine the agonies of deciding which car to take out of the garage each day. Gilet said that we would soon create a first by featuring an Old Etonian, a World Class Investment Banker and an Army Major in the same X1. Not to mention a Tesco Accountant, a Farrier and a former Senior Carpet Cleaner.

Gilet and Hollywood, who is currently only available to *watch* cricket, went for a walk around the ground, with baby Chloe (quite a posh name) in Hollywood's broad arms. They were clearly talking cricket, as from time-to-time they could be seen demonstrating bowling actions or cricket shots, Hollywood occasionally forgetting that it was a baby not a cricket bat he was holding.

"They look like a gay couple" remarked someone, which of course would have been a wonderful thing had it been true and we would all have rejoiced, it being 2020, but before we could contemplate who would have done the shopping and who the ironing, Fliss intervened and put things straight, as it were.

By this time Keeps had been batting with TRC for a while. Rumours that the Great American Investment Bank had put him on gardening leave grew, as his first scoring shot was an almighty mow across the line to the leg-side, as if changing gear in the Porsche with the left hand while steering the Tesla with the right. But he soon began driving straight (geddit?) including one thump over mid-off before his innings got stuck in traffic, and the batteries ran out with his tally on 30.

TRC astounded us all - and himself - by hitting a free hit for six which of course meant hitting the ball in the air for which he apologised afterwards. Brooksie who had joined him, also hit a six in a fit of jealousy and generally scuttled around for a rapid 23. RolfeDog did not mention "like Groucho Marx chasing a waitress" this week as the analogy had been

completely lost on his teammates at Baggers. Like most things. Where was Cooperman when needed, for a reflective discussion on solipsism, surrealism or antagonism?

TRC (or TFM) was eventually out for 75 and the innings concluded with RAJ (9no) and Birdy (24no) hitting and running everything. Well, in Birdy's case it was sometimes the Lambeth Walk. RAJ, motivated by a rise to 9 in the order (if you take into account MIdds Retired-Hurt-eating-chocolate-cake) hit out, but after some quick running confessed in a very posh voice to his 50+ batting partner who has chronic back pain, that "I am absolootely shattered". Never give Birdy anything like that to talk about afterwards.

239- 7 was enough, surely?

Not the way we performed on the day. We did get a wicket after a while when RAJ, no longer completely shattered, induced an edge and to everyone's general surprise RolfeDog caught it with a dainty but unnecessary little dive, which they all admired. When the oppo's umpire remarked at the second hand-sanitiser break (that's the 2nd break not a second-hand break as in 'pre-owned') that there was no need for RolfeDog to clean *his* hands, this allowed RolfeDog the opportunity to remind him somewhat poshly that "there has been a slip catch".

From then on it was one-way traffic as Ben Caiger popped the ball up in the air all over the legside on his way to 68 albeit with DRS going in his favour a couple of times, once to Dakes' astonishment who eventually bowled him instead.

Quite unreasonably Cheersley had played their trump card at three when Will Sawrey-Cookson came out to bat sporting a posh surname almost as long as RAJ's in a blatant attempt to unsettle our side. RolfeDog remarked that he resembled Tom Graveney at the crease and his teammates asked "Who is Tom Graveney? Is he a world-famous comic and film actor like that bloke Marx you mentioned last week?". "He was a communist wasn't he?" asked Hugo.

To our knowledge Tom Graveney was never a communist. Neither is it likely that when compiling glorious centuries for Worcestershire or England he ever faced a pair of posh bowlers sporting a headband at one end and an Alice-band at the other, unless Australia experimented with this tactic in the 60s. **1960s** by the way.

We were hammered by 8 wickets with several overs to spare – Sawrey-hyphen-Cookson and James Veness seeing Cheersley home - and were condemned to extra time. Yes, extra time listening to Birdy who spent much of the early evening doing impressions of Geoff Tombs doing impressions of RAJ who took it all in good spirit – as if there was a choice – and observed how grateful RolfeDog is that RAJ has supplanted RolfeDog as Birdy's "posh punch bag".