

Match Report
BRCC 2s vs BTCC 2s
June 5th 2021

Fats piles on the agony (some of it to Bletchley)

BRCC under investigation in Nurofen stock piling/insider trading scandal

Vice-captain under investigation in Fantasy League match fixing probe

Ridge 210-8 (45 overs)

Bletchley 205 ao (44.2 overs)

Ridge win by 5 runs

Despite the fact that the 2s remained top of the league, had a strong batting line up and were playing one of the highest ranked (based on 2019 finishing positions) teams in Tier 7, all the pre-match talk was concerned with the start of the BRCC fantasy league (big love for Shorty for setting this up). Chesh (195 runs at 65 so far this season) looked an absolute steal at £5.8M and Wellsy's 53 in his last outing made him look good value at the same price and these were the two Sniff sent out to open on what looked like a 'sporting' wicket having won the toss.

Chesh took the first ball as Suthan Balendren came tearing in from the top end and quickly realised that he wasn't in Dinton anymore as the first ball flew past his nose, overtaking a low flying Typhoon as it did so. Drawing on his experience against Tetsworth, he managed to get a bit of pad on the next one and scurried down the other end to put Wellsy on strike. Wellsy's first ball was quick and full and was firmly driven to mid-on in a "Don't be thinking your pace bothers me" kinda way. The second one was a lot shorter and was met with a ".. and neither does your bouncer" kinda pull shot, which unfortunately took an edge and flew straight into Wellsy's unhelmeted head.

There was a bit of claret, a bit of a headache and much concern and swift fetching of the first aid kit by the Bletchley boys. Dave decided to temporarily retire and as he crossed with Fats, promoted to number 3, Fats advised, "have a couple of nurofen mate, there's some on the top of my bag".

Chesh is the fantasy league's most picked batter, which is no surprise given his form this year, so what was a surprise was that shortly after the change of batter, he departed having added just 2.05% to his season's total. Curiously, he is not in his own team! Modest I guess.

The pitch was playing pretty quick, albeit also pretty true, and whilst not quite as full on charge as Wellsy, Fats was enjoying the extra pace and stroking the ball around well. Wellsy had come back in

after Chesh's departure but had not really settled and Fats now had debutante John Gardiner with him. The pace of the bowling had dropped a little and both batters set about their task. Just before the first drinks break, John pulled up limping at the end of a run and seemed to have pulled a hamstring. As they walked in for the break, Fats helpfully suggested "have a couple of nurofen mate, there's some on the top of my bag. Actually, give me a couple as well".

The pair put on 81 for the third wicket before both falling to a catch at mid-wicket to Izzy Gurney, who was bowling a good line to a well set field. Fats came back and declared it hard work and popped a couple of nurofen as he could feel things starting to stiffen up already. He had fallen just short of his 50 (according to our book). Chesh later went to check with their scorer and when asked what he had given her in the brown envelope, said it was just however his contact details in case there were any queries on the score card. Good bit of club diplomacy that. On the final card, Fats was up to 50 and with it 30 bonus fantasy points. That was lucky for anyone who had him in their team.

Birdie had gone in at number 5 and looked like he meant business. There were 4s all round the wicket and even a 6. Partners came and went, but Shorty hung around long enough for the pair to add 54 and when Taj went in for the last 9 balls, he didn't face a single ball in the last over but ran so well that they added 14 to take Birdie to 64 not out and the final total to 210-8.

Over the tea break, John iced his hamstring and took a couple of nurofen. Fats figured he would be bowling a spell so also popped a couple, just to be on the safe side. Taggart, whose involvement thus far had been limited to scoring, took a bath in deep heat and dug into his own supply of Ibuprofen. Chesh was busy on the phone speaking what sounded like Russian. I didn't know he was multi-lingual.

Bletchley's openers made it clear that they were not going to die wondering and there was a fair bit of flailing wood. Taj's pace worked slightly against him and he got tapped around a bit but at the other end Taggart's pace off (that's not a tactic, that how ever it always was), was giving the batsmen a bit more to think about. Ifthikar finally tried to smash one into the rugby pitch but completely missed Taggart's (even) slower ball which did just enough to disturb the furniture. The other opener, Hendry, had benefitted from a 4 and a 2 off the inside edge down to fine leg, but at the third go crashed it into his stumps.

By now Fats and Taggart were bowling in tandem and the squeeze was well and truly on with the pair only conceding 48 runs for 3 wickets between them in their 18 overs. Shorty took over from Taggart and bowled a decent spell taking 2 important wickets for what he later described as "I dunno, about 28" (it was 41). When Fats, who had virtually needed to be pushed to the crease for his last couple, came off, the missing piece of this year's jigsaw was revealed. Junaid was back bowling and doing it well. He went through the lower middle order taking 4 and when Bletchley were 9 down for 169, their number 11 came in and asked if he could have a runner, having pulled a hamstring in the first innings. Fats, ever the sportsman called over, "You should have said mate. I've got some ~~furofen~~ ~~nurofen~~ nurofen painkillers in my bag. I think there's still a couple of boxes there. Ooh, look at the colour of my bag. Isn't it vivid?"

We of course obliged, but with only 5 overs left and a runner in, it looked all but done. Phil Rusling, Bletchley's captain, had other ideas however. Going into the last over, with our least experienced bowler, they needed 8 to win. They got a 2, and then tried another, but Phil's opposite number, Sniffer the Great, hurled the ball in from the boundary and hit the stumps direct as all three batsmen debated who should be where in the middle of the pitch.

It was a hard earned victory in a game played in excellent spirit by both sides. Having batted half the innings and bowled a full spell, Fats was now in bits, so took a couple of nurofen.

Post match, Chesh went off to the bar and as he returned, Tags told him he had a phone call. Some bloke called Viktor from Moscow Hacking Inc. Strange message, just said "It is done. No-one will ever know it was any different"

Talk inevitably led to the fantasy league and who had done well and who had bombed. The 45% who had selected Chesh were going to be a bit disappointed. Lucky he didn't select himself. Captains of course score double points and everyone said who their skipper was apart from Chesh. Come on Chesh" urged Shorty, "who's your skipper?" "Err ... Fats. Always was. Always my favourite for the job. Right from the start. Yep no doubt whatsoever that he has ***always*** been my captain"

Good call.

"What about you Fats? Who did you have?"

"Isn't it lovely when the unicorns play under the rainbow like that"

The Gaming and Licensing Authority have confirmed that an investigation has been launched into possible breaches of protocol in the BRCC Fantasy League. Paul Cheshire was unavailable for comment.

WADA (the World Anti-Doping Authority for sport) have confirmed that an investigation has been launched into the suspicious use of pain killers in community cricket. Simon Martin commented "I love it when the poppies are in bloom. They're soooooo beautiful"