

Bledlow Ridge 1st X1 v Gt Brickhill 2nd X1 (Home)

Saturday 19th June 2021

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Ridge Brick It Against Great Brickhill

Alex in 'Destroys Middle Stump' Scandal

Gilet and Umpire Dave Communicate via Interpreter

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100 over W/L/D match

BRCC: 124 ao (37.1 overs)

OCC: 125-4 (26 overs)

Result: Lost by 6 wickets Scorecard [here](#)

We were defeated again, but there was good news: RolfeDog and Alex put on their largest partnership since Alex' first team debut in 2019.

Yes, the score reached 7 before the first wicket fell. There were only four bigger partnerships in our innings and only two of those were more than 12.

It did mean that Alex was able to tuck into a large picnic once his mum and dad arrived, army rations presumably being a thing of the past. Alex is soon to bequeath his own slip cradle to the club and we learnt that his mum used to work on his wicketkeeping by throwing balls on to it for him to snaffle. On the evidence of the picnic she must have also thrown a lot of burgers too.

SamDog added four more boundaries to his ten the week before and his dismissal for 22, played on to a low one, was an indication of the pitch's uneven bounce. That didn't deter Hollywood however, who despite telling himself to start cautiously, smashed his first ball over mid off for four. Some people just can't help themselves. In fact he couldn't help himself on five more occasions, one of these going over extra cover for six.

Dakes, likes to do that sort of thing ("it's all about whacking it"), but was lbw for 10, fourth out with the score on 87 and soon afterwards Hollywood was bowled by an awkward one for 36.

Five down and we only scored 34 more runs after that, of which Shaun made 15 and was last out. Before then even the two "Bs", Brooks and BirdDog for once couldn't rescue us, nor Allan or Sufi. Gilet batted for the third time in a row, which – no offence - is a sign that we are not batting as well as we should and his Strike Rate of 0.00 did allow Shaun to add seven runs at the other end.

And that was our innings. Not much happened except ten wickets with a few boundaries in the middle. Four players reached double figures, two partnerships exceeded twelve and only Alex devoured four courses before the innings was over.

Their scorer was unfortunate: our 2s opposition had scratched so Taggart was on hand to score and give Gilet his third day off. “The first time I have had my third day off scoring since the third time I captained our seconds for the first time in about 2014” said Gilet to no one in particular.

Imagine being a scorer visiting our ground and being faced with the prospect of Gilet or Taggart scoring with you... and then losing the coin-toss and getting Taggart.

The most interesting aspect of our innings, and probably their's too, was the officials... not only the scorers but also umpire Dave North, standing for the opposition, who graced us for the second time this season. Sadly, or perhaps not sadly, no member of the royal family had just died on this occasion so we did not line up for one of Dave's British Bulldog Up-and-at-'em speeches. He was however, able to administer plenty of bonhomie and an interesting interpretation of the legside wide rule which he shared with our Mark Neal. This enabled each bowler to bowl one per over as far down the legside as they liked and was clearly planned with our bowlers in mind. Sadly George wasn't playing.

One of the many other good things about Dave umpiring is that it is impossible for the umpires to administer penalty points for a slow over rate, it being unnecessary to apportion responsibility beyond the umpires. On one occasion, in a moment of – surely deliberate – irony, Dave mentioned something about “not wanting to waste time”. He also tells the batsman when there is one ball left in the over which is a great advantage to those of us who like to take a single off the last ball.

Gt Brickhill wasted no time going after our total, even though Hollywood bowled Rhys Nicholas with a short low one on the last ball of an otherwise perfect first over; he soon extracted an LBW against Jilesh Pattni with the score at 24 (on the doors). His “I am not fit enough to bowl” claims have been rumbled this year and this was another mean spell; six overs went for 22, most of which went off the edge to Third Man. Listen to what it's like to field at Third Man (or Turd Man) [here](#).

It was soon time for Gilet (8-3-20-2) to replace Sufi (5-0-21-0) and immediately he brought Umpire Dave into the game, using RolfeDog as interpreter at mid-off. For example, Dave wandered over to RolfeDog and asked ‘why did the bowler not ask me to move?’ prompting Gilet to walk over to RolfeDog and ask ‘what did the umpire say?’ RolfeDog almost went so far as to suggest they talk to each other directly.

Gilet did manage to make the ball talk and presumably he had caused Umpire Dave no offence as he was granted an LBW against Greg MacDonald... either that or Dave had been asked to stand so far from the wicket that he could not see the batsman. This may not have been a good move however as it brought to the wicket Anton de Beer which, following the bowling of Erasmus du Toit for Horspath a fortnight earlier, smacked of a South African conspiracy and De Beer stared smacking it about.

That large picnic was beginning to tell on Alex, who on attempting a run out from SamDog's throw, managed to send the middle stump into orbit, instead of neatly whipping off a bail. This, when added to an increasing incidence of Alex' low voltage sledging ("one for the gardening" after a batsman tapped the wicket) and SamDog's new silent helmet-wearing persona (see Bletchley report last week) is growing evidence that Alex is morphing into SamDog and SamDog is morphing into Alex.

Gilet won another LBW with the score at 80 and 45 wanted. By this time a gaggle of Carters had arrived and surrounded the unfortunate Sniff who was spectating on the bench at midwicket. Unlike the Traffic Light Convention two weeks earlier they were dressed in colours so drab that I cannot think of anything amusing to say about them, although Molly bridled a bit when I suggested that she had been responsible for leaving the hoses on the covers running *up* the slope after Thursday night's rained off junior's match.

To be fair (about the dull attire) it was a dull day and the ground had not fully dried out. As if to test this, on one occasion Gilet went to collect the ball after it had gone over the boundary, gave it two or three careful rubs on his whites and threw it back underarm along the ground. SamDog was clearly impressed by this because soon afterwards he also had to retrieve the ball and then also rolled it back along the damp ground. On being interrogated he said this was "to dry it".

Lord help us all.

As Great Brickhill (will they ever combine with Little Brickhill, in the way The Tews became Great and Little Tew?) potted along, Umpire Dave retreated further and further back at square leg so that he was only just our side of the boundary and only a few yards from the Carters. "Couldn't you find anything more colourful to wear?" he asked the Carters and "Haven't I seen you somewhere before" he enquired of Sniff, against whom he had played every season for about 20 years.

The oppo knocked off the runs in no time at all and Dakes wondered aloud why we had to play win-lose-draw cricket and why we couldn't just play win-lose instead because it's "much better". Anyone not still scratching their heads over SamDog rolling the ball in, was left ... well ... scratching their heads over this one.

The afternoon had started with a record, of sorts. It ended with Sufi staying around for longer than our first four batsmen had spent at the crease and that really was a record.

No umpires were damaged in the making of this report.