

Bledlow Ridge 1st X1 v Tiddington 2nd X1 (Away)

Saturday 15th May 2021

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Dakes in Bowling Drama As Game Abandoned Due to Too Much Sawdust

Gilet in 'Fails to Bowl a Maiden' Shock

RolfeDog in New Career-Low

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38 over W/L match (rain affected)

Tiddington: 107-6 (26 overs)

Result: Match abandoned

Scorecard [here](#)

At 12.05pm, having waited until RolfeDog had finished working on the home ground, Taggart received news of a dropout in the 1s and sent him on his way to Tiddington with an off-hand remark about not knowing how to work a SatNav and with a slight smirk about being able to replace him with Lloyd. Thus was RolfeDog's role in the 2s neatly summarised.

The 1s were not in a hurry as it happened and due to rain the game did not commence for a while. Ultimately, due to a heavenly downpour which ended the game after 26 overs, for a while this match was less a contest between two local sides as a contest to see which bowler could be the most precious.

Dakes probably won it with three Refusals down the hill when he was totally phased by the presence of sawdust on his run up - in the way sensitive horses can be terrified by nothing in particular - and pulled up three times. Gilet replaced him, trundling safely enough down the hill, but in the dressage event, lunged balletically at a return shot, foot first, and carved a neat trench with his heel across an adjacent wicket which the Tiddington groundsman had gone to great pains to protect.

This natural athleticism was matched by the youthful offside field of SamDog, Hamsah and RolfeDog although at times Hamsah's tyres span in the mud when he was required to turn and give chase. Dakes suggested he put down sawdust where he was fielding, which was both hilarious and also Dakes' first venture into irony since he once turned up an hour early for a match.

Tiddington 1s game had been called off so there were spectators to watch a rather stronger Tiddington X1 than we had played last year in a game which was, funnily enough, abandoned due to heavy rain.

Opener Matthew Weeks took on our opening pair of Precious Dakes and Sufi, while his partner Matthew Maule took on Umpire Graham when Graham called wide to a ball that had hit Weeks, before overruling it on Dakes' say-so, Dakes being a trustworthy kind of guy.

While Dakes was still slaloming in from the top end, Sufi was bowling his heart out from the bottom (if you'll excuse the unfortunate turn of phrase). We may be able to see even more

of Sufi's heart, or at least his body next week as his whites are shrinking week-by-week: his trousers now barely cover his shins and his shirt is barely (geddit?) long enough to tuck in. He either needs new kit or a wash cycle at lower temperature.

Aided by a more consistent run-up than in the past, lack of fear of sawdust, and Alex' tidiness behind the stumps Sufi bowled far better than his figures would suggest. He induced the odd edge and then in a great act of irony, ShortHand took up a perfect long-barrier position at mid-off and remained in this balletic pose as the ball made its way through or past him to the boundary, reminding us of a piece of fielding by Sufi off ShortHand's bowling in a preceding match. In an attack of preciousness Sufi mentioned something about building up pressure on the batsman and huffed off to long leg to field.

Our other fielding error was when Gilet shelled a chance at mid-on and, the Tiddington umpire asked RolfeDog at short leg if that player was just 'filling in' for the team. Well it can be an easy mistake to make, but after Dakes' aforementioned hissy-fit about running through sawdust, Gilet came on, and is the case every week, surprised the batsmen with both his accuracy and the fluency of his approach to the wicket: The Ridge's answer to Michael Holding - for those whose memories go back that far – except without the grace, athleticism and speed.

Michael Holding however, never took wickets against Tiddington 2s whereas Gilet accounted for Maule (9) and Weeks (26) with LBWs and later bowled Taylor for 12. In between times Alex' hands proved too quick off Gilet's bowling, when he whipped off a bail only for the batsman to lift his foot a moment later. Alex will be recalibrated this week.

Alex was however, involved in another chance when the luckless, and almost shirtless Sufi, induced an edge only to see Alex flying through the air, Schmeichel-like (this being the day that Leicester City won the FA Cup) and tip it around the post. The post in this instance was Mike Winson, who may have been called worse things, but on this occasion was spared the opportunity of demonstrating the benefit of Wednesday night catching practice.

This prompted an outbreak of bovine noises both from the adjacent field and from BirdDog fielding close to the wicket or possibly at cow-corner (geddit?).

Dakes now replaced Sufi at the bottom end with another pile of sawdust although don't take that too literally. He bowled Chris Goodman (12) when this batsman shouldered arms to one that he should have left alone. He then bowled skipper Nathan Brooks, the Tiddington skipper for 2, which is the sort of thing that happens to an unfortunate captain who has spent the afternoon lugging a heavy bag of sawdust on and off so that his opposite number can bowl at all. Perhaps this was yet another venture into irony by Captain DakesEye.

At the top end Hamsah was now on for Gilet who had ended his spell in a blaze of statistics 8-0-29-3, av 9.67, SR 16.00, ec 3.63. Something was missing. What was it? Oh! It was a maiden over. The first time Gilet had not bowled one since the time RolfeDog last hit a six.

Attempting a run out off a quick single, SamDog hurled the ball at the bowlers end to see Sufi who was backing up, do a handbrake turn and carve a neat trench in another of the strips the groundsman had spent a great deal of effort protecting.

Hamsah bowled two overs mostly to Gareth Weir who had been watching Gilet, Dakes and Sufi's ballet competition and decided to enter by performing a neat pirouette to a ball

pitching outside leg stump, which performed much the same manoeuvre and bowled him. Like Gilet and Sufi he ended up in a horizontal position and with any luck ... wait for it... carved a neat trench along the pitch.

The groundsman, Archie Davis, had come in to bat at 7, presumably to survey the damage inflicted by the mud-skating teams and half a ton of sawdust. The impending rain held off long enough for the only RidgeBear not mentioned in this report, to get on to bowl to him. Hollywood generously tested the bounce on various parts of the wicket and Groundsman Davis responded by trying to smash every ball in Hollywood's only over for four, succeeding just twice for which Hollywood was most grateful. His prayers for rain were answered with a deluge which, according to Gilet, was the heaviest rainfall at Tiddington on Cup Final day since Gilet last failed to bowl a maiden.

We all pretended that we were going to resume, by taking tea in our cars until the covers gradually floated off towards Wiltshire and the umpires and captains decreed otherwise.

With the news that back at The Ridge the 2s were off for rain but about to resume, RolfeDog reflected on his earlier efforts to get the 2s game on only to be called up for an away game which was ultimately abandoned, and not getting a bat, while the home game was proceeding to a conclusion with Taggart bowling a full 9 over spell.

This was a drown-your-sorrows situation, so RolfeDog went to the bar; worse was to come. Former Tiddington 1s captain Nick Pykett recognised him but couldn't quite place him. "Ah! Aren't you Taggart's sidekick?" he asked, and with that, RolfeDog's career and reputation plumbed a new low.

No careers were intentionally harmed in the writing of this report