

MATCH REPORT

Ridgebears 2 vs Brackley 1

8th June 2013

BRCC 2s 120 ao

Brackley 1 124-4

Lost by 6 wickets

Further musings of a match report novice: it's actually quite hard to do if you've been involved in the game. Either the club is full of observant 'men of letters' or one or two batsmen have been very much at leisure.

Anyway, describing our clash with top-of-the-league Brackley is made briefer by the fact that they were very good and won. Not only were they good, they were extremely keen. Here is a summary of their 30 minute warm-up routine:

- Running and stretching
- Bowling at a single stump on the outfield
- All of the top six getting throw-downs
- Catching on a slip catching mat

They also brought TWO scorers (unknown in the history of the Ridge) and a travelling band of supporters. Dickers, captain for the day as Taggart had exercised his selection vote to promote himself, declared we would not be doing a warm-up.

They put us in. Shaky, he of the massive ton last week, chipped one up that stopped a fraction and Vajiid was run-out for the second week in succession (this is his new chosen mode of dismissal). Ady, Doug and Malik also fell to quick, straight deliveries and we were soon 40-5.

In an effort to swing the momentum of the game, Scott Waite counter-attacked with a quick fire twenty, and although Nate "Nasser" Minhas was obdurate until drinks he too was undone by the pace of the pitch. At the other end, Dave "Dan" Maunder had already fought a long defensive battle. Dickers then told him to calm down and he got all excited and missed a slog sweep. We'd dragged Saints from behind the bar to lead the rearguard at no.11, but even he couldn't save us and we were all out for 120. The Guv'nor was not out AGAIN.

Brackley were probably confident, but the Ridge have shown time and again that they are patron saints of lost causes and dangerous in the field. Big Mac, entrusted with the new cherry, surprised many (including, he said, himself) by bowling a massive away-swing that induced an extravagant drive from the opener, caught by diving part-time gloveman Maunder. Some colleagues suggested Doug had somehow mastered the 'heavy ball'. Then Shaky got in on the action by ripping out leg stump and finding another nick for a regulation catch behind.

At 30-3, Brackley were unnerved. Ball beat bat with regularity and they couldn't get past the infield of Nasser, the Guv'nor or the all-action Scott who was doing incredible diving impressions of someone who wasn't hungover. In particular, no-one could get a handle on Vajiid's brilliant outswingers: he finally got what he deserved when he bowled one which wasn't so unplayable and picked up the fourth wicket, caught Maunder who now believed himself to be Ian Healey and was therefore quite as irritating. Anyone who wants to hear about any of Dave's catches in detail, he'll be in the bar next Saturday.

Their captain scored a creditable match-winning fifty, considering the lack of runs that day, although even he cut one past his own stumps and survived some close LBWs. Brackley ran out deserved winners, having displayed a seam and spin attack good enough to trouble any in this league.

Meanwhile, Ridge still hunt that elusive victory, which will surely come once we can put a batting and bowling performance together on the same day.

That wasn't so brief, was it?