

Bledlow Ridge 2s v Banbury 4s

Saturday 7th September 2013

Match Report

BORING BAZ FLUKES ANOTHER HIGH SCORE

CAPTAIN MCTAGGART DELIVERS AT THE DHL END

Bledlow Ridge 2s 251-6 (53 ov)

Banbury 4s 91 ao (29 ov)

Lost by 3 wickets

Won by 160 runs

Six points needed to finish in eighth place above Wolverton if Wolverton won, or 25 points from a win contrived in such a way that Banbury 4s would have 23 points deducted to finish above them in seventh. The latter was unlikely - although they did not have an umpire.

The lucky Tosser Ian McTaggart won the toss and gave a garbled team talk, above the sound of BirdDog singing, that we were to “bat them out of it” and that he would only declare if we had 350. This later changed to 300 but we knew he would never declare after the experience against Wolverton when we declared with 250 and almost lost.

I won't dwell long on this. Baz fluked his way to 137 and frankly, it's getting rather tedious. The only interest was whether McTaggart could declare with The Greatest Sports Retailer in Bourne End on 143. Why? Because when this happened against Wolverton with a potential 8 overs to go Baz remarked that his previous top score had also been 143.

At least Dan batted properly. He managed to score quite slowly for the first ten overs which is how it should be done. His 57 out of a partnership of 150 odd was the perfect platform and all the more the creditable as Baz had decided he was not going to do much running on the day. Baz hit 12 boundaries in his first 50, and so Dan had to find the boundary too.

RolfeDog managed to clip a leg glance like a rocket to a fielder who dived and caught it but Glorious HD kept the momentum up with 14. His dismissal brought Jamie to the wicket.

The most attractive 200 metre long industrial shed at one end set well back from the boundary and proudly bearing the name DHL was too obvious a target for Jamma. Someone predicted the “Delivery” (ha ha) and Jamma managed to hit its front elevation near the top. He made 15 and was out on the penultimate ball so MS Donnelly (2) had a swing at the last and missed and I was grateful to him for his team-spiritedness as this meant he made less than the mean-spirited RolfeDog (8).

Ady had scored for most of the innings wearing a pair of Dame Edna Everidge's red-framed glasses. He complained quite a lot but then is the complaining sort and should know better than to take the mickey out of me when I write the match reports. He did score rather well although he could not get the scoreboard to work remotely using his cigarette packet. David Oxford English Graduate found scoring at the end of the innings a little harder, he being used to words (lots of them usually) not numbers. That his brother Dan talks a lot less than David is simply down to lack of opportunity in the formative years.

We sat down to a quite extraordinary tea supplied by an outside caterer, only to learn later that at a wedding reception somewhere in Banbury the guests were sitting down to a meal of jam sandwiches, scones and chocolate biscuits.

Happy McTaggart said we were to make sure we took at least one wicket to give us our sixth point and then – bless him – we could enjoy it. What under his captaincy? ! Just kidding – its been great fun *mostly*, sorry *even* when you have been in the ones McT.

I don't have to go on about this for long. It will come as no surprise to those who witnessed McTaggart bowl the entire 23 overs at one end when the 1s visited earlier in the season to know that he bowled at the same DHL end in this match and could not be prised away. Unsurprisingly the changes were made at the other end. To his own amusement he asked Doug and Baz to warm up early on and it was rather like watching two children anticipate opening presents at Christmas.

McTaggart produced a DHL mix of quicker Deliveries, slower Deliveries and late Deliveries the first of which induced a catch at short-leg by RolfeDog who immediately made the biggest hash of a gentle skier seen to man, off Jamie who had replaced MSD at the other end.

This caused great amusement in the Ady-BirdDog department who then complained of my bodily odour when we fielded together behind the wicket. Thankfully they did not mention this loudly to anyone else in the team. Unfortunately Ady clung on to a slip catch off Jamma and so became completely unbearable to be around.

A number of Deliveries were Recorded as wickets at the other end and I hope this satisfies Deadly Doug's Desire that Deliveries at the DHL end should be Declared in the match report.

One batsman did hit McTaggart for a few and in response our skipper announced "You can't set a field to sh*t batting", which is the sort of thing Stuart Broad might say, if he was Scottish, and had been hit for a boundary by someone in Banbury 4s.

We Recorded a delivery off an edge against BirdDog's thigh and into the hands of DOEG at gully thus bringing him into the match for the only time. BirdDog took a catch behind off a particularly Special Delivery and most remarkable of all, off a Slower Delivery McTaggart caught one off his own bowling. Well he usually does: it's just the catches off other bowlers he fails to Deliver on.

Our umpire Mr Chairman declared himself bored, but then he hasn't heard himself talk. He clearly cannot count either often being unable to get beyond four and Baz had been

surprised at one point in our innings to learn that the Chair was expecting Baz to count the number of runs in each over. This doesn't leave an umpire with many decisions left to make.

Dan then threw the stumps down from 35 yards to run someone out, as Ady got out of the way, these cricket ball things being rather hard and dangerous dammit. We felt so guilty that when a little later RolfeDog shied at the stumps of the non-striker when he was out of his ground and hit the his bat, the whole team apologised for trying to get him out.

No batsmen had much of a chance anyway what with Birdy – our 'keeper – singing to each one as they arrived at the wicket. Finally as an act of Scottish Brotherhood, Deadly Doug came on and bowled some bamboozling off-breaks culminating in a fine running catch by Baz to win the game, Baz being barely able to run despite only having hit boundaries all day.

I have missed the odd wicket as McTaggart ended with 6 for about 26 off about 14 which surely cannot be true while Jamma finished with 2-40 off about 7 which can.

The Chairman left immediately thank god and so missed the offer of cash from the opposition while Ady said how much he had enjoyed the season although he was disappointed with how he had played. Amen to that, but he is a fine scorer.

Over and Out for the 2013 League Season

Your

loving RolfeDog

Jeremy Clarkson is in Australia