

Capt Taggart fails to spot Hurricane in Rain-Adandoned Fixture

Gt and Little Tew 2s 208-7 (44 ov) Saeed 5-56
BRCC 2s 101-2 (24 ov)

Match Drawn

Even Hurricane Ashby could not prevent this game from being abandoned in heavy rain as the opposition's Chairman commented "Where your skipper comes from perhaps he thinks this is fine weather".

Numerous last-minute changes brought in the likes of Chris Roddick (on time) and Marvellous Malcolm (who could play but only arriving late). For the first time Malcolm the Sahib and his assistant Malcolm the Guvn'r would be in the same team.

But it seemed as though this might not happen as the Tew openers set about us for nearly two hours and there was no sight – or more to the point – no sound of Malcolm.

Then after we had taken just one wicket against about 80 runs Malcolm arrived sartorially. His post flight checks took only five minutes and he opened the car door soon after although it must be said that the time it takes to get signals from the brain to the legs probably accounted for a further two minutes.

"You are very lucky I am here at all" said Malc who then proceeded to take a catch straightaway all nonchalant-like off Saeed, who decided that indeed we were.

Their innings then became a game of catching practice particularly for Rodders who pounced a good one off Saeed, then spiralled under an enormous one from Andy Darby until he disappeared into the turf alas without the ball, then caught a huge glad-its-not-me-under-that-one-type skyer on the boundary to get rid of the dangerous Darby, before finally declining a relatively simple chance as his teammates called "Rodders" using the excuse: "I thought you were shouting "Taggart" this being the best he could think of.

Particularly unlikely on general evidence that anyone would ever shout "Taggart" for a catch if there are between 1 and 10 other players in white on the same ground.

Earlier Shaky (no E) had bowled Dave the Opener for 42 and effected a spectacular diving run out with a direct hit meaning he has moved from the Bee Gees (see Bledlow Village Match Report) to Break-Dancing, However our musical appreciation moved on as Saeed decided it was time to call for a rag to dry the wet ball and it was with this outbreak of Ragtime that Rodders found himself tottering under the huge aforesaid catch demonstrating his own form of syncopated rhythm and proving what an Entertainer he is. Move over Scott Joplin.

Unfortunately Mr Darby had been let off three balls in a row, first a stumping chance, second Rodder's effort (very difficult) and thirdly another one of our mysteriously-declined catches where he sliced one in the air only five yards from Malcolm but three yards from Dan. Clearly Malcolm has to pass the information to his legs first so this made it Dan's catch, but Dan said he could not see it with his helmet on which brings into question the whole issue of whether it is safer for a 'keeper to protect his head by wearing this type of hat and be unable to see anything, or safer not to wear it so he can see the ball coming.

With the fall of a wicket the Captain encouraged us with the news that 'they have no more big-hitters' an observation I reflected on as Taggart's next slow ball hit the trunk of a very tall tree well beyond the boundary, two-thirds of the way up and rolled back apologetically on to the ground. Perhaps the Captain had just been joking and it was all some kind of Maple Leaf Rag.

After one short rain break, Saeed took another three good wickets ending with five and they ended 208-7 off 44. Very gettable.

After a fine tea and we went out with Blocker Rolfe and Diesel Dave. Dave needed to look after his children so got out early but Dashing Doug who made 33, joined Resistant Rolfe and took the score to about 60 odd until Malkolm the Sahib arrived and after a brief look, hit five fours, put us in a strong position and brought on the rain.

The game then became a political cat-and-mouse game as we realised that although by now set-up for a good run chase we stood to win few points from an abandoned match. We went out again and Taggart refused to acknowledge it was raining saying only a monsoon would stop up playing anyway. As it became a hurricane he was true to his word but we did eventually have to come off.

Further grumpy negotiations followed and Capt T announced that we would have a final inspection in 10 minutes time at 7.10. "What time is it now" asked Malcolm the Gu'vnor?". Seven o'clock came the reply thus proving that all parts of Malcolm are now receiving messages slowly especially the brain where the messages must presumably start out.

Someone commented that the League Secretary Dick Giles had been made aware that rain-affected matches badly affect the points potential of the team batting second, and this prompted confusion from Doug as to why a national weatherman should be involved in Cherwell League cricket especially as an administrator, when what was needed right there and then was a weatherman on-site to predict sunshine.

The oppo Chairman declared the ground unplayable and after a brief exchange of frisson we shook hands and in some cases throats and reverted to the dressing room. No one could find the four runs RolfeDog claimed were missing from his score so we reverted to the bar and finally back to the Ridge find the 1s had won and Tombsdog had made second top score with 17.

That was the final nail in a generally dour day.