

# Bledlow Ridge v Hurley (Home)

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2015

## ----- **Ridge Rore to Victory**

### **Ice cream salesman also finds his timing**

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**Won** by 5 wickets

Hurley                    211-9 (45 overs)   Easton 3-40, Spiers 3-35, Saeed 3-30

Bledlow Ridge 215-5 (38 overs)   Easton 20, Cheshire 53,, Lloyd 59,  
   Spiers 54 no

#### Match Report

It was all about timing. There were jobs to be done, sightscreen slats to be cleaned and put up, flags to put out, covers to remove and a scoreboard to put up. Plenty of HurlEy-BurlEy.

Birdy had apologized in advance for being late and was the second to arrive, all in a tizzy. Simon Lloyd texted he too would be a little late but arrived before the text was read; ten minutes before the start there was no sign of Saeed but before a text could be sent he appeared in the doorway, like a mirage, without a care in the world.

Mirages don't usually care about anything.

In the meantime debutant Ian Kelloway had showed fine technique cleaning the slats with a broom, but the flags had been buried without trace somewhere in the shed. Most disappointingly, my 23 inch cLock – yes you did read that correctly –which had arrived the previous day, proved to have one minor flaw. The hands did not go around. This is a significant disadvantage in a cLock. It's all about timing.

Hurley supplied an umpire (Mike) and a scorer (Rita), while we didn't. Well we don't know anyone called Rita: Mike and Christine would be a possibility, albeit unlikely (have you *seen* Mike umpire?)

The Youth Club opened the bowling. Jake, hey ya, and Rory, playing his first game since emigrating from Croydon, testing wicketkeeper BirdDog's back. We went a long time without a wicket, despite Pete Atkinson's fielding masterclass, but once Rory had asked to come off he managed to take three and should therefore have asked to come off earlier. Timing again.

Ed Montague replaced Jake and took some advice on bowling from Joe, who then came on at the top end to show how it is done. Joe was then offered advice from Ed. Between them they did not take a wicket which only goes to show. And also meant that Hurley were progressing smoothly and remained only three down at 3-125.

That, is until the return of Saeed. Last seen in 2013. Any other sightings had proved to be a mirage. He removed Ridgeway for an aggressive 69 in his first over. Joe was taking a bit of tap at the other end although he induced enough catching practice for the captain to offer a free pint of beer to the first catch by a Ridge player. This was eventually taken up by Ed once Jake ya, had returned at the top end. Fortunately for the captain Ed had to leave immediately after the match without taking up the offer; this sort of timing takes years to perfect.

Inevitably the Hurley No 5 Abdullah who was wearing a grey hoodie, made 70, which probably means he will wear a hoodie again. The Big Question at the Ridge is whether Joe will wear his huge fluorescent yellow/green watch again. This question was put to Joe who with his encyclopedic knowledge of cricket trivia came up with the name of some obscure cricket professional who also wears a watch on the pitch. It was pointed out that had he ever played for the Ridge he would have been cured of this affliction.

Jake bowled rather well and took three wickets as did Saeed, one of which was a catch in the deep by Chesh – sorry! first mention, that is Paul Cheshire newly of this parish – who celebrated in the manner of a player whose mantra is “you should celebrate success, Rolfey”. It is fair to say that working for John Lewis as he does, Chesh's celebrations are “never knowingly undersold”.

And so Hurley ended their 45 overs at 211-9. Special mention should be made of Rory's ability to scale the electric fence at the far end of the grounds to retrieve the ball, an important role this seeing our club is suffering a massive, yes **massive** (that word should never be undersold) ball shortage. A ball shortage of of course, is what threatens anyone scaling an electric fence.

After a tea provided by the Eastons (Jake clearly does not go hungry at home), Jake and Chesh opened up.

Now the idea is that Chesh should demonstrate that there is a slower scorer at the club than RolfeDog (why else open with him?) and so it seemed to prove as

early on he perfected the late cut straight to backward point, timing being at first hard on this slow wicket. However he discovered his radar and much to the captain's disappointment progressed to a debut 50 in good time giving Jake the hurry-up between the wickets on several occasions. The latter prompted Ed to observe, on returning from an umpiring stint, that they were bickering like brothers... or was it like father and son?

Jake eventually located a fielder's midriff called Abullah - that's the name of the fielder not the midriff by the way, otherwise the fielder would have been called Solar Plexus - and he was replaced by Lloyd, he of Beechdeen Ice Creams fame. Or infame. Or Beechdeen Farmhouse Dairy Ice Cream if you want to be pedantic.

Talking of which, a little earlier, Joe who scored all innings as studiously as a student preparing for his AS exams, had asked Simon whether anyone ate ice cream in the winter. Or put another way, whether there was any point in Lloyd getting out of bed for six months of the year. Lloyd explained that ice cream vans by the seaside was not the only available market in the winter, in fact it was hardly a market at all and this inspired Joe to consider taking a degree in Economics.

Probably more likely than one in Maths, because he and Rita did not always agree on the score, or anything for that matter and at one point I thought Joe was going to be sent up to his room without ice cream for a week. Or a winter. An ice cream debate ensued in which Lloyd passed the opinion that a cold country like Iceland was not a great market for Beechdeen Ice Creams - they don't even need fridges out there.

Very useful to know.

Anyway Lloyd went about his business in the middle and was so inspired by Chesh's running that he even took a quick single himself. Chesh was eventually adjudged leg before off "Ridgeway" which seemed particularly appropriate for someone living in Haw Lane with easy access to the National Trail of the same name. It's a bit like us playing Oxford and fielding a player called "Dreaming Spires".

Anyway, talking of Spires, as we progressed nicely past 100 with just one wicket down, A dilemma was forming. Rory Spiers (who could be Rory Spires in a game of Scrabble) revealed he should be working at The Boot at 7pm which was fast approaching. The time that is, not the Boot... it's all about...Ed then said he too had to leave at 7pm. It was by now 6.45 and Timing was once again becoming important.

So there we were, willing Chesh and Lloyd to both win the game and to get out. It took rather longer for Lloyd to oblige, batting by now with Rory who had been assured by the arrival of the President and his wife that there were no customers in The Boot yet. This was another way of saying that Mike was not in it.

Lloydy, finding his timing, put two big sixes in the field but disappointed us all, following earlier scores for the club of 63, 36 and 63 by miscalculating and making 64. This must have been why I found myself watching him and humming “when I get older losing my hair many years from now...”.

So with another 45 wanted and Rory now batting with aggression, he was joined by Ed who was already in trouble at home and to my mind might just as well have batted normally and taken whatever was coming to him on his return to Downley. As it was, he went for it and after one boundary and his dismissal he more or less ran off the field straight to Downley.

Thus RolfeDog arrived at the wicket with 24 wanted and scratchingly contributed 1 of them to the winning total which was reached with seven overs to spare as Rory, who had by now discovered his timing, opened his shoulders and too reached a debut fifty in his first match, a sort of Double Debut if you like which Joe suggested to Lloydy could be a suitable name for a new Ice Lolly. This could be marketed in Iceland, and why not Iceland? After all they sell ice cream in M&S.

So the first win of the season, debuts for Ian and Pete who unfortunately, and most surprisingly did not get in to bat, and from Rory who eventually got into the bar at The Boot. Incidentally with a great sense of timing Rory hit the second last delivery into the field at the far end where the ball (we have a **massive**-ball-shortage-problem, remember) was left overnight for the captain to return next day and risk what remains of his manhood in retrieving it.

The lovely Rita then dutifully copied out their innings into our scorebook sustained by a hot cup of tea (Rita that is not the scorebook) – the very first one produced by the new club kettle. This is believed to be the first time the club has had a working kettle since the President was born, which is a long time ago.

The award of the Biffen’s Bridge T-Shirt went to Jake mostly for wearing red slippers around the clubhouse. His earlier observation that Shaun Dryden on the boundary appeared to be wearing a paintbrush on his head is also worthy of mention. So I have mentioned it. Here.

Amazingly Jake knows where he lives and I was able to get him home to Loosley Row and back to mine in Radnage with no comment at all about my being late.

My timing must be coming back.

Happy Days

**RolfeDog**