

## Saddos vs Crabbers the return

The season to date can best be summarised as the three Ps; pissing rain, piss poor performances and piss-ups at the Raven. So it was with a sense of excitement that the squad travelled north to Harpenden in glorious sunshine to face Crabtree who we had prevailed against only a couple weeks ago. The squad had also been freshened up with a couple of new signings as the ever shadowy committee looked to salvage some pride from the remaining games of the season.

Rothampstead Park, the venue for the match, of course shares it's name with the world famous agricultural research centre located but a well struck six away... or so we thought as on reaching the middle the customary comments of "it's a road" "looks like it'll take some turn" etc without having a clue what we are talking about were replaced with equally poorly informed agricultural themed comments " looks like a field of cabbages" "see they went for the heavy plough" etc.

Skipper Jones attended the toss, no idea if he won or lost but net result was that we would get first use of the aforementioned vegetable patch.

Yips and Dips strode to the middle, Dips got dropped but in a very generous gesture played the same shot again and got caught. Yips prodded around while Glenno came in and flashed away from the other end thankfully moving the score along at a decent rate, before getting the call from skip that he was on 25 and thus ensuring he was bowled next ball. Busted dealt only in maximums just unfortunately only one. Busted's demise brought new signing one James G to the crease who like Yips took some time to figure out what happens when the bowler lands one on a turnip. Yips scoring meanwhile had finally moved from Boycott to Botham but umpire Bond had seen enough and gave him the finger. When Umpire Bond returned from his stint in the middle he thoughtfully explained to the not entirely happy Yips that he'd let Glenno off with one so he restored the balance by giving him out. CRS came and went leaving us 5 down at the halfway stage but going at a healthy 6 an over. The rate was maintained by the two James' although mainly thanks to the G rather C variety. James G finally retired having reached his 25 and with wickets in short supply was good to have a man in form on the rack should he be needed.

The remainder of our innings was characterised by some questionable running. Now one thing to remember is if you are going to be involved in a run out make sure you are writing the match report, with that said the first run out was an act of suicide by Tim P and James C bears no responsibility whatsoever. Chenners popped a catch to mid off before Bondy nailed one straight to a man on the boundary. These events had brought new recruit two otherwise know as Paul and skipper Jones together. Jonsey perhaps confused by Paul playing the ball with two hands on the bat decided he was running despite the ball heading straight to the short fine leg, perhaps surprised again to find that you are allowed to place a fielder there. With both men now stood at the same end Paul departed reluctantly with some advice for the skipper on the way and many a comment on the side-lines about

how to welcome new team members. On the plus side this brought James G back to the fray and while Jonsey flayed at the ball one handed with limited success he struck a couple of fine sixes to see us to what we felt was a competitive 127 on the experimental surface.

In a more welcoming act Paul was handed the new ball and he didn't let his new team down with a very tidy spell which veteran Bond did his best to offset from the other end with some more traditional sabbos bowling. Actually most of that sabbos bowling followed a similar pattern to Mr Bond's, one decentish over and one not so tidy. Notable exceptions being dippers the "double tidy", pointer the "double traditional", Chenners the "double wicket over" (in keeping with the match theme going for four on the hattrick ball) and Jones the "all in one over" with plenty of runs and a wicket.... All this meant we never really got on top of their batting, almost certainly helped by at least one dropped catch but no need to name names and they chased our score down in the 18<sup>th</sup> over.....

As the saying goes you can't judge a pitch until both teams have used it and I think we can therefore confirm that this was indeed some genetically modified experimental pitch which is designed to favour the home side.... Rumour has it part of the ECB preparation for the next ashes series, far smarter than sandpaper in your pants.

Despite the result an excellent evening rounded off with pizza and beer outside the pub.