

SFDWP vs Crabtree, Clarence Park

In safe hands

With 2 wins out of 3, the SADS were looking to consolidate a great start to the season with this home match against Crabtree. But as the Clarence Park clock reached 6pm, just 3 Saddoes had managed to make it on time to the Pavilion. Well, 4 actually if you count Tembras who, looking dapper, had come along to boast about his impending anniversary night out with his wife.

He had a definite spring in his step and by the look of the amount of wire surgically implanted following his recent op, a spring in his finger too. For those who weren't there at this point (8 of you) Marcos recalled with bravery how he nearly lost his finger and was injected with liquid Viagra to 'make the blood rush back to the tip'. With that he bounded off, keen to get home, muttering something about coming back for a pint later if he 'finished early' at the aforementioned anniversary celebrations. Alas that was the last we saw of him.

More Saddoes finally began appearing. Special mention to Busted's mate Richard, on debut, who appeared on time and was to make an immediate impact - unlike Busting who was too busy trying to download porn and 'crimp off a Bungle's finger' at the same time in Trap 1 on the 5.15pm from Leeds.

Before we get to the match itself, we should pause and remember that although forgetfulness can strike at any age, it is prevalent amongst the elderly. That said, once WG had phoned his wife and knew she was on her way with his whites he could relax and begin his pre match rituals (peanut butter smell tests, name recall etc).

What all this tardiness meant was that our captain (Jones - more of whom later) threw Pagett and Williams in to open the batting. Paggers had been traumatised by the organisational skills needed just to get the match on. Thanks to Pointer flying out of the country on the pretence of a business trip, Paggers was left to bankrupt his own family just to get 22 men fed with Papa Johns pizza. Lord Wilson, our wealthy club treasurer (more of whom later), apparently still fuming over a dubious No Ball decision had confused matters even further. Anyway the next match manager needs to be aware of the following equation used for money, pizza and pitch. In this equation, f = off:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\pi(x)}{x/\ln(x)} = 1$$

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} = 2^n$$

$$\oint_C \frac{f'(z)}{f(z)} dz = 2\pi i(N - P)$$

Fig 1. The 'Wilson Equation': used to work out match fees, pizza, pitch hire, second mortgage etc. You could lose your home and possessions should you fail to meet monthly repayment

Anyway we digress. Williams asked Pagers if he wanted to face. It was apparently a rhetorical question. Pagers duly opened and proceeded to, in the words of Williams, “bat like a ****”.

The first 6 overs were slow scoring before this reporter was bowled. In came Harsha, a class all rounder, who began to get some runs. Williams was removed soon after. Sheddars then brought to the crease a broken bat and a broken finger. After his own digit issues and hearing Marcos’s tales of blood and gore, he presumably wanted to see a healthy finger –the umpire’s - and allowed himself to be bowled.

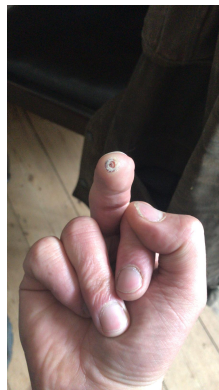


Fig 2. Rupert’s finger. Unlike Marcos, Sheddars is a “Pre-op”, but he still managed a great catch.

Meanwhile, that subtle master of man management, captain Jones, congratulated Pagers as he came back in from his dismissal with the following ego booster: “It’s alright, the proper batsmen are in now.” Wonderful stuff, but this wasn’t the end of Jones’ seemingly unlimited generosity, as we shall see.

After making 19 runs against some very good bowling, Harsha’s downfall was no fault of his own. No, the death of his innings had been sealed in the beautifully manicured gardens of Lord Wilson’s expansive Highfield Park estate.

Ambling down to his lower field in the previous week, he had found his gardener, Ted, mending a fence. After a few questions about whether there was a Mrs Ted, Lord W cut to the chase and asked if Ted would like to play cricket. Ted said he would and consequently witnessed Wilson attempt a wild pull shot on a just-under-waist-height beauty of a pie, only to miss it completely and be given out.

Ted however played very well and promised he would be there for his employer at the Crabtree match. But due to Pampas grass problems outside Wilson Manor, Ted had to stay late and therefore missed the entire game. We presume in his fury, Lord Wilson ran poor Harsha out. There has been quiet talk amongst the team about how Wilson can possibly afford a gardener. I refer the reader to the match fee equation earlier in this match report.



Fig 3. Wilson asks Ted if he will join the team. "I don't be knowin' 'bout that sir" was the response. Cue fury and Harsha's run out.

Wilson was joined by the rangy figure of Curtis in his homemade and unofficial SADS top. He played some lovely strokes, only to be bowled out in a masterful over from the Crabtree bowler.

In came Jones, a (tennis) player of some class who immediately stunned Crabtree with a beautiful boundary stroke at great risk to his own being. It may have been at this moment concussion struck affecting his co-ordination later. Whatever, Jones and Wilson did well, but it is fair to say that the entire SADS team scored too slowly and ran out of overs in which to score any more than 82 for 5.

Jones now displayed the kind of high standards of cricketing leadership we expect from him. Immediately sensing the urgency of the task at hand, he ordered the pizza delivery to be brought forward from 9pm to 8.30pm.

Inspired by his actions, the SADS now made a good go at chasing an incredible win. Williams opened the bowling, only to be loudly lectured by a clearly fearless umpire with a death wish as to why he wasn't going to give a seemingly plumb lbw decision.

Wilson took his aggression out on the field again, but thankfully this time on the opposition, bagging a wicket. Sheddars found line and length in his first overs of the season while WG, now in his whites and fully aware, bowled his usual almost unplayable, deliveries.

Harsha's overs were a masterclass in deception and intrigue – a highlight of the bowling attack - while a post-dump and fleet footed Busted softened the Crabtree hitters up for new SAD Richard J to bag a wicket in his first over – a superb debut. It was very tight and for a while Crabtree began to find it hard to score.

Some wonderful catches from Busted and Rupert now meant we were in with a chance. The feeling was enhanced by the appearance in the field of Jonno, a rare but welcome sight for the SADS. As we all know, 'catches win matches' and it was game on!

Perhaps sensing it was getting too easy for a SADS team already twice victorious this season, or perhaps distracted by the waft of expensive Italian pizza, Jones dropped what seemed to many a simple catch.

The threat of a potential libel case from the SADS' favourite lawyer has dissuaded this reporter from commenting further on the ease of the catch. Instead, please refer to Fig 4 below.



Fig 4. Post match Jones explains how difficult the catch he dropped was. Wilson reacts on behalf of the entire team, the wider cricketing community, children over 3, the ICC, the ECB, World Cricket and WG, who is back in civilian clothes.

Our good Captain, now seemingly ravenous, sadly could wait no longer and began his own early delivery of luke warm pies which were readily devoured by the hungry Crabtree batsmen faster than you can say "Deliverpoo".

And so the SADS suffered a rare defeat this season, but it wasn't all down to a dropped catch and lobbed pies. Crabtree bowled well and set up a victory early on. The only moan of the night (apart from in the Tembras household) came when the match fee was announced. Such is the resilience of this team and its captain.

Man of the match: Marcos's finger