

Match report vs Fishers
4th May 2023
Verulamium Park

A Brave New World

In association with ChatGPT®

It is the start of a new season and a new technological dawn for the Saddoes.

The new App has been adopted and, although not quite as popular with the team as Apps such as, for instance, Pornhub, it's already proved its worth with only two Saddoes being horrendously late and therefore on the fine list for the AGM (make a note WG).

With this new era for the SADS also comes another frontier to be crossed – the first ever match report written by AI (Glenn, these letters stand for Artificial Intelligence). So, I entered the following parameters, along with the scores and a few extra details, into ChatGPT:

Write a match report for the SFDWP vs Fishers. Assume normal service resumed and make sure you mention highlights of play from the usual suspects.

It was an exciting moment to see the AI work and in mere seconds formulate its report, which I now present to you, in full:

Corporal Jones served two overs of steaming hot pies.

As you can see it worked far too well. Scary stuff - and I had to stop it in its tracks. So, we won't be doing that again – back to the report written by a human!

For all its detractors, Verulamium Park was looking immaculate as the Saddoes marched out to face their traditional rivals. Spring was in the air, but so were what seemed to be a million flies, attracted to the 'changing area' by the sun's heat and in no small part by Granty's crack which he was regularly displaying like a demented baboon. This behaviour could be put down to the bombshell Mrs Granty had delivered to him earlier in the day, more of which later.

Nine of us showed up on time, with Longers arriving sporting a huge shiner on his left eye. It looked nasty and it can only put it down to him having forgotten the 'safe word' again. Glenn arrived announcing he had been on the lash for weeks in a row, and to be fair he did look a bit peaky. As we will see, it was a perfect excuse for his performance.

We took to the field. WG opened the bowling, and has clearly used retirement to hone his accuracy and pace variation. A wicket in his second over was just reward for his efforts. Now, it's rare to see WG cross, but when a harsh wide was called off one of his deliveries, he was fuming and revenge was in his age-addled eyes. Later, WG would of course umpire and, as the run chase heated up and there was a clear run out after clear run out, the Saddoes

answer to Joe Biden would not (or could not) put his finger up. More fool them - Fishers sowed the wind, yet reaped the whirlwind. Top work WG!

Robbo bowled next. He seemed in an angry mood (more of which later), which I can only put down to an intensely competitive nature or another flare up of his chronic haemorrhoids. I thought it was the former and he seemed to be moving OK - until it came to batting that is. Anyway, I digress, his bowling, possibly like his ringpiece, was to all intent and purposes very tight, but overshadowed by the odd loose moment.

Longers and Noble shared the bowling responsibility for the next few overs, and this pairing would prove pivotal in the match. With three wickets between them (Longers 2, Noble 1) Captain Church saw the potential and would make them open the batting too. Even with only one eye, and God knows what other unseen injuries, Longbottom was on fire.

At this point, the Saddoes were playing well and we could hear the sound of the Six Bells tolling ever nearer. Although Fishers were scoring, the wickets were coming. Sadly Glenno, (at this point a shrivelled husk in the outfield), flapped at an easy catch. To make matters worse, he was called on to bowl. Luckily Granty stepped up too, with a wicket. This was welcome as Fishers scored 29 off Glenno's bowling. Yes, before he awakens from another drinking bout to argue the case, we should be fair to Glenno and say he did take a wicket and he had to bowl 3 overs, but there you go. 29.

One of the bowling performances of the match came from Clampers, who after being told (not untypically) by Longers to "move up a bit and catch the dribble", bowled two super tight overs and took a beauty of a wicket. Sadly the oppo marked him down as "Clumb" in the scorebook so his feat will never be properly recorded in the annals of Saddoes cricket - a real shame, but be philosophical Clumb, we know what really happened! Another top bowling performance came from Roffers, or "Rotheers" as the scorebook notes - again, a really good line and length just when Fishers were getting back on top. Rotheers also manufactured a lovely slow motion run out too. Top work from Clumb and Rotheers!

Meanwhile the field was being marshalled by Churchy, however his iron grip was weakened when he stopped a rocket with his left hand. Although he tried not to cry, the quivering bottom lip was a giveaway. His teammates even had to tell him to pull himself together and move round 10 yards. Wiping tears from his eyes, he said crossly "The batsman will not hit it there!" We know of course what happened next. The batsman hit it exactly there and Churchy stopped it with his one working limb (his other three limbs now utterly fucked). To be fair, he bowled well, even with a bloody hand, taking a well-earned wicket.

Fishers - 131 for 8 after 20 overs.

So to batting and Captain Church methodically working out the batting order; "Number 4 Granty? Anyone? Pagers, number 5? Anyone? Pagers, number 9? Oh wait, did I say 5?" Robbo, applying a soothing lotion, looked agitated - his competitive nature telling him that a little more thought in the batting order could mean the difference between victory or defeat. Still, it's not the SADS way and besides, Churchy was too busy stitching his fingers back on to care.

Longers and Noble, who dovetailed so well together in the bowling attack opened and started the innings well. It should be said here that the VP outfield was very slow, and the boundary seemed to be painted well into the nettles. Noble hit a beauty and the pair sauntered down the crease, believing it to be a four runs. It wasn't – a costly error. This pair were ahead of the run rate however and played well against the top Fishers bowlers. Longers took to spanking (insert your own pun here) the ball about in an effort to keep his average and libido up to record levels. Noble made 15, before being bowled out.

In came Pointer after an admirable half session behind the stumps, with Longers about to retire. But then DISASTER! The ball goes to their best fielder with a robotic arm (you may want to enquire Churchy), and despite Pointer running as fast as he could an incredible direct hit rendered his walk to the pavilion longer than his stay at the crease.

In came Granty - and Paggery as Longers had to retire. We should mention that Granty had been told by his long haired colonel to curtail the time he dedicates to his cricket. Thankfully for the sake of his relationship he took this to heart, ensuring he stayed at the crease for just minutes before sacrificing his wicket for 5 quick runs. He deserves credit for that, Mrs Granty.

A word now too for the two Fishers bowlers, one we will call "Octopussy" after his action reminded one of an eight legged sea creature falling out of a tree. The other we will call "The Stumbler" who seemed fall down a rabbit hole just before releasing the ball. Or maybe he actually was, you never know with Verulamium Park. Decent bowlers both and great to see.

What can I say about my own innings? A sparkling cameo! It was so good Glenno thought it was Robbo hitting the ball so sweetly for 4 and then 6 in successive deliveries. No offence taken, especially as once I had been caught and bowled at the end of a swashbuckling performance, Glenno came in and then rapidly went out again for half a half dozen. He even tackled the quietly fuming WG on the decision, staying at the crease debating the no ball rule on the number of bounces. No wonder he sank another 5 pints in the Six Bells later. What a sad end to a once glittering cricket career.

Meanwhile Robbo looked cross too. His inflamed arsegrapes meant he was reluctant to take the singles as running was clearly aggravating them. Still, he was scoring nicely and the run rate looked OK, but we drifted and Fishers began a strangulation hold (*always* have a safe word Longers). Enter Rotheers, who scored with some nice shots. 18 needed from 2 overs. Exit Rotheers. 11 needed from 1. Enter Clumb who thought 'go big or go home'. Exit Clumb for 0 with two balls left and a chance for glory for our Captain. Just two sixes required off two balls for the win....

Dear reader, you need not know what happened as you can probably guess. Robbo finished the innings by kicking the ball away petulantly shouting what would probably be spelt in the Fishers' scorebook as "Kernts".

And so we retired to the Six Bells for beer, chips and sausages. Vanquished maybe, but satisfied and happy that cricket is back!

Man of the match: Williams (not selected)