

Match report
Vs Scratchers
Sandpit Lane Stoa Dome
31st July 2019

Cowen's Corner

This was a fixture that came together quickly and unexpectedly, but in many ways it was one of the most enjoyable of the entire season, particularly as we managed to meet the opposition at the right venue.

It was played in an atmosphere of friendliness and bonhomie, thanks in no small part to Phillip, his Scratchers, and a smattering of old faces and next gen Sads playing across both teams.

And of course the promise of a bit of sausage and a pint or two of Three Brewers' golden ale round at Pips' house afterwards was enough to ensure this was a very happy fixture indeed, with the crowd swelling to incredible numbers later in the evening (five, if that was indeed Curtis lurking on the boundary).

Seeing these oldies but goldies don the whites for a rare outing, before the cricketing equivalent of Dignitas calls, brought a mist to Jonno's eyes and the joy of reunion brought on a melancholy air that many players may also have felt at the close of what has been a great season for Saddoes. So moved was Hookles in fact that those on the boundary were treated to a potted history of the Saddoes:

"Over there, well that's Richard Noden - a founder member and "Cap number 1" for the team. And there, just warming up with the box splits and arm windmills is Peter Cook, another Sads original - yes that's him - high kicking that fiercely struck ball away with his shin."

Without the likes of Nodesy, Cookie and Hookie of course we would not have the chance to be part of something as enjoyable as the SFDWP Cricket Club. And so the scene was set....

We will address Pip's self built pleasure den later in the report, but first we should thank the lovely April for bravely volunteering to score. Her wonderful smile was full of joy at first, but little did she realise what she had let herself in for, especially when Saddoes and Scratchers alike demanded score updates. I am sure she will recover and in time forgive the impatience of all concerned ready for the proposed rematch next year.



Fig 1. Sandpit Lane, July 31 2019: Players, spectators and, far left, our brave scorer April. Note extreme right, Winfield Jr snarling at his father. Sads cap 1, Noden, is wearing the umpires' coat, while Cook, minus his splintered leg is far left at the front. In the back row, Matt McHoweson makes his first appearance for the Sads, albeit as a spectator and BBQ raider while Shedders, Church and Jonno are the other injured 'sausage jockeys' present. Curtis presumably is in the bushes taking photos.

Our captain, Jones, won the toss and elected to bat, sending in Yips Snr and Jnr to open. Thankfully for April, the family Yips scored slowly, as snatches of their angry conversation about two dropped catches and powerful sunshine floated over the Sandpit Lane outfield to an increasingly restless Sads team. Eventually the Scratchers did well to dismiss Yippers Jr and in came your loyal reporter for his standard innings of 7. Before his trudge back to the loving arms of his sympathetic teammates, wiping their eyes of what he assumed were tears of sadness, he had the pleasure of watching Yips Snr retire to practice his camp signal for four as umpire. He also witnessed the jolly but unfortunate Eamo get bowled first ball, and then Winfield Sr enter the fray, dodging large clumps of stoat poo on his way in.

Winfield Jr removed his pullover and began to salivate: Jacob could sense blood. He wasn't interested in taking any other wicket other than his father's. It was real drama, and once Ashton had played an innings of some style, Winners Jr finally removed Winners Sr and with it any chance of clearing his 25 year student debt using the bank of mum and dad. In came the bespectacled Jones, who competently, and with two hands, guided the Sads through to a total of 129 after 20 overs

130 to win and it was the turn of the Scratchers to bat. Ashton started beautifully with his crafty spin, taking a wicket in his second over. Saud bowled at real pace, making the ball move so that Cowen had trouble getting bat on anything, not even a nick. Saud's pace pushed our WK back half a pitch length away from the stumps - yet Padders was still taking balls in at face height (oh, grow up lads).

What was especially promising was that a number of Scratchers had expressed an interest in playing for the Saddoes - and it is clear we have the perfect feeder club: One Scratcher, high up in their order, came to the crease and immediately asked for a guard. He had to be told he was in fact at the non-strikers end, blocking our bowler's run up and delaying the game.

A special mention must now go to the Knee family. It was a wonderful family display, with Busted Sr bowling superbly and taking one of the catches of the season low to his left from his own bowling. Busted Jr and Busted Jr Jr also bowled magnificently, although questions were asked about where they got their orthodox run up style, compared with their "father's".

It was around this time Winfield Jr, still reeling after looking at his bank balance online came in and smashed it about with aplomb. Winners Sr saw a chance to take his revenge and everyone gasped as we saw an over of bodyline from the usually mild mannered Tim into his young son's ribcage. One can only imagine what garden cricket was, and is, like in the Winfield's plush Highfield Park residence (although no doubt their near neighbour Lord Wilson charges them for pitch hire).

As the light faded, Jones, who had captained benevolently to give youth a chance, took up the mantle and began a mesmerising spell which led to a superb stumping by our beloved keeper (*cough*) and an almost certain run out, only foiled by Jonesy's own hand after wonderful fielding from Yips Jr (who also snagged a great catch off his Dad, proving once and for all he's the bigger man).



Fig 3. A wonderful view of young cricketers taken from the bushes by someone who looked like Curtis, but it couldn't have been because he "had the kids that night" and couldn't play. The appearance of a shady figure was later reported to the police as a suspected sex pest. They have taken the golf bag in as evidence and have reported that "Titleist" will be a major clue to any arrests made

A serious and worrying moment now ensued: With the Ashes starting just hours after this fixture, ball tampering was at the forefront of everyone's mind, especially for our well respected and well liked Australian teammates. Picking up the ball from a Jones' delivery, our WK saw its normally perfect pink surface had what looked like stoat poo smeared on it, and being an honest sort, announced the fact to the match officials. Luckily, after a short inquiry Yips pointed out it was probably just a bit of gristle and/ or pastry and the potential 12 month ban Jones faced was immediately rescinded.



Fig 2. A stoat, captured at the scene by Eamo, (after an athletic dive at huge risk to himself) and later BBQ'd at the Cowens'

Meanwhile, in the field, the Sads were making the kind of sacrifices we have come to expect in our victories this season: Cook – sacrificed a shin; Yips Jr - sacrificed a knee ; Busted Jr - sacrificed a hand; Yips Snr- sacrificed half his hot dog bun so Pagers could have another sausage at the BBQ.

Talking of which, in the end the Saddoes won, thanks to a few extras, and it was off to Phillip and April's for a BBQ to remember. The hospitality was incredible, as was the self built summer house, containing lashings of Three Brewers and god knows what kind of filth on the computer Pip keeps in there on the pretence of 'business'.

And so the season ends on a high, thanks to the Scratchers and the Saddoes - past, present and future. Hurrah!

Man of the match: Winfield (play a Garden Superover to decide which one)