

Sunday 22nd August 2010

Northchurch CC vs. Mayfield CC

Following the disappointment of having to call off yet another game on Saturday I was relieved to see the weather clear up over the course of the morning, from rain at 7 AM to sunny spells at 11. Still didn't stop half the team contacting me with panic-laden texts and voice mails though – gentlemen, I will contact **you** if the game is off!

A short jaunt up the M1 and A41 and I arrived at Northchurch ridiculously early to find a very young and serious looking bunch working hard in the nets with both machine and real bowlers – if only Enfield Council provided such facilities at Hazelwood!

Eventually, in dribs and drabs, the rest of the squad (apart from Wiggy) arrived, Steve lost the toss as is the norm on a Sunday and we were unsurprisingly out to field.

With Ramadan and the summer hols affecting the normal Sunday seam attack today would be a more sedate affair. After starting with the seam and swing of Norm and Steve the plan was for Starcky and Hutch (KY/Sarj) to tie down the middle overs, leaving Steve to come back and get some presents.

Well that was the plan – in reality it went something like this.....

Steve and Norm opened, Steve bowling with good pace and swinging the ball both ways caused a few problems and could have picked up a couple of wickets but for bad luck (inside edge missing leg, and butterfingers, holiday-effected keeper dropped catch). Norm was more erratic, struggling to control his in-swing but produced a couple of beauties including the first wicket to fall. Off stump knocked out of the ground to dismiss the opener for 26. Norm finished his spell with 1 for 46 off 8.

Steve meanwhile had bowled a first spell of about 4 overs and then was feeling weary so asked Starcky to take over. Initially Dave was bowling the wrong length (too short on a good track), but adjusted well and started to cause some problems. He picked up the second wicket to fall courtesy of a very friendly LBW decision – put it this way if it had been Steve or Colin batting and given out like that we'd be hearing about the injustice for years to come! Dave finished his 8 overs with a very respectable 1 for 30.

KY had changed Norm from the bottom end (!) and was varying his flight and pace well – unfortunately he couldn't get it passed the dancing Northchurch number 4 for love nor money and so the potential stumping didn't happen.



Norm feeling fresh after his change!

Karl did pick up a wicket – the final one to fall to the bowlers - when he tempted the Northchurch number 2 into one too many hoicks to cow corner where the safe hands of Starcky did the rest! Karl bowled out taking 1 for 54.

This left Sarj and Steve to finish off the bowling. Sarj wasn't in great form and decided to blame a manhole cover in his run up, so after 4 overs he changed ends (Steve G bowled the 'change-over' over – less said the better about that), but the change didn't make a lot of difference. By now Northchurch were in a 'hit-out' phase and Sarj took the brunt (7 overs one for 61) despite picking up a wicket late on in his spell.

Steve (8 overs, none for 27) carried on where he left off at the start of the innings, frankly too much swing to get a wicket, but a good combination with Starcky saw a run out. Into the last over the Northchurch number 4 (and captain) was on 99 and despite our best efforts he was able to get his ton with a 4 off the last ball which took them up to 253-4. A tempting target for a run chance, especially with our batting line up of Ray, Martin, Gilly, Guy, Lazza, Sarj, Steve and Starcky!

After tea then it was out to bat, the now traditional paring of Ray and Martin to start. As usual Ray was off the mark with a 4, but perished soon after for 12 – bowled trying to cut a ball that was too close to him.



Ray and Martin - inseparable on a Sunday. Even after getting out Ray was soon back to join his pal as a runner!

Martin was having a bit of a scratchy day and there was much muttering from the bench over wasted balls and run rates. Martin then made matters worse by tweaking a muscle which led to him having a limping Ray as runner! Martin fell shortly after, not to the anticipated run out, but stumped for 26 after an hour at the crease.

This brought in Guy to pair up with the increasingly impressive looking Steve G for what we hoped would be a match winning partnership.

Gilly had started a bit uncertainly (not trusting his under-endowed Worsop) but after passing 30odd was getting more and more assured. He got his 50 with a 6 after just 40 minutes and was getting better and better. Guy meanwhile was not his usual wham-bang self – his 48 took over an hour and contained 16 singles – of course the good news about this was plenty of strike for Gilly.

Once Guy was out (caught in the deep to a very good catch considering the distance travelled) it was Lazza time. Well, clearly the thought of moving in with Donna was preying on his mind and he was only able to edge his way to 10 before he too was caught.

Gilly meanwhile had moved up to and beyond 100 taking just 85 minutes to reach this milestone and looking good for a new club record. Unfortunately this wasn't to be as he was caught on the boundary as well, a case of one hit too many. The good news is he now likes his Warsop!



If I mention them enough do you think we'll get a free bat???

This left Sarj and Steve C to see us home. With 3 overs left we needed 20 odd. Big hitting Sarj then took 17 off the penultimate moment which left Steve to hit the winning runs (despite the best attempts of Sarj to run him out off the first ball) off the second ball of the over. Mayfield 257-5.

A very good run-chase and win, our first against Northchurch, we suspect there may be a few more first teamers playing for them next season!

MOM – Steve G 119 runs, honourable mention for Starcky with for a good all-round fielding performance. Dishonourable mention for the Northchurch umpire for some of the kindest home-side decisions on wides ever seen in an overs game.



Golden Moment – there were several great shots that would normally get the prize, but in the spirit of the old Fez award for funniest moment the winner was Lazza for his panicky bouncer avoidance, closely followed by my zombie-fielding whilst trying to get under a high top-edge (I was awarded a '5.9' for my triple-Salchow around the helmet though!)

Steve G, showing the makers name in an attempt for sponsorship!