

Dunsfold Cricket Club vs Saints

28st September 2015

Here we are again...



After a few false starts before we finally get a game of cricket. The team have been missing the opportunity to wind up the skipper during the off season so they have lots of fun coming up with excuses like "revision", "injury" and "age" to cry off the cricket. With only 8 at the start of Sunday the game is in the balance, I recall Steve from a corroborree with his kids. Alex takes his dads place who is crying sore knees, a common DCC complaint. When Mike delivers a new cricketer found sharing his Sunday lunch. Well the jokes over and I have 11 a whole hour ahead of time!

Peter Coveney has been bribing the captain with tales of hours in the nets under professional tuition. I set him up for the fall, "but you need to adjust to the softer outdoor pitches, you don't want to be caught at mid-off or mid-on now do you?" Mike beats him to it though getting caught for a duck. Then Peter pushes it to mid-off, Doh! Rob goes first ball to a ball that asked to be hit and we have our Dunsfold collapse in full swing 3-12. Sudhakar keeps us nervous but survives with Paul Whitney. Paul looks to get in his stride but is bowled just when a partnership is forming. Now we have a typical opening pair of Steve and Sudhi but in an untypical show of resolve they go stroke for stroke and build a proper partnership. Not only are they scoring runs, they are managing not to run each other out. They even start to find the boundary and we have a total we can defend. Well a total greater than we managed for our first game last year against Charterhouse. Now to make a game of it.



When Sudhi is bowled for 22 (yes 22 folks) he has nearly scored half of his 2014 total in one innings, hey Peter I think you should net with Sudhi's coach. ;-) I join Steve but Im as guilty of a fluffy "first game of the season" shot as any of the others so its down to Ollie. Clearly he has got the hump with being dropped below me in the batting order forcing him to bat sensibly. Steve has let his form go to his head and must be able to sense that he has surpassed Sudhi's total and gets himself caught. Ollie meanwhile tries to ping one over the road but has to settle for a boundary.



Another Steve, Mikes new recruit enters the fray but is cruelly cut short by a great catch at mid-off, being dismissed for a duck in front of his fan base. That brings Alex Andrews out to bat. Lets hope there aren't tight calls for the Umpire to make, OK Dad!!? Ollie is undone by a worm cutter of a delivery, with his years playing on the Dunsfold pitch why would he be expecting it to bounce above grass height?



Adam strides to the middle muttering something about "definitely time to be moved up the order". Alex takes the holding role with at least 30 balls left in the innings and a total only a lick over asking the Saints to score at 2 an over.

Adam and Alex give us a few palpitations but then Adam finds the singles and then the boundaries, we edge towards 3 figures, with another hearty blow we are 99, 4 byes gives us 103 and something to defend. I guess Adam thinks its time for tea and is bowled on the penultimate ball trying to heave it into the shrubbery.

The cake and sandwiches have been arriving in a steady trickle, kind of like Dunsfold batsman returning to the shed. Another cracking tea is had in the sunshine. One of the opposition remarks "best tea ever, I've heard about these Dunsfold teas". See Ladies! I don't make this stuff up!

Well now how do we defend 103. The lower down in the order Ollie is, the more recent getting bowled is in his memory. Give grumpy the ball! The radar hasn't been turned on for the first ball. Come a bit closer to me Peter as second gully. He switches on the radar and the second ball flies off the edge and Peter takes a screamer. Always satisfying to move the fielder BEFORE the ball goes there, makes up for all the times I move them out of position!



1-0 game ON!

Adam backs this up with a pair of maidens. Ollie gets a snick behind but it was travelling "too slowly" for Whitney who has 3 goes at catching it before picking it up off the lawn. Adam finds the edge too and again it's Peter, that was traveling at just the right speed and he didn't have those pesky gloves to get in the way. Ollie bowls their nervous number 4 and they are 3-13 and our tails are up. Peter and I take over saving our strike opening pair to reek some havoc with their lower order. Peter struggles in his first before finding his rhythm and causing them trouble. I keep it tight enough except the occasional full toss which their left hander, who is now set, dispatches.

Time for something different so I throw it to new boy Steve to show us his tricks. Coveney traps their left hander with all their runs LBW to put a different complexion on the game. When he starts his next over he gets another caught behind and just before he bowls the next delivery someone mentions "hatrick ball". Whoa hang on let's put the field right in close pile on the pressure, adjust it once or twice to string it out a bit longer, it is their skipper after all! The fielders are set, Peter reaches cruising speed, the birds are quiet the squirrels pause to watch. The cherry shines bright in the sunshine and swerves past the swishing bat and clatters middle stump. The fielders erupt and Peter's handshake gets a workout while his back is slapped.

Three balls that turned them from 3-58 into 6-65. Ok time to unleash the Bell on them again and he delivers second ball of his second spell to a screamer of a catch to Whitney down the leg side one handed, I think it was even a dive! It was surely one handed! Peter gets another, this one caught behind and they are now 8-73. We need two more wickets with 30 runs to play with. So when Ollie traps one LBW it's with a mixed emotions we recall him as the slips cordon concur he got bat to it first, doing the right thing can be hard!

Peter has exhausted his allotted 7 so it's Adam to try and blast the last two out, who have plenty of overs in hand. Peter instead turns to sledging to rattle their cage "are they golf shoes!?". Yes, he bats number nine and is using the nine iron to loft mid off and mid on. Their number ten is clearly batting lower than his technique suggests so when Adam bowls him we are one ball from victory but they are in the nineties, ten runs from victory. They do however have a "genuine number eleven" so chances and close calls are had.

Ollie too has exhausted his 7 over allocation so we turn again to Steve who has been beating the bat. Possibly the shot of the day comes from their number eleven jamming down on a straight line that doesn't bounce above his shoe laces which definitely saved one of our chances of victory.

Adam gets another chance off the edge of the golfer but it finds the grass in the slips cordon. So close, surely!! Adam is pinging in straight Yorkers but can't find a way through. A loose one and they level the scores with a boundary. Can we get a tie?? Adam sends down a fast out swinger, the nine iron is heaved at it with loose hands, the ball takes the sweat off the stumps while the bat nearly achieves escape velocity. Dunsfold air traffic control divert flights while the bat re-enters landing

harmlessly on leg side. If only it had landed on the stumps. Next ball he hangs on to it and sprays it to the boundary for the winning runs.

We console ourselves with a great game and team effort. A famous hattrick to Peter and twice as many runs as we managed for our first game against Charterhouse last year. A big reversal in the batting statistics...

Batting averages for 2015 after game one...

Batter	Average
Alex	No average as he didn't get out 0, typical junior! Shouldn't you be revising for something??
Steve McCullen	23
Sudhakar Vittalam	22
Adam Young	12
Paul Whitney	9
Oliver Bell	9
Peter Coveney	2
Paul Petersen	2
Steve Ray	0
Mike Berry	0
Rob Watkins	0



Bowler	Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wickets
Peter Coveney	7	2	27	4
..so those hours in the nets was clearly bowling practice right Peter?				
Oliver Bell	7	1	21	3
Adam Young	6.4	2	23	2
Paul Petersen	4	-	13	-
Steve Ray	3	-	15	-

So Rob, out first ball and you drop the game winning catch, six pounds for the privilege please. 2014, that's all history now.



Peter shows us how he got his hatrick, hang on isn't it a no ball when you bend your arm like that?