

Dunstable Cricket Club vs Wibbadune

17th July 2016

Our scheduled match against the blues falls flat when they can't get enough players. We find ourselves an alternative fixture in a team from Wibbadune!? Are they Aussie tourists? I consult an atlas...

Wagga Wagga?
Wahgunyah?
Walla Walla?
Wallabadah?
Wallaroo?
Wangaratta?
Wangi Wangi?
Waratah?
Warooka?
Warracknabeal?
Wee Waa?
West Wyalong?
Whyalla?
Wilcannia?
Wollongong?
Wombarra?
Wombeyan Caves?
Wooli?
Woolloomooloo?
Wudinna?

Nothing! Turns out Wibbadune is aboriginal for "place of the strawberries and cream" in an island off the west coast of Europe, you might know it as Wimbledon.

We have an opposition, I can put a tick in that box. I don't quite have a full team being down to nine players. They too are struggling with only ten. A novel idea hits is as we discuss the match format, it's called a "timed match". Yeah I know! You thought I had banished those from Dunstable forever. It must be the historian in me inspired by learning the old name for Wimbledon. I win the toss, tick that box, and decide to bat.



Now for some openers, Mike shuffles backwards. "Max fancy opening with me". "Yes!" A proper response, I think I've banished the "er" "ums" and "maybe", tick that box. Openers, tick.

The pitch is right over towards the pub side giving acres of lawn to cover. A lucky dip will be arranged so some can bat twice so we have 11 batters each in the book.

When Max and I open it is slow going but plenty of byes keeps the run rate ticking over. Only Max can find the boundary until I get sight off a slow spinner having seen off both openers. I stick it in cow corner to bring up our 50 partnership in the sixteenth over, tick. I sky the very next ball trying to repeat the shot 1-51.

Peter has injured his knee in last week's match and informs me he can't bowl, seems to run ok when when he hits it??!

Peter ups the run rate and the rate of boundaries spanking a handsome six. We cruise past 100 with another 50 partnership. Tick. Max survives skying one when all the fielders stand and watch each other, he gets another life as short mid-off spills a chance. He makes the most of his luck and secures his first fifty for the club, tick that box. He then turns on the accelerator.



Peter is trying to push the rate up but gets plenty of singles off spanking shots. Max goes caught for 66 trying to go big and Peter is bowled next ball 44. 3-148



Mike survives the hattrick ball, well he edges it over slip for two if that is surviving. He pings a huge four two balls later to show his true intent, only just inside the longest boundary on the ground, denied a six! He gets bowled for a quick 11.

Rob can't get the strike or his timing going. Wigmore goes crazy viciously nudging two runs through the covers. They both run out of time on 3 not out. Those two not out and the likes of Matthew and Ollie still in the shed, talk about keeping your powder dry!

Dunsfold 4-168 off 35 overs
Decent target, tick.

Ross turns up for tea having cycled to the ground and can play, sorry Ross you will have to delay your ride home, I'll find you some kit. Another bowler to replace the lame Coveney, tick. (he ran pretty well with the pads on!?)

Ollie gets us going from the pub end. Rob is behind the stumps trying to figure out where the holes in the gloves are. Their opener smacks Ollie for four on the up between me and Matthew. That was at catchable height, a wakeup call to the fielders and the bowler. Ollie responds having him well caught in the gully by Ross

Max Bell has a go from the pavilion end. Uncharacteristically he scatters a few wide ones conceding more extras than runs from the bat in his first four.

Ross takes over from Ollie after 5 overs. Third ball and I catch the other opener in gully. 2-30 off 11 overs.

I take over from Max and come in for some treatment in my first over from the number four. Second over I clean up their number three, top of off stump, sweet.

I can't claim their big hitter when he skies a big hit. The sun aids the high ball too find the turf despite Max's best effort.

Ross joins the party bowling the troublesome number four. 4-59 off 19. He doesn't have to wait too long to pick up another well held at first slip by Peter. Yeah I know gully catches and now a slips catch! Proper cricket!

Something has gone awry as we calculate they will get 40 overs. Their wiley old skipper had meandered along with the offer rate only giving us 35 overs! Timed games! Still it means more time to get them out.

The runs dry up, back to back maidens. The target of those maidens was later to remark in the pub, "you had inswingers, out swingers and then the other one that was doing something weird off the pitch" I quickly check that Wigmore has his hearing aid turned up and stands as a witness to this statement. No cash changes hands... well not in front of Wigmore!

So we had arranged to fill the batting order despite being down on numbers. I had conducted a public hat draw selected by the opposition skipper. This gave Dan and Peter another opportunity to bat. They conducted a private pick and choose their best batsman to go in again at number eleven. I delay the steward's inquiry until we are in the pub. Either way its all about claiming wickets and with their number 5&7 steadying the ship Ross and I have no further success as they build 5-61 into 5-80. I hand over to Matthew to entice a false shot but he has no luck as they move steadily along to 5-90 despite a good attempt under the high ball right on the boundary. I recall Max into the attack who leaks eight runs getting his rhythm back. His rhythm returns with vengeance with a double wicket maiden as he bowls #5 and his replacement two balls later.

Matthew takes care of #7 next over to snuff out their thoughts of victory. We have the skipper Ray and his rabbit looking like they want to dead bat their way to a draw. 8-103. Max shines the headlights and dispatches the rabbit clean bowled. That brings back their number four Zeeshan who had scored 28 first time around. He looks like he wants to score it faster second time around, has nobody told him a draw is on offer? He blasts away and farms the strike away from his skipper.

I bring Ross back into the attack and tell Ollie to take over from junior. "I'll only get one over!!" grumbles grumpy. Ross offers his end as he will have two overs. "No the skippers decided".

Grumpy fast bowler, tick!

Ross is troubling Zeeshan but can't get the wicket, he steals a single off the last ball to protect the skipper.

Ollie first ball has to be retrieved from the long grass as Zeeshan dispatches it.

Really grumpy fast bowler, tick!

Fourth ball and Ollie splatters middle stump.

Zeeshan out, tick!

Victory, tick! Dunsfold win by 47 runs with 8 balls to spare.

Happier Ollie, tick. "I take an over to warm up so one over isn't enough". You sell yourself short Ollie, you take four balls to warm up!

Shower, tick!

Water off, Electrics off, Rubbish in bin, tick, tick, tick.

Lock Windows and shutters, yes even the ones around the back that get forgotten, tick!

Kit bag packed and in car, tick!

Lock clubhouse, tick!

Not locking the opposing skipper who was still changing in the clubhouse, tick!

Re-locking clubhouse, tick!

Lock gate, tick!

Cold beer in the Sun inn, tick!

Last couple of ticks...

Mentioning how much I miss Adam who, when playing, is always there doing all the unglamorous jobs, tick!

Chastising work shy team mates in match report for pissing off early to the pub and leaving the skipper to sort the clubhouse out! TICK!

Ray, their skipper regales us with tales of the last time he played at Dunsfold some 35 years ago when they lost one of their players "in the long grass by the road where he had a nap"