

Match report: Dunsfold C.C. Vs Butterflies 19/07/2020 “Men with Boys Vs Boys with Men”



Hear hear Kath! Although it's not entirely clear whether or not this is a post off one of Dunsfold's many alternative lifestyle pages... But let's assume Kath is referring to the cricket (I hear she swings it both ways).

Yes, cricket at Dunsfold was back! Covid style... With hand sanitiser at the ready, and a gentle reminder that no one was allowed to spit or sweat on the ball (where is Prince Andrew when you need him!), Dunsfold and our loyal fanbase returned to the field.

With a slightly younger, slightly leaner (emphasis on slightly) look to the team, all those years of investment into the Dunsfold youth system seemed to be paying off (and by that I mean we were able to actually get 11 players out on the field...). Indeed, skipper for the day was our very own young gun Max Richards. Add to that two new faces in Dan Ward and Ru Slater, and Dunsfold actually looked like a team that knew what they were doing. The debutants certainly thought so, with an incredibly vocal display in the field throughout the day... but more on that later.



Our opponents? The Butterflies. Made up of a plethora of well drilled public school boys, marshalled by some familiar faces, this was not an oppo that was going to lay down lightly. Even though half of them hadn't had a proper haircut since the start of lockdown, I'm sure I was not the only one in thinking that Dunsfold had their work cut out for them.

But looks can be deceiving... and Dunsfold quickly established a foothold in the game with Adam Young taking the first wicket with a clever piece of bowling to dismiss the Butterflies no.2 for 4 in the third over... Butterflies 14 for 1. On the other end, debutant Ru Slater was steaming in with some express, albeit indirect, pace which kept the batsmen on their toes.

Yet after a good start for Dunsfold, the Butterflies no. 1 and no. 3 regained some control over the match with some swashbuckling stroke play. The no.1 bat rotated the strike nicely, whilst the Butterflies no.3 demonstrated what thirteen grand a term really buys you. Their batting was matched with some uncharacteristically competent fielding from Dunsfold that managed to keep the scoring down to just 5 an over.

And soon the pressure paid off... Sort of... A glance down to fine leg from the opener for a quick single was met with some textbook village fielding from yours truly. Or so the crowd thought... In fact, this subtle, malcoordinated ruse coaxed both batsmen into thinking a second run was on, only to see a direct hit controversially sending the no. 1 batsmen back to the shed for 20... Butterflies 51 for 2. Umpire Dave soon quashed the murmurs in the field that he couldn't see the run out (and the no.1 was actually in), when the Butterflies no. 3 cracked a straight drive that smashed into the bails of the non-strikers' end, with Dave only moving after the left bail had grazed his cheek. Clearly Dave had judged that no movement was needed to avoid the ball.

After the breakthrough, the Hitl..., I mean Dunsfold, Youth really found their voice, barking orders and chirping away from all corners of the boundary. The field chat was

brimming full of “Ru-isms” from Messrs Slater, keenly supported by Lieutenant Dan Ward. There was some “special” bowling one end, “electric” fielding the other - a good day for Dunsfold’s utility companies. And my personal favourite - “all ten wickets for you mate” after Alex Andrews took his first wicket to leave Butterflies 115 for 5. The Dunsfold Youths’ enthusiasm led to some subcontinent-like appeals from Fine Leg, Square Leg and Long Off every time the ball flirted with the pad. After another “enthusiastic” appeal and some pressure bowling, Butterflies found themselves 6 down for 131 with ten overs to play.

The final ten overs saw two good spells from Alex Andrews and Sam Thomas, restricting the Butterflies to 4 an over, with Ru Slater returning at the end to find his rhythm. At the end, Butterflies were restricted to 173 for 9, leaving Dunsfold needing 174 for the win at 4.3 an over. On any other day, this would look like a tall order. But with youth on our side, Dunsfold returned to the pavilion quietly confident.

During the changeover, it was great to see our old chairman Larry West out in force, giving a heartfelt thanks to all who had contributed to getting the season going again. The speech hit exactly the right tone for what has been a troubling summer for the club, so thank you Larry. It was slightly disconcerting that Larry had decided to dress up as Emilio Largo to deliver the speech, but we think it was intended to unsettle the opposition rather than Dunsfold. Anyway, a few M&S sandwiches and millionaire shortbreads later, Dunsfold were ready to chase. As our openers took to the crease, Ru Slater kindly volunteered to umpire. This offer was quickly followed by “So, what are the rules again?”... that explains the appeals from Fine Leg... Despite some obvious concerns over Ru’s game awareness (you can't get ten wickets if they’re already 4 down Ru), he joined Max Bell and Skipper Richards at the crease.

Despite our quiet confidence at tea, any preconceptions of a new Dunsfold were quickly quashed. After 14 overs, we found ourselves 44 for 3, with Max Bell, Skipper Richards and Dan Ward all coming and quickly going with 8 runs between them. Dunsfold now needed 130 to win off 26 overs - five an over - no mean feat.

Yet despite the traditional early innings collapse, at the other end, Seb Bell was showing his brother that nets really are overrated and set about methodically accumulating runs. He was joined at the crease by Sam Thomas and the pair began to restore some pride into Dunsfold’s batting lineup. Ten overs later and Dunsfold found themselves 115 for 3, including one over that went for 19. After more eloquent strokeplay, Seb Bell reached 50 not out and both batsmen bought up their 100-run partnership. A match saving stand from both. The Butterflies bowlers began to hit their spot however, and soon S Bell was back in the pavilion after being trapped on the crease.

This brought your author to the crease, and with the sun setting and beers waiting, I was not prepared to hang around. Closing my eyes and swinging for glory, the ball miraculously sailed over the boundary three times. In all the excitement, it may have

slipped my mind that Sam Thomas could still get fifty. This was soon corrected after some not-so-subtle score reminders from the boundary ostensibly directed at Sam, but really meant for myself. Message received Julian! Next over, Sam did indeed reach 50 but was stumped soon after with Dunsfold still needing 23 to win off 8 overs with 6 wickets in hand... Shouldn't be a problem...

And surprisingly, it wasn't, despite myself and Bell snr. 's best efforts to get ourselves out! Dunsfold recorded their first win of the season, winning by six wickets. A fantastic day out against a very capable opposition was aptly ended at the Sun Inn. Thank you to all who came and supported the team. Onwards and upwards for next week as Dunsfold take on Tabard Pilgrims to continue a fine start to the season.

For more information about the club, please visit our website www.dunsfoldcricket.com