

Defeat from the jaws of Victory?

The sun had its hat on, but the Follies lawn mower had broken down, leaving the wicket a little two tone... fortunately Dunsfold resident groundsman and official umpire Dave Renmant arrived and with his special touch the ancient cutter got back to work.

Winning the toss, Follies elected to field first. Paul Petersen and Max Bell got off to a steady start until Max was bowled for 3. This brought in Max Richards and it became clear that the wicket was slow, the bounce was low and the ball was moving around a lot. In these trying conditions Max R and Paul P kept the scoreboard ticking over, just. At the 20 over drinks break Dunsfold had amassed just 58 for 1.

The message from the Dunsfold dressing room was clear - flick the switch and start hitting the ball harder! Paul Petersen was duly bowled the next over for 23. Peter Coveney struck the next couple of balls for 4 but was then caught at short mid-wicket. Rob Watkins was bowled second ball, Max Richards was then bowled for a tidy 27, Conrad was then bowled for 0 as was Oliver Bell. Oops. From 58-1 Dunsfold had slumped to 80 for 7.

Mike Berry and last week's hero Lucas Watkins were at the crease. The pair struck the ball cleanly with Mike in particular peppering the boundary on his 56th Birthday. Finally the scoreboard was motoring. Mike continued to accelerate until he was caught on 37. Ed St Aubyn charged in to replace him and he and Lucas continued to strike the ball well. Ed and Lucas lost their wickets in the 36th over leaving Dunsfold 147 all out.

After tea, the Dunsfold opening attack of Ollie Bell and Adam Young set about their task. Whilst Ollie struggled on the slow and low pitch, Adam's away swing and off-cutters had better luck picking up the first wicket in his third over. Paul Petersen replaced Ollie and his slower pace and gentle movement caused immediate problems and he tempted the dangerous looking opener into a slog to cow corner which Lucas Watkins snaffled. Adam forces the number 4 to drag the ball into his stumps and ended a fine spell of 8 overs for 2 wickets for 26 runs.

After 16 overs Follies had scored 62 for 2. Ed St Aubyn replaced Adam without much luck in his four overs of full tosses! Left Arm spinner Lucas W replaced Paul P and Follies were quietly heading towards their target. The fourth wicket finally fell when Lucas bowled the number 5, but Follies were on 104 in the 24th over. Max Bell then replaced Ed and immediately caused trouble with his off-cutters. The runs dried up for a while and then Max caught and bowled the Follies skipper and dangerous number 3 followed by bowling the incoming batsman next ball. 120 for 6. A couple of overs later Max bowls the number 9 and then Lucas traps the number 10 LBW, as adjudged by our very own Dave Renmant. 134-9 in the 35th over but the end of Lucas's spell a fine 3 wickets for 16 runs off 8 overs.

The Follies number 11 is an 8 year old. Ed St Aubyn kindly misfields his first shot to give him a single to loud cheers. The number 8 sees the over out and manages a single to stay on strike. Ollie Bell replaces Lucas and bowls spin for the 37th over to the number 8 who sweeps the ball to the boundary three times and wins the match for the Follies!

Dunsfold are left stunned and a stewards enquiry erupts as to why Ollie didn't bowl his normal pace. It certainly felt like a defeat from the jaws of victory!