

Dunsfold all Max'd Out

Awaking to a gloriously sunny day Dunsfold CC were finally back at home after a 6 week absence due to cancelled and away matches. To improve things further one of our favourite opposition, Kensington Cricket Club, sponsored by Johnny Walker and Cobra beer, were visiting us.

Dunsfold had a strange look about them - no less than 6 under 18s were in the side and three Max's - Max Coveney, Max Bell and Max Richards - surely a Dunsfold first?

Captain Peter Coveney grimaced as he lost the toss and Dunsfold were inserted on a perfectly prepared but slightly green wicket. After much thought he decided to keep the opening pairing of last week of Paul Petersen and Max Bell. Paul started tentatively - blocking his first 19 balls, fortunately Max had other intentions smashing the ball around the ground, the combination producing a solid start against some good bowling. Paul then hits a boundary but the next ball is caught behind for his solitary 4 runs. 25 for 1 off 8 overs. In further signs of a stabilising top order Max Richards walks out as our number 3 and he carries on where he left off last week smashing the ball to the boundary in quick succession. The pair of Max's continue to bat well taking the score to 65 in the 18th over, when Max R tickles one behind for a solid 21 Runs. Again like last week Peter Coveney is our number 4 and he seems in a real hurry swishing at the ball relentlessly and eventually finds his timing as he and Max B start to accelerate the innings with 4s and 6s raining towards the pavilion. The pair take us up to 154 in the 31st over before Peter chips one up and is caught for a tidy 34.

Max Bell had moved onto 73 and is joined by Sam Bugler who makes Peter's inning look positively sedentary as he produces a selection of 'Dilshans', reverse sweeps and good old fashioned slogs. At the other end Max B was caught behind for a fine 77, Paul Whitney had come and gone for 9, as had Ollie Bell for 3. But Sam carried on until our umpire Dave adjudged him LBW (it must have been plumb!) for 39 off just 21 balls. Steve McCullen was bizarrely stumped as he set off for a run but changed his mind, and on the final Ball of the innings Max Coveney missed the ball but Seb Bell called a run only for the keeper to miss the stumps at his end but run out Max at the other! 208 for 9 off 40 overs - Dunsfold's first score over 200 for some time.

A delightful tea courtesy of the Coveney family was taken in which the egg sandwiches were to die for.

Ollie Bell opened up the bowling attack and to his absolute horror his second ball is smashed back over his head for an enormous 6. The team collapses in a fit of giggles but Ollie is suddenly more focussed! At the other end Matt Forrester opens up with his barrage of fast bowling and is unlucky not to get a hatful of wickets. Ollie pushes through a quicker ball and catches the edge which keeper Paul Whitney is happy to snaffle, between his wrists! At the other end however, the Italian batsman was relentless in his assault smashing the ball all over the ground and seemingly always on strike!

After 12 overs Kensington were on 44 for 2. It was time for a change with Paul Petersen, our current leading wicket taker with his very gentle away swing, replacing Ollie and Seb 'had a mare last week' Bell takes over the reins at the pavilion end. They are both instantly on-form and both take a wicket in their first couple of overs. It doesn't take too long before 'the Italian' takes a liking to the buffet being served from the War Memorial end by Paul P and the ball starts flying over the boundary. After 21 overs Kensington are 78 for 4. Seb picks up another

wicket in the 22nd over, but the runs continue to flow, especially from the buffet end. Skipper Peter, has had enough and decides to replace Paul P with Max Bell with the score on 111 for 5 in 26 overs. However his spell lasts just one over after Seb Bell bowls the dangerous Italian for 77 next over and there's a sense that the danger has passed. Seb ends his spell of 8 overs with 3 for 36 and has thoroughly redeemed himself from last week's aberration!

Max Coveney replaces Max Bell at the war memorial end, and Matt Forrester replaces Seb Bell and both bowl tidily against an increasingly aggressive batting attack. After 32 overs Kensington are 153 for 6. Then Max Coveney strikes, clean bowling the dangerous looking number 7, quickly followed by a run out by his father Peter Coveney and then returning Max Bell bowling their number 8. Kensington were suddenly 154 for 9 in the 34th over and with the game seemingly safe, Captain Peter takes a huge gamble and invites Steve McCullen to bowl. Steve's career bowling amounts to 2 previous overs and one can't describe accurately Steve's action other than he keeps his bowling arm straight, just!.... In he comes for his first ball, and its a perfectly placed long-hop that is spooned to Max Richards at cover. 1 ball 1 match-winning wicket and a celebration by Steve reminiscent of Arsenal of old! Fortunately he kept his shirt on!

The wonderful thing about playing Kensington is their sponsorship, a crate of cold Cobra beer is distributed to the teams and supporters to drink immediately after the game and then there's the obligatory man of the match award - a fine bottle of Johnny Walker Gold Label. Captain Peter awards the Kensington Man of the Match to the Italian batsman who scored 77 for Kensington and in acknowledging fine performances from Sam Bugler (39 in 21 balls) and Seb Bell (3 for 36), in interesting symmetry Kensington captain awards the Dunsfold Man of the Match to Max Bell for his 77 runs.