

### A game of two halves (weather-wise)

With peak holiday season underway Dunsfold pulled out all the stops to raise a side to play Reigate Priory Cavaliers. Another young team was selected with 6 under 18s, including two debutants 14 year old Luca La Costa and 11 year old Harry Petersen.

A sharp 1:30pm start was advertised and 10 of Dunsfold's finest were ready. Predictably Ed St. Aubyn of Upper Ifold was stranded at home, unable to drive, cycle or walk to the ground for excuses beyond me. The stranded boy was fortunately collected at the second attempt to be delivered to the ground in time for the start, delayed due to the late arriving opposition.

Winning the toss stand-in skipper Ollie Bell after much deliberation decided to bat first. Looking for a solid start, Ed St Aubyn was elevated to open with Seb Bell. We got a solid, albeit slow start as the 12 year old opening bowler from the War Memorial end tied Ed in knots with his gentle away swing, bowling 4 consecutive maidens to him. Fortunately at the other end Seb was pushing the run rate along. Seb was then bowled in the 14th over by a young leg spinner for a decent 28 and Dunsfold were 41 for 1. Max Richards was next but smacked his third ball down the throat of deep mid wicket for 0. Rob Watkins next up and holes out to deep mid on second ball also to the young leg-spinner. We only had 2 specialist batsmen this Sunday - and in 5 balls they had both been removed for ducks! Paul Whitney, nursing a hangover from his quinquagesimus (50th) birthday celebrations, was next and we needed a good innings with his extraordinarily heavy Sumo bat. At the other end Ed was still struggling, in 19 overs he had scored just 19 runs.

Drinks were taken at the halfway point and Dunsfold were 63 for 3. Ed decides its the bat's fault that he can't hit it off the square and duly borrows an alternative weapon. Whilst this does accelerate his scoring briefly the change in bat seems to accelerate his demise caught at mid wicket for 33. Debutant and injured all rounder, Luca La Costa replaces Ed, and instantly looks more at ease at the crease. Paul Whitney then gets caught at mid off for 16 and Paul Petersen comes and goes for 2. Dunsfold were in a spot of bother at 86 for 6 after 25 overs. If ever a skipper's innings was required... in strides Ollie Bell. Luca and Ollie play safely, waiting patiently for bad balls in which to score runs. Luca's elegant cover drives gliding to the boundary were contrasted by Ollie's agricultural slogs to deep cow corner! Never the less the runs were ticking and partnership was forming. The pair put on 52 before Ollie is bowled by a very slow delivery for 25. The score had moved on to 142 for 7, then for 8 as Luca spoons up a ball in the next over for a fine 28. Chad Marais and Matthew Forrester had suddenly been thrust into the heat of battle with 21 balls left. They play diligently, with Matthew playing some particularly elegant shots. Chad gets caught and bowled in the final over, leading to 11 year old Harry Petersen to try and better his father's performance, which he does with his second ball stroked over 2nd slip for 4! Unfortunately he is bowled next ball leaving Matt stranded at the on-strikers end. Dunsfold had amassed 152 all out, probably 20 runs less than we would have liked but a defendable score.

Tea was taken, courtesy of the Whitney girls and Shelly Forrester. The rock cakes were my favourite this week. After an beautiful rendition of happy birthday, Kirsten Bell blew out the candles on her birthday cake and the cricket could continue. Having been a warm but overcast day, the very first drop of rain fell out of the sky as we took to the field. It was just a drop.

Fiery Matthew Forrester and speedy Chad Marais opened up the bowling for Dunsfold. A mixture of variable bowling and some very aggressive batting meant Reigate got off to a flying start. After 8 overs Reigate were on 44 without loss. Time for a change and Paul Petersen was asked to try and calm things down. Success! With his Second ball he traps the aggressive batsman plumb in front - as adjudged by our trusty umpire Dave Renmant. Then 2 balls later Reigate's number three faintly snicks another gentle away swinger - as adjudged by trusty Dave Renmant! The Reigate number 3 was not happy but he had clearly nicked it, and he was overheard later

admitting so. Seb Bell replaced Chad at the Pavilion end, and the runs continued to dry up. Paul Petersen forces another couple of errors. Ed St Aubyn replaces Seb and is immediately successful picking up a wicket. At drinks Reigate are ahead of the run rate with 90 for 5 off 20 overs. The rain had turned from occasional drops to constant drizzle. Paul Petersen finished off his fine spell of 8 overs 4 wickets for 19 runs. Seb Bell was brought back to replace Paul from the memorial end and Ollie Bell came on at the Pavilion end. Both bowled well and dried the runs up well and brought Dunsfold back into the game. Ollie surprises the remaining opening batsman who had passed 50 and keeper Paul Whitney snaffles the catch. Beyond that, with the rain getting heavier and the ball wetter we were unable to dislodge a further Reigate batsman. Matt Forrester and Chad Marais were brought back to bowl the final 8 overs with the score on 119 for 6. They bowled really well in very trying conditions but just unable to make the breakthrough. Reigate passed our 152 with just 7 balls remaining - winning the match by 4 wickets.

Next Sunday we have the honour of playing under the Red Arrows against our favourite opposition the WoodPeckers. Anyone is welcome to join us - we will fire up the BBQ at lunchtime for people to cook anything they wish to.