



Dunsfold Cricket Club vs The Saints (H)

Sunday 9th May 2021

by Oliver Bell

“Catches win Matches”



John Richardson 84 runs & 4 wickets for 25

After a long break, yours truly found himself stepping in for club captain Peter Coveney for Dunsfold's second match of the season. After coercing a number of players out of semi-retirement or asking them to ignore long term injuries a familiar looking XI was cobbled together. Having lost the toss and been inserted to bat, that familiar XI had a familiar start to their innings with 5 of us back in the pavilion with just 35 runs on the board. Just our opening batsman Mike Berry remaining at the crease – albeit fortunately, given he had already been dropped 3 times. Young John Richardson, a late addition to the team, was our no.7 and as he strode out DCC was in a batting crisis, again. However it was clear from the first couple of shots that John was not from the same pencil case as the rest of the Dunsfold team, neatly clipping the first few balls off his legs to the boundary. Mike at the other end was using all his and the rest of the teams season's luck as he was dropped multiple times, some hard, some not so hard but he battled on and eventually fell when bowled for 37. However he and John put on a 82 run partnership that steered Dunsfold from 35-5 to a more respectable 117-6. Mike's dismissal came as John pummelled another 4 to make his 50 and with Steve McCullen and Max Cooke adjudged out LBW by our very own Dave Renmant in the same over it was looking like DCC would still not post a big enough score. However that would underestimate John, who decided that with the usual batting collapse at the other end he needed to urgently take matters into his own hands and 5 sixes later and everyone rushing to move their cars from the firing line, he eventually fell for 84 and the score on a much more respectable 146, our final pair nudged us up to 152-9 in our 35 overs with, Jolian Howell delighted with his 3 not out, outscoring 6 other team members!

A covid, bring your own tea was taken at the interval before DCC went out to defend their total. Looking around as the team took to the field, it became clear the selectors had selected a predominantly batting team, not that the scorebook would corroborate that. So alongside our stalwart opening bowler Adam Young, Matthew Richardson, who managed to run himself out on the first legitimate ball of our innings, was asked to open at the other end with his gentle beguiling balls. Whilst wickets were hard to come by, the opening pair

kept the runs down well and the game was fairly balanced. I replaced Adam at the pavilion end with a mixture of non-spinning offspin and military medium 'stuff' and we continued to do a good job of keeping the runs down. Eventually Matthew made a breakthrough, with one of his balls allegedly darting in off the seam to clip the stumps. Matthew's son John replaced him at the War Memorial end and like his batting, showed DCC how offspin should be bowled. Wickets started to falling and the match was finely balanced, however we were regularly dropping catches too. Max Cooke replaced me at the pavilion end and bowled a great spell of very accurate leg spin and the overs were ticking by, with Saints requiring 5-6 runs an over to throughout. Steve McCullen was asked to bowl an over to bail the captain out of a miscalculation on the limited overs and that passed without incident. So with 5 overs left, 25 runs required 6 wickets down, it was a very tense finish as John and Adam came back into the attack – John snaffled a couple more wickets and Adam bowled tidily – but alas on the second ball of the final over the Saints managed to sneak past our total. An exciting and close game that kept the large crowd on their toes until the end. With 84 runs and bowling figures of 4 for 25, it's very clear that John Richardson was man of the match and indeed was responsible for ensuring it was a fun close contest and had we held our 5 dropped catches, I suspect we would have won!

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