

MATCH REPORT

V&A v. The Nashers

Sunday May 20, 2007

THE NASHERS are a pleasant and sporting lot who make the day an agreeable one. From the cricketing point of view they are depressingly young, in their twenties by the look of it. They scamper between the wickets, and throw over-arm. Some of us do, some of us did.

Bird N. won the toss and elected to bat as he had to do the lunch in Sarah's absence. In retrospect he got the batting order wrong. Jake Warman and Dennis de Caires agreed to open but perhaps their aggressive batting style is better served at 3 or 4. Both were out cheaply, Dennis to one that bowled him off his pad. A pity as he was looking sound. Jake was playing nicely when out for 11 – his succession of twos would have been fours but for the uncut outfield. The next 5 batsmen all went for 8 or under (Nixey unfortunate to be given out caught behind by Linthwaite). We staggered from 18 for 5 after 9 overs to 30 for 7. Then new boys Heathcote (23) and Staple (18) batted with élan to bring the score to a slightly more respectable, if inadequate, 77 for 9 (we were however batting 12). Heathcote used to play for Surrey 2nds and it showed in his classical style. He is, by his own admission, not in peak physical condition but what does that matter if you restrict your scoring to boundaries (he got 5).

Bird N. made a quick flurry of runs at the death (30*), mostly cutting through a gap down the slope but with a few drives to the cover boundary. If the outfield had not been so slow he would not have had to run, exercise which he could do without. Last man Chris Moore – to whom we are grateful for putting the day together in Sarah's absence and Rico's late decision to watch rugby – went in at the death. He should have been up the order. We ended on 132. Not enough. 180 would have been safe on this pitch.

In Bird's absence on washing up duty, Dennis took charge of the field, Moore the keepers' gloves. That he dropped a couple made no difference to the outcome, merely his pride. That Bird returned to catch one was obviously irritating. Dennis and Jake bowled their 7 overs cheaply (Jake's went for only 11 runs) but without taking wickets. Their openers passed the 100 mark with ease. Heathcote had been a very decent fast bowler in his day, but this was not his day - he went for 20 in his only over, to a smirk and hint of ribaldry from his friend Moore. Knapp bowled quickish off breaks effectively and got the caught behind. Someone caught a very good catch in the deep, Dale I think, but by then my attention had wandered to thoughts of my first whisky. Dennis ensured however that heads did not drop.

They passed our total with 5 overs to go. The Nashers are the perfect opposition – they cough the match fee without demur, do not sledge or indulge in the dreadful public school banter of a certain team we play, appreciate the view, and put on duff bowlers when we're in trouble. Their only flaw is their emphasis on youth...next year perhaps they could bring an old git or two like we do, preferably gay ones with a

serious disability. Peter Linthwaite, I think it was, complained that although they brought fit youths, eleven of them, they brought no totty. He will be reassured that next Saturday we play The National Theatre, who arrive with a full complement of old people and WAGS, though few in his age range of 50 – 75.

Please let skipper Martin Bowden know if you can play - mbowden146@hotmail.com

Nicky Bird