

## MATCH REPORT

Sat. June 23, 2007

V&A v. The London Erratics

I WAS ABSENT LOOKING UP Brigitte Bardot in St. Tropez last week (not literally) so Andy Fraser took over reporting duties. He is sorry if anyone felt insufficiently insulted.

The threat of thundery storms of Biblical fury put back kick off until 13.30, so no official lunch but a magnificent tea provided by the family Morris. It was Kitty Morris's birthday (age undisclosed) so their whole menagerie came and had a day out in the Chilterns. When we arrived they had clearly been enjoying a good, upmarket picnic lubricated by Veuve Clicquot and several bottles of 13% Burgundy. The 13% did the trick for Rupert as he opened with a blistering attack on the (very good) bowling, hitting 10 in the first over. His opening partner Rico Wilson was whacking anything loose but succumbed to a strain and Bird N. came in as a runner, not everyone's first choice as Mr. Nippy between the wickets. Then Rupert too fell victim to that curse of the aged, the pulled muscle (as did one of their chaps) and so the field was littered with walking wounded, runners, and confusion. Geriatric cricket – it is the sign of things to come...

Rupert holed out to mid-off, but Rico powered on, assisted by Andy Fraser (after Adam had been bamboozled by one that kept low). Rico was eventually caught behind for 25, unable - with his disability - to get his foot to a wide ball. Andy was soon after bowled for 21, having been distracted by some banter and indecision in the field. In the meantime umpire Adam Jacot had managed to have a tiff with their nice bearded opening bowler, Bowden had fallen to a controversial umpiring decision by Simon Hilditch (LBW, front foot well forward, and bat / pad), a friendly kite came to admire Andy's late cut and their opening bowlers plugged away unremittingly, this being a timed game (20 overs after 6.00) there was no restriction on the number of overs bowled per bowler.

We might have been not inconsiderably embarrassed, as John Major would say, but for a marvellous powerful innings by skipper Dennis de Caires, who thwacked the ball to all corners but particularly straight and square. One 6 and ten 4s tell the story and on this slow outfield the tally of 4s is doubly impressive. He was not out 74 at tea, the other end being propped up first by Peter Linthwaite (bowled for 4 but a useful innings) and then James Nixey.

And then the rain came. And that was that. Pitch flooded, match abandoned. Bad luck on The Erratics who had fielded with keenness (some, not in the first flush of youth, are surprisingly nimble). We ended with 145 for 6 but would have reached about 170 or so, a decent total on this pitch. The Erratics would have made a good game of it – although they have a longish tail they have some very good club players at the top end. As always they bring a scorer, which always impresses, he is a real pro and vigilant with the telegraph.

No Lucinda this time, so no homemade scones and assorted goodies but the Morris tea was superb. Unfortunately much of it was scoffed prematurely (by some who will remain nameless) so you might have missed out. We revert, we hope, to a morning start next week against The Thebertons. Let us know if you can play. Martin, Dennis (Capt.), James, Andy, Peter, Adam – I think – said yes. Roger Smith returns from Oz in a week or so and will grace us with his brooding presence and menacing pace. He'll be disappointed to have missed the couple 'dogging' on the bench by the nets the other week, but I've invited them back. Ex pats like Roger always bang on about England going to the dogs (but this might mean something different), and whinge about our warm beer, hideous women and dreadful service, so be prepared for your cellar, wife and servants to be insulted.

Nicky Bird