

MATCH REPORT

V&A v. JESMOND JAGUARS

Saturday June 9, 2007, Stonor

Another fine day, if a trifle humid. For some reason we had found it tricky getting a quorum – we were 8 on Friday – but thanks to Adam Chataway, the Jaguars very game and sporting captain, who lent us both himself and their best bowler, we had a decent 10 on the day.

They elected to bat in a 35 over game. Depressingly, they only had one man over 28 it seemed, and although clearly in bus pass territory he appeared to have most of his marbles, unlike some of our own geriatrics (although old age may be less to blame than substance abuse for our incapacity in the field). The Jaguars started like a whirlwind, being 50 or so for 0 after 7 overs and 130 for 4 at lunch after 21 overs. The wickets had fallen to Rico Wilson (bowled), Shaun Mayana (LBW) and Martin Bowden (bowled and caught behind, the keeper diving in front of first slip – Andy - who might, or rather might not, have caught it). Ed Eccles bowled beautifully in his first session of 4 overs, going for a measly 7 runs, but as so often happens to quickies he was too good for them to get the snick. Our fielding was poorish, a couple of catches were dropped, probably because several players were ogling a couple who shall remain nameless, called Jimmy and Sarah, who were shagging each other on the bench where the old pavilion used to be. This practice, know as ‘dogging’ in the trade, diverts and distracts, and could explain why Andy just failed to snap up a half chance at first slip, and why Adam Jacot’s meandering gait in the field seemed more slow motion than usual.

Sarah Jenkins returned to catering duties and provided a predictably satisfactory lunch with the minimum of fuss. She is off now until the end of July, climbing the Inca trail in memory of Emily who had always wanted to do it with her mother. Sarah will not find many other ladies with bus passes on the trail. She should know that it is difficult to get a decent bottle of claret at 12,000 feet, sherpas tend not carry such things. It is not too late to switch to a more sensible route to Machu Pichu, via Peruvian National Railways. They probably have a dining car serving fresh llama and Jacob’s Creek (the filthy stuff is everywhere, but in an emergency you would, wouldn’t you...).

After lunch, as seems to happen, the batsmen broke loose but not before we had dropped another 4 or 5 catches, one - which went straight to Mooro at mid-on - you would have bet on a moderately decent fielder catching. Mooro looked a bit sleepy and there was some suggestion that he had been drinking heavily the night before which is akin to a Fredalo incident, and one for the Committee to look into.

Their 5 and 6 got 61* and 58, which should not have been but for our misses. Only one wicket fell after lunch, a superb ball by Ed, who with Martin and Adam Jacot (5 overs for only 9 runs) was the most economical. But their score of 239 looked unassailable.

However we started extremely well, with an opening stand of 80 odd by Adam Chataway and Shaun that was brisk if not quite up with the required rate. Both played their shots with abandon, before Adam C. was bowled and Shaun caught, both trying to force the pace. Enter Andy and Adam Jacot. Jacot was caught off his first ball, a full toss on the leg that he scooped to long leg, which was depressing, the bowling was to his liking. But Andy, now joined by Ed Eccles started to murder the bowling with some beautiful drives and cuts before Ed had a teeny bit of a rush of blood and called for a single after hitting straight to point. He was, quite reasonably, sent back by Andy but it was too late. Bowden came in and played a crucial supporting role to Andy's increasing domination of the (somewhat wayward) bowling, hitting ferociously to leg (6 sixes to the pavilion boundary! and one to the road). Suddenly what seemed a forlorn chase was feasible if still unlikely. But Andy was unremitting, hitting a memorable cover drive down the hill and two beautifully timed wristy late cuts up the hill as well as some ferocious sweeps and pulls to the road for 4. He was out to tiredness (he is not in peak condition), having been unable to return to base after a confused call. Martin had supported admirably, his total of 29 containing a weird number of singles – 23 – testament perhaps to his determination to give Andy the strike (and his inability to run two).

Rico came in with some 12 or so runs needed off two overs but was run out after a trademark mix-up, as was Chris Moore coming in next. Rupert Morris walked in with, I think, 7 runs needed off 6 balls. Rupert got the required single off his first putting Martin on strike, who grabbed two runs but then a single. A dot ball was followed by a swish from Rupert that was caught at mid-off. But the batsmen had crossed and so when Bird N. came in – last man – Martin needed 3 to win off the last ball. In the event he smacked it straight to mid-wicket and was not quite quick enough to return for two. So...we had lost by one run, a tremendous achievement, one that looked only remotely possible an hour or so earlier, for which the credit is Andy's with an innings of unparalleled power and elegance. But that we came so near was also due to Adam Chataway's generosity in providing us with two such superlative players. I would have been embarrassed to win, but not to tie.

Martin Bowden is captain and organiser this coming Saturday, Lucinda is kindly catering. Please let him know [mbowden146@hotmail.com] if you can play. It is the Chelsea Arts Club and David Maddocks, he of the cravat and stripey blazer, so be on your best sartorial behaviour. Chris Moore's ripped trousers will not do. Jock straps should be washed, even if it is not the end of the season. The CAC are a respectable lot, they would not know what 'dogging' is even if they were peering through a car window.

Nicky Bird