

JTCC v. ANSTY

The phoney cricket & reporting are a thing of the past as, at last, a real game of competitive 20:20 cricket has been played. The risible farces witnessed in the pre-season friendlies have become a distant, fading memory displaced by an almost flawless performance which the team should be proud of.

This week's game was against Ansty. They are a thoroughly professional, organised and well managed club with whom the Jolly Tanners has close ties. Unfortunately most of these are with **Brian Fletcher** who has more in common with "**Norman Stanley Fletcher**" than any of us would like to admit. Thus making this scribe **Godber**. For the record Brian now prepares both the wicket and the out field. One day he will get it right. On Thursday evening when fielding in the deep one was likely to find **Dr Livingstone** than the ball.

The tension before play was palpable with much practice catching to steady the nerves. Unfortunately this was just the Jolly Tanners as Ansty simply fooled around trying to lull us into a false sense of security. At the out set it was decided by the captains to only allow for a wide call without conceding the extra delivery. This it turned out had more to do with the quality of light than the bowling.

Charitably we were allowed to field first and as both teams had a very good turn out both contained 12 players. Ansty's innings began steadily. Our bowling was metronomically accurate (with very few wides) and the fielding was sound if not inspiring. Half way through (10 overs) we began to quietly fancy our chances as by this time we have normally bowled too benevolently, dropped catches and given over runs galore. So a nervous hush descended. Play was only interrupted by the Ansty batsmen returning to the pavilion having retired 25 not out. This should have been a portent.

To win matches you must take wickets and though **Phil** opened his year's account with 2 for 18 (Including a catch off his toes with a plie a ballet dancer would have been proud of and one which will soon enter his **Elvis** routine) it simply was not enough. For the record Phil won last year's prize for the most wickets in a season and as such is precluded from winning it this year. However those of best match figures and best average remain well within his abilities.

Ansty's innings ended on a very high note with their captain smashing 20 off 8 deliveries. He too retired and their innings finished on 119.

Needing 120 at 6 per over, or as TMS would have it a run a ball, our innings began in the gathering gloom. **Brian Giffin** and **Mark Waghorn** gave us a good start with Mark's entertaining shot de jour the 'genueflecting slog/sweep/mow' much to the fore. Brian's eventual untimely dismissal (1 short of retirement at 25) precipitated a middle order collapse of glacial proportions with 4 wickets falling for 3 runs.

Then it dawned on us. To win matches you must also score more runs than the opposition and though we valiantly attained the 100 mark we really needed more overs or better batting. So the expectant nervousness of victory was replaced by the disappointed, **Brando**-esque mourns of 'we could have been a contender. A somebody!'

Perhaps it's true, teams do forget how to win but though the wheels did ultimately come off we have to acknowledge that Ansty are a much better team and just to exercise some control over them was quite an achievement.

The return match is on 27th July and who knows.....

Warne Out

Cricket Correspondent to the Jolly Tanners

STATISTICS

Ansty beat JTCC

Champagne moments:

Phil's plie.

Nigel Reid running him self out and the silent laughter that followed.

No dropped catches.

Ansty's captain's innings

Beer moments:

The lack of chatter in the field. IT'S ONLY A GAME. SO PLAY LIKE WINNERS, LOOSE LIKE WINNERS AND YOU GET TO DRINK LIKE WINNERS.

Nigel Reid running him self out and the silent laughter that followed.

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