

## Match Report

### JTCC v The Ladies

At a time when society is increasingly obsessed with its lack of morals & respect; wants equal opportunities for all & craves heroes of substance, the gentlemen & players of the Jolly Tanners Cricket Club decided to offer the cricket experience to cricketing clueless – the ladies of the Jolly Tanners. After all, cricket has long been regarded as the last bastion of sportsmanship, fair play & quintessentially 'all things English.' Unfortunately it is also viewed by many to be one of the last bastions of male chauvinism, 'all things English' & dead boring to boot. So what better way to spread the gospel of cricket & remove its last stigmas than our own 'out reach' programme!

Your reporter is pleased to inform that the day went well. The gentlemen were sporting to a man & the ladies gave their all. Whilst fielding the gentlemen habitually dropped catches & stepped over the ball so that it might trickle a little closer to the boundary. Some cynics might mutter nothing new there. However such was Ron's (Stevenson, Chairperson of Selectors) determination to not catch the ball whilst fielding at the appropriately named silly-mid-on that he will need treatment for a newly acquired RSI.

When bowling they reined themselves in so as not to intimidate the ladies. When batting they did so with their weaker hand, although one or two callow characters could not resist a little batting practice. When declared out they walked with out too much protestation. To meekly walk off may have persuaded the opposition that they weren't taking the game seriously.

To a man all were gallant, noble & generous with their praise. Even Keith Butler!

Unfortunately the same cannot be said of the ladies.

Prior to the match there was the gesturing & posturing more redolent of the football terraces than a village cricket ground. The ladies even engendered a conversation, with much more posturing, about how ladies pee. One thought that things could only get better.

Then there was the selection of a ball, which was discussed with voices so shrill that they could have emptied a belfry. A standard cricket ball was thought too hard & a tennis ball too light. Fortunately Kevin saved the day by providing a child's cricket ball which was also deemed to be the right colour.

Play began with the ladies batting. A phase we shall call "The Innings of the Bambi." Every delivery was treated as though it might be a hand grenade or fizzing cartoon bomb. Despite their best efforts runs were accumulated & the game was on. Gill (Stevenson, Chairperson of Chairpersons) actually started placing her shots, calling the runs & when cruelly dismissed, (c&b – Andrew Bickley, whose parentage Gill questioned) made reference to Rachel Hayhoe Flint being on the phone.

Then came the Margaret Thatcher "Rejoice Phase" which was typified much self congratulation, declarations of male sad denouement & cries such as "No, we don't want your help in bowling".

With the ladies' ire echoing around Staplefield the gentlemen's innings began. It was soon obvious that their "psyche ops" had worked when early wickets fell. However the middle order held & the winnings runs were ground out. And run they were as there was no boundary during the innings.

The game then entered its final phase "The Harridan". In order to take the final wickets the rules & fair play, the very essence of the game, were abandoned. Bowlers ignored the readiness of the batsman & fielders bayed for the remotest of dismissals (Blame the one day game.)

Andrew's dismissal summed up their attitude, clean bowled while being distracted by their comely wicket keeper. Unfortunately his comical attempts to evade the ball whilst trying to defend his stumps will mean that his new nick name 'Freddie' owes far more to Astaire than Flintoff.

So the intent of the game was lost. Morals & respect remained as elusive as before & certainly no heroes were revealed. Rather the underlying cause of the society's demise was exposed. The perpetrator who threw the rules out with cricket ball is a pillar of this community, a church warden & perhaps most embarrassingly a teacher. Not just any old teacher but occasionally a sports teacher who the next day was teaching the next generation cricket. This reporter cannot help but think that this generation is yet another forever lost to cricket. Her name? Sam 'Hansie' Butler.

### **Paddy Dup**

Tanners Cricket Correspondent

#### **Stats**

**Cricket lost under the Vera Duckworth/Daniel Day Lewis rules.**

**Champagne moment: Andrew's Foxtrot.**

**Beer moment: Sam 'Hansie' Butler's dismissal of Andrew.**

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