

Taylor leaves his Mark on Albanian's

Potters Bar 2nd XI recorded their fifth victory of the season in a low scoring game at Old Albanian's on Saturday. Skipper Greg Hodge lost the toss and was unsurprisingly asked to bat first on a wet looking wicket in overcast conditions.

Bar started brightly against a strong pace attack of Matt Corran and Kwesi Roy, openers Evans and Pett found the boundary regularly in the opening overs. The pair managed to add 43 for the first wicket, when Tom Pett fell trying to pull a ball from Corran, only to direct the ball on to his stumps. Tom was quickly followed into the pavilion by his uncle Dave, who was caught behind in the same over. Tom Coughlan came and went for 4, also dismissed by Corran and when Evans was caught behind for 24, Bar were in the mire at 47 for 4. Evans' 24 turned out to be the second highest score of the game and was a valuable innings on a difficult wicket.

Number five Mark Taylor was to make a match winning innings for Bar, putting on valuable partnerships with Luke Owers, Aditya Sheth and David Rock. Taylor mixed lusty blows with careful stroke play and reached his fifty with the score on 120. When Taylor was dismissed on exactly 50, Bar's innings fell away, with captain Hodge and youngster Brown both failing to trouble the scores.

Bar's 127 was probably 20 runs below par, however some rain in the tea interval added dampness to the wicket and Bar were confident of dismissing the opposition.

Skipper Hodge and Mark Taylor took the new ball and Taylor made the first breakthrough, bowling Albanian's opener for 2. Hodge was unlucky not to take a wicket in the third over when a straight forward catch went down at square leg. Bar were to drop Albanian's number three no less than four times in an innings where every shot seemed to go in the air.

Boyce replaced Hodge after ten overs and instantly made his mark on the game dismissing ex-Bar player Ravi Viji to a catch by Evans in the gully. Taylor continued to make inroads, picking up wicket at regular intervals, whilst Boyce extracted sharp bounce out of the wicket. With Albanian's struggling at 60 for 4, skipper John Smithers strode to the crease, the ex-Radlett man found the boundary several times. With overseas player Roy at the other end the game was slipping away from Bar. However Boyce was to take a stunning catch off Taylor, to dismiss Roy, who in truth played an awful shot, next ball Alfie Rehman struck his first ball to Hodge at short leg to be dismissed for a duck.

With Boyce tiring Luke Owers replaced him, but was dismissed to the boundary twice in his first over. A shot wide ball to Smithers seemed destined to go for another four but a good catch by Brown left Albanian's down but not out at 80 for 7. Albanian's number 9 took Owers for 11 in his next over and Bar were scratching their heads looking for answers.

Hodge turned back to Boyce who along with Taylor strung together three maidens, the pressure told on Albanian's number 9 who was bowled trying to hit over the top. Taylor had now taken five wickets and along with his fifty was clearly man of the match, but it would mean little unless Bar could take the last two wickets. When Jayawardena struck the ball in the air to Hodge off Taylor the game was nearly won and the next over Bar were jubilant as Boyce removed Albanian's last man's off stump to dismiss the opposition for 112. Taylor finished with figures of 6 for 38 and Boyce with 3 for 36.

Bar are now up to 9th, whilst Albanian's have slipped dangerously close to relegation. Next week Bar entertain local rivals Cockfosters at The Walk and will be looking for another victory.