

Sadly I have to report my first complaint received in the two years I've been doing this column. I wish to sincerely apologise to the gentleman that I have upset and offended and despite being given reports which I was led to be 100% correct, they apparently weren't and I am disappointed in having to report this.

Freds Box View wishes to apologise to Sir George and hope that this is the end of the matter and we can all go back to playing / watching cricket and enjoying the banter as per normal

WALK HOODOO STRIKES AGAIN

Saturday

North Mymms 262 for 6 in 60 overs

Potters Bar 162 all out in 48.5 overs

Unlike the away 100% record, the 1s entertained North Mymms at the weekend and slumped to their 4th defeat in 5 home league and cup matches as they were trounced by 100 runs in a lacklustre showing against local rivals North Mymms.

After winning the toss on a green pitch, thanks to a downpour the night before, Lenny Cooper, despite being without the inured Andy Colquhoun opted to have a bowl on a warm morning and for the toss to work Bar needed to take early wickets but despite taking the early wickets of Claxton for just 6 and Herts skipper Andy Lewis for just 2, it was plain to see that the Bar were not for whatever reason firing on all cylinders.

The 50 came up in just 13 overs and it wasn't long before Chris Stead and Mark Saxby set about getting after Bars attack. The one positive to come out of the opening session was the fact that thanks to the slow bowling department, Bar were flying through their allocation, but this meant the threat of any advantage of a seaming pitch was lost and the batsman took full advantage.

Stead pounced on anything full and sped to his 50 in just 64 balls and 70 minutes and Mark Saxby pounced on anything short and his 50 came in just 60 balls in 50 minutes after hitting Nesan Jeyaratnam for four 4's in an over as Mymms took the game well and truly by the scruff of the neck.

Bar did manage to sneak a vital wicket just before the lunch break, but the damage had been done as Stead was bowled by the slow left-arm of Paul Barker for 65 and although the boys hurried and scurried through to lunch in the field, Mymms still reached the break in fine fettle with the score on 157 for 3 with 18 overs left of the 60-over allocation. Bar needed a really good session after the lunch break to stand any chance, alas for long periods we struggled as Mark Saxby took the attack to pieces.

After starting after lunch unbeaten on 74, he survived three chances in just 4 overs and despite losing Charl Pietersen for 10, he completed his 100 off of 129 balls in 105 minutes and the game was slipping away from Bar with every boundary plundered against the Bar attack.

He finally departed for 140, in a knock that contained 18-fours and 5-sixes in his 156 ball stay and Mymms managed to rack up a creditable 262 for 6 off of the full 60 overs. Collectively, the bowlers had a poor day. They didn't seem to hunt in pairs, the fielding was average for the first time this season and there didn't seem to be the same intensity of the previous league

and cup matches, both at home and away from the Walk. Paul Barker did manage to take 4 wickets but it was at a cost of 115 off of 24 overs.

If you were being picky, the attack was a little 'samey' however, the attack was missing a top-seamer who was injured and in all fairness, they had all done the business in the majority of the matches before. I thought there could have been a few more bowling changes, maybe mixing it up a little more and maybe Lenny Cooper could and should have bowled more than the 8 overs he bowled.

One positive that came from the innings was that we had bowled our overs in a shade over 3 hours, and this meant that we should have received more than the 50 overs that were due to us, so the run rate of 5.26 runs per overs may have been reduced down to a figure of around 5.

Unfortunately, the reply didn't start well as Mymms opening pair of Wendell Roberts and Charl Pietersen tacked into Bars batting with a real hunger and after Mike Palmer was strangled down the legside for 0 and birthday boy Scott Fraser shouldered arms for 0, Bar were miles behind the clock at 5 for 2, however lets make no bones, the opening attack was excellent. They were quick and hostile and bowled in challenging areas. The over rate certainly wasn't helping either, as the first hour contributed a pitiful 13 overs.

The loss of Dean Dass for 17 saw Bar sat at 41 for 3 and this brought to the crease arguably Bars best partnership to the crease in Kash Weeraratne and Jared Norman and this sparked some bizarre captaincy from Mymms as although the target was still a massive 221 to win off of just 37 overs out went the scouts and to Kash in particular they had as many as 6 men out on the fence and didn't have a slip in place. This persisted all the way through to the tea break where Kash and Jared had settled in and started to both play nicely on a surface where 262 should never have been the target to chase.

At tea time Bar sat at 96 for 3 off of 26 overs, leaving the boys needing another 169 to win off of just a minimum of 24 overs and in truth, we weren't going to get many more, as again the over rate in real terms and not the bizarre league over rates were around 14.5 overs per hour. Jared Norman was sat 45* and Kash Weeraratne was 23*. With Mymms ludicrous field settings and over-rates it would have been justified if Bar had ended up 200 for 3, thus making no attempt to go for it – they were however clearly frustrating both the batters, both in and waiting to come in and in fairness their plan worked a treat.

After a little spurt after tea, Bar lost Kash Weeraratne bowled for 36 and Jared Norman caught behind for a fine 59 and the game as a contest was effectively over. Bar were 122 for 3 but were now 126 for 5 and from then on it was the Danny Duggan show as he spun Bar out and not for the first time either with his innocuous slow left-arm bowling.

Nesan Jeyaratnam was bowled for 2, Paul Barker went caught at long off for 2 and Tommy Coughlan offered no-shot to a ball. After skipper Lenny Cooper was snaffled in the gully to complete Duggan's 5 for, it was left to Greg Hodge and Paul McGee to sneak past the 150-mark and another bonus point to take our days efforts to a paltry 4. Macca ended up with 19 but Bar were finally dismissed for 162 with just 9 minutes left for play. In truth you could question the boys not being able to last out another 3 overs, but in fairness it could have ended 30 minutes earlier.

So the boys ended up with just 4 points but stay in 3rd place, 6 points of new leaders Welwyn Garden City who beat our fellow leaders at start of play Radlett. Despite the 1s performing less than magnificently, the same could not be said of the rest of the club on Saturday as it was a clean sweep for the rest of the boys.

The 2s travelled to fierce rivals Welwyn Garden City in a no quarter given encounter and after inserting them, the 2s started with promise as they had the hosts tottering at 4 for 60. Some decent middle-order batting ensued and Bar needed to chase 220 in 47 overs. Of the bowlers, Mark Taylor took 4 for 63 and Michael John took 3 for 57 as their long spells kept Bar in the hunt.

After skipper Dave Pett departed for 0, his second successive failure at the top of the innings, it was up to Addy Mehta and Ian Henderson, who himself had been searching for a bit of form to address the balance and quieten the rather vicious wicketkeeper Daniel Blacktopp, and quieten him they did.

Addy and Squeak both completed their 50's in double quick time as they took advantage of the friendly fire and the shouts from behind the timbers only ensured the boys concentration remained in tact and although they both departed in quick succession, the innings had a fine momentum and this was only to improve with Mark 'Sir George' Taylor striding out to the wicket. Despite having more scouts out in the outfield than the Welwyn and Hatfield Scout troop, George timed the ball to perfection as he picked the gaps, made the boundaries resemble an U-9 match and his 50 rattled up in just 29 balls and Welwyn were as good as beaten.

George departed for an excellent 32-ball 53 and the win was in the bag and although Dave Breeze gave Daniel Blacktopp a chance to appeal for real as he offered him a stumping on a plate, it was up to Jessie Tailor and Johnny Pett to bring home the bacon and the 30 points with a 4 wicket win over our illustrious hosts.

Sadly at the end, Mr Blacktopp showed his impetuous side as he ripped into the batters, Addy Mehta especially for being a tad lucky, despite not giving a chance, and then decided to pick on a unarmed flower bed. Maybe he was looking for both Paul and Dean Barker to fetch him back to the Bar but alas they had long gone.

The 3s entertained Old Camdenians down the school and they too chased down a big total. Thanks to some dogged bowling from Neil Raisborough (3 for 65) and Rupert Pyrah (3 for 70) a strong late, middle order effort made sure the boys were chasing 210 for the 30 points. Rob Daley 68 and a hard hitting 73* from John Lewis ensure the target was reached with some relative ease and this was confirmed as there were still some 20-odd balls remaining. Another fine win for the boys and they keep their top 3 or 4 slot as they now enter the second half of the season.

The 4s powered their way to their 4th win in 5 matches as they won at Sawbridgeworth against their 4th eleven. Sawbo managed to get 213 for 3 off of 53 overs but again a few lads chipped in but it was Julian Brauer who took the plaudits with a fine 81*.

However, the finest and tightest win was probably achieved down with the 5th eleven as they toppled the league leaders, Hatfield Crusaders in a remarkable game of cricket. The 5s batted first and were licking their wounds a little as they could only rustle up 148. Steve Moore hit a good 59 but with the leaders confident of another scalp, they hadn't accounted for Mr Guyantha, or Mr J as he is known. He took 7 for 44 and the crowning moment was the last ball of the innings was a thick edge which allegedly flew off the bat only to be held by a diving Isaac Moore which had he not have clawed it in, the game would have been the Crusaders. A great win for Steve Moores' men and this will give them one hell of a boost as games are starting to run out and promotion is now a real possibility.

Sunday saw 10-man Bar travel to Harrow in a Chess Valley league game and unfortunately the 2s had to concede as we were decimated by injury, festival cricket and all the other things that go with Sundays after a heavy league campaign the day before.

The hosts won the toss and batted first and made 255-8 off of 45 overs on by all accounts a small boundary. Of the bowlers, Sam Titmus should be a proud young man as he nipped out 2 for 24 and the Wild Wing of John Erroll accounted for 2 victims in his 2 for 29.

Bar set off in a hurry again and it was Sir George (Mark Taylor) who blazed the trail with another whirlwind innings as his 60 this time came off remarkable 30 balls as this time he made the boundary look more like a back garden. The rest of the boys chipped in. Nesan Jeyaratnam made 34, Tommy Coughlan 33 and the consistent Addy Mehta struck another 70 as Bar snuck an unlikely victory with 11 balls remaining. A word for Gavin Baker mind, as word has it he is still driving around the roads around Sudbury Hill looking for the ground!

Next week, the 1s have another big weekend. On Saturday they entertain Hertford and they will be keen to get back on the winning track and atone for some rather poor words uttered by Hertford in the press after their opening day defeat in the league, as they weren't overly fond of Kash Weeraratne. Hopefully we can put that down to an opening day defeat and sheer disappointment. Sunday sees a great chance to avenge North Mymms as we entertain them again, this time in the Becker Cup. Mymms were a good team in my eyes, but Sunday will be another day and they cannot have 6 men out on the fence at anytime in this competition, unlike Saturday.

The 2s are down the school for a 1-off fixture against Hemel Hempstead in the league. This is due to the Leagues fixture computer not being able to accommodate all the fixtures where required. With Hemel struggling, Dave Pett will be confident of a decent showing. After two failings opening up, is Dave the man to open the innings with the strength in depth or are you just there as a pinch hitter and don't mind losing an early wicket? We will have to wait and see.

The 3s travel to Leverstock Green 2s who will prove a hard nut top crack, but again with the strong availability available to Rocky, providing he is back, will mean the boys will travel in confident mood.

The 4s are now on a real roll after a really ropey start but will be very confident of taking the spoils as they entertain Northampton Exiles 2s – this being on the little pitch down the School and finally the 5s who had the mother of ropey starts are travel to Northampton Exiles 3s and they are looking to beat the next three sides and if they do then promotion to Division 12 is a real possibility.

Until next time have a good couple of weeks, remember the futures bright, the futures Potters Bar

Regards
Fred