

## **WILL SHOWS VAN DER HEART AS BAR WIN LAST BALL THRILLER**

### **Saturday**

**Sawbridgeworth 215 all out off 60 overs**

**Potters Bar 217 for 7 in 53 overs**

Bar made it 8 wins out of 9 completed matches with a nervy 3 wicket win over third placed Sawbridgeworth, which basically ends their chances of catching us for the chance to play Premier League cricket next season.

On a horrible morning and after a week's incessant rain, Bar won a good toss and asked the visitors to bat first which offered a little more assistance to the bowlers than the previous week. After a tentative start and a regulation drop at 2<sup>nd</sup> slip 3<sup>rd</sup> ball of the day, Bar finally broke through as skipper Danny Wilson hit a low full toss straight to Adam Norman at mid off and the visitors were 28 for 1.

The Sawbo run rate made for some pretty turgid stuff as they struggled against the line and length of Bar skipper Lenny Cooper and the aggression of Nick Walker and it wasn't long before Herts U-17 skipper Tom Small was walking back to the pavilion as he was strangled down the legside for 18. 43 for 2 saw the 'helmet less' Will Jones come to the wicket and he struggled to lay a bat on anything Walks bowled at him, much to his frustration. Jones' misery was brought to an end as Paul McGee had him caught at midwicket for 14 and Sawbo were 73 for 3.

It was soon 77 for 4, three balls in truth, as Marshall got a thin tickle to the keeper off the fired up Nick Walker for 22. As Bar were cranking through the overs at a quick rate, Richardson and Rudkin batted well up until the lunch break and saw no further loss as the visitors were 108 for 4 from an amazing 42 overs. If it weren't for some "fannyng around" with helmet changes we could well have bowled 44 overs before lunch.

After lunch Sawbo picked up the pace and with Rudkin and Richardson batting quite beautifully. Rudkin played some exquisite straight and off drives, whereas Richardson was more brute force as he struck boundary after boundary. Saying that though, Richardson was dropped on 32 with a sitter of a chance at cover and should also have been run out on 19, but for a poor throw.

The pair brought up their 50 partnership in a steady 80 balls and this was the sign for Sawbo to really go for it in the final 15 overs. 14 runs came off Paul McGee's 15<sup>th</sup> and final over of the day as the runs were flowing like a good night in the bar and Andrew Richardson brought up his 50 in just 61 balls. This also brought up the 100 partnership in 130 balls. At the other end Rudkin was playing a lovely hand and defied his previous performances against the Bar by bringing up a classy 50 in 75 balls.

Alas with the run chase on, wickets were always going to fall. The 200 came up with 27 balls left of the innings but with 6 wickets in hand; a challenging total was more than achievable. Alas wickets tumbled quicker than a pack of cards as Rudkin went for 59 as he was caught behind off Nick Walker. Rudkin's 59 came in 81 balls and contained 2 maximums and 7 fours. Then the carnage came in large lumps.

Cunningham went for a 6 ball duck as Len Cooper re-arranged his middle stump for 0 and Paul Reed was run out in farcical circumstances for a second ball duck. Richardson's luck ran out as

he was caught by Will van der Maat off of Walker for a fine knock of 67 from 74 balls. He struck 3 sixes and 4 fours. Simon Greenall was run out without facing and then Joe Hurst was caught at long off by Adam Norman again off the bowling of Len Cooper for 2. Sawbo had gone from a promising 206 for 4 to being dismissed for 215. They lost an amazing 6 wickets in just 25 balls and scored just 9 in the process.

Of the bowlers, Len Cooper took 4 for 67 from 20 overs toil and Nick Walker, still not fit enough to tear in bowled excellently taking 3 for 48 from 18 overs.

So Bar wanted 216 to win in a minimum 50 overs on a pitch which was flattening out a touch. Skipper Len Cooper wanted a light roller on it. This isn't Lords Len one wag replied. The difference between a light roller and a heavy roller was in fact whether Dave Lawrence was sat on it, claimed another.

Bar started off like a train and the opening partnership of Steve Gale and Nesan Jeyaratnam found the ropes on a regular basis as the opening attack was a little bit on the friendly side. The youngsters brought up their 3<sup>rd</sup> 50 partnership in just 54 balls as Bar were eating up the runs in a frenetic style. Sawbo brought on their 2 aces in the pack of Richardson and Cunningham, both ex-Jamaica bowlers and they didn't stem the tide as Steve Gale cut and drove his way to a majestic fourth league 50 of the season. It came in just 49 balls and the visitors were becoming more and more fractious.

On 99 and 1 shy of equalling our best opening stand in the league, Nesan Jeyaratnam was brilliantly caught at slip by Rudkin in a bizarre dismissal which appeared to come off the back of Nesan's bat after an attempted sweep turned and bit a touch. 99 for 2 was soon 118 for 4 as Bar collapsed as Steve Gale went in soft fashion for a lovely 64 as a change of ends benefited Cunningham. Lanka de Silva was adjudged leg before for just 6 and Nick Walker went for 12 in a strange innings right on the cusp of the tea break. As brilliant as Nick's innings was in the opening game against Sawbo where he blasted 116\* off 57 balls, this innings was everything as bad. Swipe after swipe followed a soft catch to mid-off and saw Bar look in a moody position at 118 for 4.

Tea arrived 6 balls later and Bar had progressed to 124 for 4 with last week's centurion Chris Stead on 2 and skipper Len Cooper on 0. Bar needed 92 more to win off of a minimum of 23 overs. Drama after tea saw a fired up Richardson bowl a hostile spell which saw Steady retire hurt with a badly bruised hand and Bar were in effect 125 for 5 and against vocal and fired up opponents it was far from a cake walk.

Adam Norman joined the skipper Len Copper and slowly started to chase the runs down as the tiring Richardson was coming to the end of a fine spell and the boys were content to see off Cunningham at the other. The 150 came up in the 37<sup>th</sup> over and with careful batting and putting the bad ball away the pair brought up their 50 partnership in a watchful 95 balls.

Sadly skipper Len Cooper went to a good running catch in the deep by Paul James for a fine 32 and he was swiftly joined in the hutch by Adam Norman as he went to an uncharacteristic slog off the innocuous bowling of Jones for 27 and Bar were struggling at 185 for 6. Things got worse as Dave Breeze went for 2 as he was adjudged lb mister this brought together Dean Dass, who'd had a shocker in the field with young Will van der Maat. Bar needed 15 to win in 11 minutes with the overrate starting to resemble the South African's from the previous day at Lords.

The pressure was lifted as Dassy cleared the ropes and hit the scoreboard for a mighty 6 penneth and with 5 minutes to go, 1 over in reality with the countless conferences and field changes, Bar needed 10. A dot ball was then followed up with a scampered 2 to deep midwicket. Dassy then blocked the third ball of the over then hammered the 4<sup>th</sup> through extra cover for four to bring Bar within 4 of a win. A scrambled leg bye saw young 'Vanders' on strike who calmly launched the ball over and wide of mid on for four glorious runs and see Bar 48 points clear of Bishops Stortford and claim their 8<sup>th</sup> win out of 10 games.

Fair play for young Will who was smacked in the chest from a short and quick ball from a fired up Richardson but showed plenty of heart and ability to step up to the plate and contribute to a 'Murray' good win against a vastly improved Sawbo side. However that bogey side tag struck again and its now 8 straight wins over them.

The 2s had a great comeback win as they won in dramatic fashion at Old Albanian at the weekend with a tense 14 run win. After being inserted Bar laboured to 126 all out in 37 overs, due in the main to a fine 50 from Mark Taylor. Matt Evans made a decent 20-odd and with a small total to bowl at Bar needed to take wickets.

Plenty of drop catches started the innings off on a poor footing but Bar stuck at it and Mark Taylor's excellent 6 for 39 from 21 overs and Chris Boyce 3-38 saw them bowl the hosts out 14 shy and gain a vital and much needed win. The 10<sup>th</sup> and match winning wicket saw "Marlene" remove the off stump of the number 11 and some fine celebrating by the boys.

The 3s are improving rapidly as they had the better of a draw against a team which whacked them by 9 wickets last year. The boys racked up 197 for 9 from their 53 over allocation thanks to a swashbuckling 69 from Andy Hughes. Southgate Compton were constantly losing wickets and were fortunate to hold on 9 down for 156. Rizzo's boys will be disappointed that they had 8 overs at the last pair but couldn't remove them but 17 points is a fine result.

With the 4s rained off due to the school being under water, the 5s played at Stevenage and it was to prove another bad day at the office as they were skittled for just 54, ironically 1 more than the week before. The hosts tapped them off for the loss of just 2 wickets but it's looking a grim tale of woe for Colin's boys as they haven't won or drawn a game for 2½ months.

Sunday saw no 'cricket' for the club but we were fortunate to hold a 'pub competition' where the local pubs in the parish did battle. The sun shone, fun was had by all and sundry, the bar was nigh on drunk dry as everyone had an enjoyable day. The efforts from all concerned contributed to a highly successful and profitable day and thanks in the main go out to Mark Taylor, Mike Rowlands and Colin Titmuss for the organisation of the day, which went so smoothly. The pair of Matt Palmer and Dave Lawrence on the BBQ saw a roaring success and the bar staff are now asking for a fortnights leave as they were under the cosh somewhat!

Next year should see a return and a settled date as all and sundry had a ball. For the record the final was between The Woodman from Wildhill and the dark horses from the White Hart from South Mimms. The Woodman gained the win and hopefully they will be back next year to defend the king of pubs crown.

Next week sees the 1s travel to Stevenage with a weakened side which sees as many as 4 players unavailable for one reason or another. Sunday sees the return of the Chess Valley league as we travel to Chingford. The 2s after their vital win will be looking to follow it up with a home game against local side Cockfosters. The 3s travel to St Margaretsbury to play their 2s, the 4s entertain

pavilion less Hatch End 2s and the 5s looking to end a sequence of 10 without a win travel to Berkhamstead 3s.

So until next time, have a good week, the future is bright, contrary to popular belief, the futures Potters Bar

Regards  
Fred