

August Newsletter

After a disappointing start to the season, the 1st XI were now enjoying a rich vein of form, but holidays intervened in the next round of matches and not only were we missing some players but this scribe also abandoned his post for a couple of weeks. In this time we lost at home to Catherine de Barnes, but not without putting up a good fight. And if the loss hurt, which it should, then the moral of the story is to practice even more to improve performance. We all know Gary Player's famous quote "The more I practice the luckier I get". Another example is when Frank Dick was head of UK athletics, he stressed that the performance of every team member was crucial at team events, such as the World Championships. For example, he told Daley Thompson that only a win from him was acceptable. But for the youngster who just scraped in to his first ever final, the message was different. Rather than finish 8th, he must strive to be 7th or better because the points he could accumulate were a bonus. In Frank's mind, he expected Daley to win so couldn't improve on that. As for the youngster, he would earn less points than Daley but anything better than 8th would secure unexpected points.

Following on from Catherine de Barnes we then had a tie with Moseley in the midweek league and having been surprisingly beaten by Winchcombe in the second Saturday match of the season we had the opportunity for revenge when we visited them on 18 July. "Don't get angry get even" is an old saying and we did more than that by scoring 315 for 6 which included a magnificent century for Chris Barber, which was well deserved and reflected his outstanding batting performances all season. We then bowled them out for 94.

Rain put paid to what would have been the last midweek fixture of the season, away to Bourneville and so all the attention was focused on the next Saturday fixture at home to Norton Lindsey. We lost at their ground in our third match of the season, but since then we've improved and so it was with great optimism that we welcomed them to Tanworth Lane. Despite torrential rain on the Friday and some sharp showers on the Saturday morning, the covers did their job and the game went ahead.

Norton Lindsey batted first and got off to a good start, reaching 48 without loss. Kully and Andy Turnbull then took 3 wickets in quick succession and this changed the nature of the game. Chris Barber then weighed in with 5 wickets, his first "5 for" in the first XI and John Robb then called curtains to the opposition innings with the last 2 wickets. Norton Lindsey were all out for 114 and once again the bowling attack were ruthless in their demolition of the opposition batsmen.

In reply, Chris and Fred opened the batting and as is their way settled into a steady rhythm before Fred lost his wicket, to be replaced by James. Out of sympathy for all the previous days rain we then got a bit bogged down and struggled through the 80's.

When James fell it was time for KP to demonstrate his silky skills and he and Chris saw us safely over the line, with Chris getting his 50 on the way. It was

great to get a win over very accomplished opposition, but the nature of the comfortable win was beyond our wildest dreams. We were now back up to 3rd in the table and only 3 points behind the team in second. If we can maintain this run of form then there is the danger that we could be promoted. And well done Chris for another sterling performance. We've all heard of Hawaii-5-0, but the sequel is even better as Chris takes the lead role in Tanworth-5-0 (5 wickets and a 50 with the bat. Fantastic)

But, was the casting premature? Events at our next match, away to Rowington, certainly threw some more nominations into the hat.

Batting first, we scored reasonably well with the highlights being 66 for Fred and 58 for KP, who was joined near the end by Rory, to form an excellent partnership. We were ultimately all out for 200, which was a reasonable score, but it would need some tight bowling if we were going to subdue the opposition batsmen.

And so it was Team Turnbull who were nominated to open the bowling, with Rory at one end and Andy at the other. Just before the resumption after tea, Martin Barber was very vociferous in calling for a fast start and for everyone to be focused on the job in hand. And he was not disappointed, as not only did we subdue the batsmen, we absolutely intimidated them, so that they were running for cover, like lemmings over the cliff face, trying to find refuge from the onslaught.

Rory delivered the first ball of the innings which the batsman middled and sent soaring towards the boundary. Was it going to be a 4 or a 6? As it turned out it was neither, as David Williams, in his first match for the 1st XI, took off like a goalkeeper making a save in the top left hand corner of his goal, to clutch the ball safely in his hand. What a catch and he was rightly mobbed by his team mates. The batsman trudged off in disbelief. What a start. But, there was a dangerous precedent. On the handful of occasions previously when I've seen a dismissal with the first ball, the batting team fought back and eventually won. I hoped this pattern would not continue.

I needn't have worried as the brothers absolutely dominated and at one stage Rowington were 25 for 7 (5 wickets for Rory and 2 for Andy). With nothing to lose Rowington started to swing the bat and it was a relief when Andy took a catch off the bowling of Chris, to claim wicket number 8. The tail continued to wag however and so Rory was called back into action and duly claimed his 6th wicket. Rowington continued to edge closer to our total but events came to an end when James claimed the final wicket with their score on 142.

6 wickets, 17 runs and the match ball for Rory. And more importantly, 22 points for the team, which puts us a clear second in the table.

There are 4 more Saturdays of competition and a lot of cricket still to be played, but we're on a high. Can it be sustained? You'll find out in next months newsletter.

It was also a good day for the 2nd XI who recorded a fine win against local rivals Woodbourne. Could this be the precedent for a winning streak? Let's hope so.

As always, full details including fixture list can be obtained on our website www.tachcc.co.uk or on twitter: @tachcc. We are also now on Facebook

Alastair Turnbull