

BIDEFORD V TAVISTOCK AWAY

LAST GAME OF THE SEASON.

AND OF SEASON REVIEW

But first an amazing coincidence for those who have yet picked it up'
There were two really important games yesterday, Barton against Bottom-dweller and us. If one could win and the other lose, salvation could come their way. The scores were:-

Abbotskerswell 184 Barton 94
Tavistock 184 Bideford 94

Now what odds you could have got I do not know, but as Barton were ahead of us, Division B beckons for another year.

Yesterday's Match

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Driving down the A30 to reach Tavvy yesterday I went through such a torrential down pour that I could scarcely see the car in front. It stopped raining just as I reached the Tavvy outskirts and it appeared that the ground had only a light shower and play was die to start on time.

Paul H won the toss and elected to bowl - quite correctly in my judgement with Alex Hannam and Steve Bond opening. Paul H caught a quick drive from their overseas very early. However the other opener and their no 3 galloped away at nearly seven an over. Michael Lemmings and Jamie Lathwell Michael picked up 1 - 34 in his 10

It was however the combination of Paul H and Jack Ford which dragged the innings back under some control. Paul bowling off his short run took 5-20 off 7.2 and Jack 2-25 off his 10. Martin Stewart bowling 6 at the end also kept it tight. So Tavvy all out for 184 was a target that should have been in our sights, but for reasons I shall suggest in the next section I didn't really fancy it.

Tom Brend had hurt his hand and clearly couldn't open the batting, so another new partnership of Alex H and Ben Perry started., However Alex didn't last long, and again Paul H was in at No 3, for too early and he also got a good delivery and we were at 5-2 again. James Ford and Ben Perry battled diligently against the very controlled pace attack and lasted a long time, but first Ben and then James were out, James making the highest score of 22. Jack Ford was given out LBW to a sweep that one of the Tavvy fielders afterwards told me he had clearly hit. Jamie Lathwell came in earlier than usual, presumably to up the scoring rate, but that didn't work. Ollie H looked a bit more like his old self for far too short a time and was out for 19, Martin Stewart played sensibly for 12, but again extras topped our score with 23.

Another disappointing day

Could do Much better (extract from pretty well all my school reports)

So how do we judge the season. There have been some highs and too many lows. We started at Home v Cornwood with no points and our last home match was against Hatherleigh when we also got no points. 6 from each of those would have saved us, so of course would beating Ivybridge at home - that loss probably the lowest point. As to Highs, well we won 4 matches, beating Barton twice (how ironical is that bearing in mind that they were the ones who went up at our expense) but lost too many. We had three DLS matches and without question we have the best scoreboard on all the grounds that I have visited this year. Unfortunately none of those matches were close enough to bring any DLS excitement.

So were did it go wrong. I suppose the honest answer is Paul's back. He is heart of the team. In bowling batting fielding catching and captaincy he is absolutely essential and the season changed during and after his injury. Many of the players seemed to lose confidence as the season went on and ended up as shells of the players we know they can be. Unfortunately we are in desperate need of another player to step up to the PH task to help take the strain. The problems evolved around the opening batsman and the opening bowling. At the batting end there seemed to be little opportunity for scoring, more a case of saving one's wicket, and on the opening bowling, whilst early wickets were available, far too many runs were scored early on - see the early overs against Plympton and Tavvy. Another result was that there was no set, ideal opening pair either batting or bowling. Some of our younger batsman have not been able to show the quality they have, or renew the success had we had last year.

If one wants to look at the stats to see where it went wrong – Barton won the same number of games, and lost the same number of games, and had exactly the same number of batting points but had 11 more bowling points.

Really there is not a great deal more that can be said. I am not going to repeat the stats for the team, they are readily available on many sites – and of course the best performance trophies will be awarded this coming Friday. Ben Perry has been a very important member of the club and I hope he has enjoyed his stay with us. He is the highest scorer for us with a best score of 94.

It has to be accepted that the loss of players over last winter has affected us. I certainly hope that there will be no more, and that other failures in the North Devon area will encourage others to give us more flexibility and durability. The thinking must start now.

All in all it has however been fun. We've travelled to places I haven't been before, met new friends, rekindled other friendships. I have enjoyed the year and I do hope everyone else has - it is after all the reason we turn up week after week.

Next year

We will be in Division B, visiting places we have been regularly like Ipplepen and Chudleigh and places where I have been but not with Bideford like Kilminster. I also have never been to Cullompton. Now is the time to start panning for next year - not March. Next year will be my friend the scorer last year as scorer so please send in your applications - it is a great position but time is passing and we desperately need new blood in the score box (not literally). I will give all the help we can.

The Quill.