

2018 Season A Division Devon League

2nd Match 12th May away at Paignton

So here we are today after pouring rain yesterday visiting Paignton – a new ground to me. After the tense excitement of last week's game, won on the last ball of the match and now with the final confirmation that there will be no overseas this year, a wonderful opportunity of all those who aspire to the 1st XL to stand up to the plate. Today Fred King and Josh Atkinson are unable to travel bringing in Michael Lemmings and Steve Bond for their first senior games of the season.

It is a little known fact that Gilbert & Sullivan opera 'The Pirates of Penzance' was first performed in a small theatre called 'The Bijou' at Paignton late in an evening sometime in the 1880s to protect the world copyright. Little did Bideford know that Pirates were awaiting to board the good ship SS Bideford as she seemed to be heading to port with all the the spoils of victory – only for those spoils to be taken away by the boarding Pirates.

Bideford, through Captain Paul Heard won the toss and put Paignton in. He himself had little luck, but Alex Hannam, opening in place of Fred King apparently walking the dog, seemed much more back to his old self. In an impressive spell he bowled with hostility and completed eight overs taking one for 26 with two maidens. Steve Bond taking over from PH was even more impressive. In 9 overs he took 4 for 33. Martin Stewart got two for 34 and Jack Ford got three for 30. The Paignton batting managed to get 172, which was a trifle disappointing as at one stage they were 68-5, the last five wickets adding over 100 and crucially stands of 31 and 30 for the 8th and 9th wickets proved Bideford's undoing. The fielding and catching was excellent with just one catch falling to ground so far as I could see. - but I was a long way away from the action.

The speed of the game was such that Paignton were all out before the 3.00 pm water mark, so that Bideford had to bat for 16 overs before tea could be taken. James Ford and Tom Brend started cautiously against a steady attack which was, let us not forget their attack of last year which humbled Sidmouth twice in the premier division. James F bringing all his years of experience to bear, and Tom B showing deep levels of patience took Bideford to tea on 45 – 0. All was going well until the score got to 76. TB was adjudged LBW for a hard fought 29 (the 4th highest score of the match) and thereafter the innings began to unravel. JF continued on his dogged way but no one could stay with him. When Jack joined his father it was clear that something dramatic had to be done (130-6) and James F started some hard hitting which saw him depart for a wonderful 76 – but the hopes of the team died with him. However there was still some fighting to be done for points and a fine short but explosive knock by Jack F of 16 (the only double digit innings for Bideford) got us at least an 8th point for 152. But alas, the innings died at 154 with SS Bideford boarded and ransacked.

However in the first two matches we have achieved 26 points and shown that we have the talent and potential to take on the best – talking of which next week is Torquay at home. Paignton may have been relegated from the premiership with Paignton last year but the view is that Torquay is probably the strongest of the bunch, so it will be all hands to the mast – which this space.

The Quill