

## 2018 Season A Division Devon League

v Torquay away 21<sup>st</sup> July.

**Into the Lion's den** (an allusion to the story of Dameal in the Bible)

First I am soory that this is a day later than I would hve liked. However in these days of intense heat, the old people (i.e. me) need to keep cool and be provided with copious liquids, and to exercise the dogs I need to be out early in the morning – Sunday. I also felt that I should support Wester Storm at Taunton against Yorkshire Diamonds – WS won by 7 wickets with 5 overs to go and Heather Knight scored a splendid 97 – interesting though there were three leg spinners on show – one of whom trapped the Western S opener leg before with the first ball of the innings.

Now some of you out there might be thinking at this point - ‘what is the old fool on about know’ - but bear with me I will try to get there in the end.

Torquay, as they showed both when tney visited us, and in the showing in the A division this year aare really head and shoulders above everyone else in the Division and on the back some deeply disappointing performances recently, even the most optimistic of us – if truth be – did not expect to win.

So I arrived at the ground where I had last visited in 1971 to see Sonmerset v Surrey in the John Player League. (For those of you a fvev years younger than me John Player were based i98n Nottingham and were manufacturers of cigarettes – and they sponsored the first limited over first class county league in the 1970s)., It seemed to me – without being iunkind that some of the facilities had not been touched or improved since then!

So going to the top team in that situation was really going into the Lion's den (I told you I would get there) but in my view (perhaps fanciful) we did not get the mauling that we may have exoected and to my mind there were some distinct bonuses to come out of it.

Paul Heard called correctly and inserted Torquay. Fred King and Akex Hannam – in the continuing absence of Paul Heard as an opener – opened with pace and hostility – and Alex managed to get their South African openere caught at mid off fairly early. However it was clear that Torquay intended to get a move on and edges flew everywhere – except to hand. Jamie Lathwell tempted the other opener to edge to the keeper. This brought together their two foremost, premier league batsman, who proceeded to put on 191 runs for the third wicket, until their number 4 was run out on 99. (Note to wicket keeper – you should take the bails off on the first attempt not the second!). However their captain sailed on to 114. Where, I hear you saying is the bonus from this. Well, undoubtedly the two batsman in question were a class apart and at one stage the predicted score went up to 378 – but the bowlers managed to

drag it back to under 300. Well, Paul Heard managed to bowl 10 overs – not hos most hostile it is true – none of the main bowlers went for more than 6 runs an over and Jamie L and AH got to wickets.

So were does the Western Storm fit into this. I mentiobned the leg spinners. Well, for the second time at least young (but not so young as I thought) Cameron Atkinson, coming on when the batsman were trying to up the scoring rate bowled 6 overs and took to for 23. Oustanding.

So off to our innings. James Ford got a fast middle stump yorker second ball – not much he could do about it – probably not much he could have done about it 30 years ago. Tom Brend and Ollie Hannam then batted sensibly, taking runs when on offer and put on 35 u7ntil TB – to some surprise missed a straight one. Alex H joined his brother and again looked as if there was a big score in him – but a genmtle suggestion might be if you can't get thje boundaries try to take some ones or twos. Ollie looked good and took runs off the hittable balls and was at 43 when that front pad again came into play (atechnical issue?) Of the others, there were a few nice shots, but it was Fred King, again, who showed what a good batsman he is and could be – another 50 with 7 fours and 2 sixes. The score of 192 was of course well short of Torquay's but it showed again that all the players have the ability, we just need some luck and forn it all to come together at the same time. Looking at it realistically I think the result was pretty much what one would have exected but if we play like that inj the next 4 matches we should have 4 victories. All the other teams in the foot of the division sufferred similar (or worse) fates so not much damage was done.

So onto the next matches. Next Saturday Ivybridge – the bottom team at home and vice presidents' day so a good win is a must, but after the mauling that we prevented last week I have every hope and expectation – let Ivybridge come to the Lion.

The Quill