

Devon Cricket League A Division

Season 2019

Match No 8 v Hatherleigh Away

'Crushed again' Reginald Bunthorne to Lady Jane, Act ii, *Patience* by Gilbert and Sullivan. (for the non cognoscenti Gilbert and Sullivan wrote 13 comic operas in the Victorian era, *Patience* is a satyr on Oscar Wilde and his friends).

First an apology for the lateness of this report. It is a huge coincidence that the scorer has suffered the same arthritic injury that the scorer has. Such can be the pain on what is not considered a grave injury is such that even sitting at a word processor is agony. Certainly the both of us hope for an improvement as driving is mindblowingly awful.

Crushed again is perhaps a little harsh when one remembers the age of the team, the experience of Hatherleigh and the unavailability of at least 3 1st XL players. With Paul Heard still injured – but it was good to see him at the ground – Chris Luxton came in to replace the unavailable Jack Ford, with Tom Brend captaining the side. Tom got off to a good start with winning the toss. Whether batting first was a good choice or not I don't know, but probably the tactic of trying to get as many batting points as possible first out was a sound judgement call. Tom again opened with Ben Perry and it was quite clear from the outset that this was going to be a struggle. Whether there was movement in the pitch or in the air, or whether the bowling was a nagging line, I have no idea, with the score box where it was (as far away from the bar as it could be) it was impossible to discern that. Tom having scored one elegant boundary played a rather rash stroke in the 3rd over and was caught at gully. I am sure in a million years Tom would not play again, but the pressure at the top of the innings must be very great after the last few matches. This brought James Ford to the wicket and with Ben they nudged and nurdled for a stand of 36 (the highest of the innings) before James fell to the first really aggressive shot he played. This was going to be the story of the innings. Ollie H, James Hayter and Alex H all came and went while Ben with his head down kept at one end as best as he could. It was rather ironic after my comments few weeks ago, that the first time the ball hit his pads, the umpires finger was up almost before the appeal. (he might think about taking guard outside the return crease. Ben made 25, the highest of the innings. James L clouted 10, and it is a credit to Steve Bond (13*) and Cameron Atkinson that they saw out the last few overs in a stand of 14 to deny Hatherleigh one bowling point.

After the usual Hatherleigh tea, it was clear from the outset that this was not going to be Bideford's day. A relatively straight forward catch went down in the early overs (with two more to follow), and in 23.4 overs Hatherleigh were home and dry for the loss of no wickets.

This was always going to be a tricky game – after all Hatherleigh aspire to the premier division again – and was not on my list of 'must win' matches, but it was sad to see our bowling attack quite so blunted.

It was nice, I must say, for the older ones of us to see Chris Luxton opening the bowling – makes me think of the good old days, winning draws, Chris bowling 13 overs off the reel with 8 maidens and very few runs – Ah those were the days!

These days are more important right now, particularly next week, home against Tavvy, very important. Hope the scorer's knee lets him get these

The Quill.