

Salix v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 16 September, Chiswick House. Salix won toss. Sunny, 23C

Lost by 5 wickets

Gentlemen of West London			Salix				
H. Patel	c Padmore	b Kulasingam	17	Henig	c Kota	b Dubey	26
Kumar	c Kulasingam	b Padmore	45	†Lamont		b Dubey	5
Kota	c Ilangakoon	b Kulasingam	24	Ilangakoon	ret. hurt		56
Krishna	run out		18	Juma	c Basker	b Namilikonda	35
Chatharaju	c Sarif	b Ilangakoon	20	*Padmore	not out		29
Basker	run out		10	Kulasingam	st Dubey	b Kota	14
Caveney	not out		21	Sarif	lbw	b Krishna	0
Gulati	c Ilangakoon	b kakumanu	5	Kakumanu	not out		3
†Dubey	not out		8	Spillane, Balasubramaniam and Collins dnb			
†Namilikonda and *S. Patel	dnb						
Extras	b5 lb2 w8 nb1		16	Extras	b11 lb4 w4 nb1		20
Total	7 wickets	35 overs	184	Total	5 wickets	33 overs	188
FoW: 40, 90, 93, 122, 133, 158, 174			FoW: 17, 44, 132, 165, 170				
Bowling: Balasubramaniam 7-0-30-0, Kakumanu 7-0-45-1			Bowling: Dubey 7-0-36-2, Kumar 5-0-30-0, Gulati 6-0-19-0,				
Kulasingam 7-1-29-2, Padmore 7-1-23-1, Ilangakoon 7-0-50-1			H. Patel 2-0-16-0, Chatharaju 2-0-14-0, Namilikonda 4-1-22-1,				
			Kota 4-0-24-1, Krishna 3-0-12-1				



Victorious captain - 29 not out

Salix deservedly beat the Gents for the first time in eight games, overcoming a competitive 184 with two overs and five wickets in hand. They paced their innings perfectly and were always up with the required rate. Having cannily hunted down targets in the last six games, the visitors found how difficult it can be to set one: 184 would win many games, but not against a top six of this calibre, on such a perfect batting pitch. They did not help themselves though, bowling too short and having a poor day in the field.

This was the third Gents visit to this sumptuous venue, with only Basker, Caveney, Dubey and S. Patel having played here before. Eight Gents and four Salix returned from the 2017 game. On a beautiful day, Gents were inserted. H. Patel, Kumar and Kota took the score to 90 for only two down, Kumar batting attractively, but it took 20 overs against accurate bowling and highly committed fielding.

The top seven made double figures, but after Kota edged to slip only Chatharaju threatened to dominate, taking three 4s off an Ilangakoon over. Some powerful batsmen were underused, mainly because the batting order was rightly based on who was on the ground at 1pm. Late acceleration was welcome, but Salix seemed confident at tea.

One diving stop by Collins incurred a trip to Charing Cross Hospital and ten stitches in his right hand, but he had saved four runs. Similar drives in the second innings would result in one dance over the ball on the boundary, one lazy attempt to trap it with the right foot and one prolonged speech about how far away it was rather than, as is traditional, an attempt to stop it. Collins was later summoned back by his tough skipper as he owed his match fee and had the key to the pavilion. D.R. Jardine lives!

The confidence exuded by Salix was not misplaced. Lamont was bowled Dubey prodding forward but Henig rattled six 4s in nine overs before driving the same bowler to mid-off. Enter Yovaan Ilangakoon and Sajjad Juma, who were out of the top drawer, hitting nine and four 4s in a 15-over stand. Ilangakoon retired hurt after a hamstring injury incurred turning for a sharp second and when Juma soon fell off a mistimed reverse sweep off Namilikonda Gents had brief hopes of victory. But veterans Kulasingam and Padmore were now together and posted 33 in only four overs, including a remarkable Kulasingam 6 over long-on off Kota. The fielding improved as it dawned on the Gents that defeat was nigh, and Kota and Krishna deserved their wickets, but captain Padmore steered Salix home after a hard, very fair game.

One in a row



Salix enjoy the highlights

The first paragraph of the last report I wrote back in June reads as follows: “Gentle Reader, you may by now be tiring of my attempts to reinterpret defeat at King’s House and, to be honest, I wouldn’t blame you. It is fair to say though that this game (and last week’s) although ending in defeat carried some hope for better things to come. Anyway to the events of Sunday last...” Well it took a bit longer than I hoped but it finally did all come together in time to save me from having to describe another shellacking and us from experiencing a winless UK season. Most of the elements for Sunday’s win were indeed already in place. We had only one debutante, Saj, but we were also bolstered by the welcome return of CK.

Well that was the idea but when we started in the field we were only nine with the above-mentioned pair still not with us. We were forced to field helped by one of the Gents and an elderly substitute fielder who will be described only by the appellation YM. Sai and Bala set the tone with good opening spells – lots of playing and missing, few runs and a drop of Bala at slip by our elderly sub. Let us pause at this point because Saj (when he arrived) was placed at slip and therefore there is a philosophical argument here that this was, in essence, his drop – if so he becomes the first Salix player to drop a catch for us before making his debut.

Anyway, philosophy aside, we were eventually at full strength when suddenly we weren’t as Tim managed to split the webbing on his finger saving a certain four. A trip to the Urgent Care Centre at Charing Cross Hospital beckoned.

On the field, the bowling stayed good with the scoring restricted despite a fast outfield and a shortish boundary on one side. CK and Padders came on first change and kept the pressure up. Big shots were attempted and CK picked up a couple of wickets that his spell merited. Padders picked up the other opener, Yov came on for Padders and continued the thrifty theme and at one point the rate was four an over with half the overs gone. Some smiting ensued but to limited effect and with some good fielding and tight bowling we held the damage to 184 off 35. Two run outs and only two drops with five completed catches (including a spectacular diving take at long off by Yov) went a long way to stopping the runs leaking as they have sometimes done this season.

So to tea. A joint effort from the teams producing a far more edible effort than ever seen in Harlington. I particularly enjoyed the samosas. Post tea Daveski and Dozy opened up and were going well until Dozy copped a beauty that nipped off middle and pinged his off stump and then Daveski slapped one to mid-off. That brought Yov and Saj together for the stand that set the tone for victory - always on the run-rate they added eighty or so runs before Yov felt something pop and was forced to limp off. Saj then went for a reverse sweep and popped up a dolly.

Surely victory was not to be snatched away at the last? CK and Padders added a rapid 33 and we were 20 short. Two quick wickets kept hearts fluttering but Padders and Sia were up to the task and we were home by five wickets (really three as Yov and Tim were unlikely to bat). So then, a win at the very end to salvage a little from a sorry season but rather more importantly a good performance and one that provides hope that next year will be much better. Onwards and upwards! Thanks to the Gents - gentlemen as always in defeat or victory - and to anyone who has waded this far through my tangled prose.

Until next season, Nurdler, T.

Ed’s note: Surprisingly this wasn’t even our worst season: in both 2017 and 2000 we lost a greater percentage of games. Secondly I assume Nurdler T. is referring to the well-known Australian balladeer, Sia Furler, well known for her lovely music and also covering her face with a giant wig whilst singing.