

Crossbats v. Gentlemen of West London

Saturday 13 April, Marble Hill Park. Gents won toss. Sleet and showers, brighter later, 9C

Won by 5 wickets

| Crossbats | | | Gentlemen of West London | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| S. Skinner | c Dubey | b Namilikonda | 51 | H. Patel | c Sayers | b A. Skinner | 2 |
| McAlpine | run out (Francis) | | 68 | Basker | c A. Skinner | b Ross | 55 |
| *Wright | c Sudireddy | b Namilikonda | 20 | Kota | c Sayers | b Ross | 57 |
| Carter | run out (Ahmed) | | 12 | Francis | c Sayers | b Ross | 10 |
| †Sayers | not out | | 4 | Sudireddy | not out | | 33 |
| Barnes | not out | | 0 | †Ahmed | c and | b Ross | 2 |
| Ross, Boereboom, A. Skinner, Gumbly and *Gray | dnb | | | *S. Patel | not out | | 0 |
| | | | | Gulati, Dubey, Chatharaju, Namilikonda and Krishna dnb | | | |
| Extras | b1 lb3 w8 | | 12 | Extras | w11 | | 11 |
| Total | 4 wickets | 35 overs | 167 | Total | 5 wickets | 25.2 overs | 170 |
| FoW: 104, 128, 158, 166 | | | | FoW: 7, 123, 124, 160, 160 | | | |
| Bowling: Dubey 4-0-23-0, Krishna 7-1-30-0, Gulati 7-0-29-0, Kota 7-1-30-0, Namilikonda 7-0-37-2, Chatharaju 3-0-14-0 | | | | Bowling: Gumbly 4-0-33-0, A. Skinner 7-0-36-1, Boereboom 4-0-37-0, Gray 5.2-0-46-0, Ross 5-0-18-4 | | | |



Henrietta Howard. You might, George II did

The Palladian majesty of Marble Hill House dominates this scenic ground, the villa being in effect the sightscreen at the River Thames end. What history it has with his late Majesty George II boffing mistress Henrietta Howard senseless in the ©18 and the Gents playing games here in 1988 and 1989, both against East Harrow Cheetahs. The first was lost and the second abandoned due to a dangerous pitch after Bob Ashton had retired hurt on 54. The club's relationship continued indirectly when United Titans played a pre-season friendly here four years ago and Pavan Kota scored 104 guesting for St. Anne's Allstars in 2018.

On a bitterly cold afternoon, the Gents won their seventh successive game batting second. Kota has been the mainstay of this run with a 50 or ton each time he has batted, but Basker and Sudireddy also batted attractively to settle the matter at a quarter to six. Earlier, S. Skinner's and McAlpine's opening stand gave Crossbats the foundation for a match-winning score before tight bowling pegged them back. The scorecard was pleasingly symmetrical with two 50s and a century stand for each side, a rare occurrence.

This was by eight days the Gents' earliest domestic start to a season and the piercing north-easterly was consistent with the calendar. Gents had 13, so Sumit Kumar kindly stood down to manage this rare early-season oversubscription. The new artificial strip was bouncy and true, the wind howled, the bowlers persevered while Crossbats' openers fashioned a proper opening stand of 104 in 22.3 overs. A couple of chances were dropped but the batsmen were ruthless with anything short or wide. Dubey pouched the left-hander S. Skinner at gully, the first of four wickets during Namilikonda's spell. Sudireddy took a neat catch off captain Wright in the covers, might have had another and Francis and Ahmed effected run outs. The run rate was consistent throughout, the bowling and fielding sharp enough to restrict the threatened acceleration. Tea was taken al fresco at sixteen minutes past three. Hot drinks were a godsend.

H. Patel edged behind ninth ball but Basker (nine 4s) and Kota (seven 4s) did not hang about in scoring their 13th. 50s for the club, putting on 116 in 17 overs. They played the bowling on its merits, taking few chances and were urged at drinks to see the job through. Ross had other ideas, snaffling them both on his way to a deserved 4 for 18. The elegant Francis and the blistering Sudireddy (seven 4s in a dazzling 14-ball cameo to notch his personal best club score) saw the Gents home despite the dismissals of Francis to the 'keeper's third catch and Ahmed to a stunning caught and bowled.

Thanks are offered to Crossbats for hosting so well. Their Fixture Secretary Mr Carter was keen to renew for 2020 so there is the basis for a sustained relationship. Their website alluringly refers to a punch up back in the day, which was not their fault, something it is our mission to find out more about.