# THE GENT

No.164 May 2019

# Tea 1966 - Chai 2019



Match reports - fixtures - averages - news

Contact this magazine via email andrewburman\_840@hotmail.com Read about the Gents on www.gowlcc.org or Twitter @gowlcc



# Behold, my friends, the spring is come



Nothing can make a writer look more ridiculous than early season observations, but here goes.

It has been a promising start. Batsmen are in the runs. After a barren 2018, we have already had two four-wicket returns. The fielding has improved from 2018 but could hardly have got worse.

Availability has been declared early and has been healthy, but teams of 12 will no longer be selected. This is because they are difficult to administer. They were introduced to satisfy demand but by definition somebody has to stand down for part of the game. In the first three matches the club's best all-rounder Sanjay Patel has neither batted nor bowled (he did not face a ball in his 0\* against Crossbats) and Hemin Patel has not bowled. It will be 11 plus a standby in future, so nobody will be asked to sacrifice bowling or batting. Should rotation be needed, please be patient.

The new kit is elegant, thanks Naveed for a good deal. The players look splendid.

The club is in funds but please pay your match fees promptly. It costs us  $f_{220}$  to host a game.

We remind you of the 1.30pm start time for home games at Old Tenisonians unless otherwise advised. Start times at Wycombe House will be confirmed.

# Awards summary

Pavan Kota, Srinivas Namilikonda and Ranjith Chatharaju shared the 2018 Playing Awards. Kota was unanimously voted Batsman of the Year with 562 runs in 13 innings, and shared Fielder, taking six catches. Namilikonda won All-rounder and Bowler with 196 runs, 15 wickets (including four three-fors), eight catches and a stumping. Chatharaju batted consistently, scored the famous last-ball 6 to beat Squirrels and took important wickets.

The 2019 Committee is last season's Captain, Vice-captain and Secretary, Sanjay Patel, Hemin Patel and Andrew Burman, with strong additions in new Chairman Sumit Kumar and new Treasurer Nilesh Dubey. Thanks were minuted to outgoing treasurer Vamsee Krishna for his good work in improving the finances. A new venue is needed for the AGM this year. Club 182 stung the club for £150 room hire, before any food had even been ordered. By this time, it was too late to organise anywhere else. They are greedy bastards who do not deserve our future support. Let's work on this now and lock in somewhere better.

## Stand by Me

The 1952 *Playfair Cricket Annual*, edited by Peter West, generously repays repeated reading. The review of Yorkshire's 1951 season by J.M. Kilburn implied that all was not well at Headingley. "Wardle was unreliable ... bowled with sorry judgement and technique". His analysis for the season was Overs 1,279.1 Maidens 576 Runs 2,333 Wickets 122, with an average of 19.1 and an economy of 1.82 which seems pretty good these days. All that mattered was not losing to t'other lot from across t'Pennines. Warwickshire won the 1951 County Championship, Yorkshire came second and Lancashire third. You'd think they'd have been happy.

English cricket was in crisis after an Ashes hammering in 1950-51 so the editor asked the great and good how to fix the malaise. Suggestions included better batting wickets (proposed by the batsmen), better bowling wickets (the bowlers endorsed that one), an extra stump, the usual tinkering with the lbw Law and, presciently from E.W. Swanton, Sunday cricket, provided "practical help was given to the Church". Within two years England had one of their strongest Test sides and dominated until 1958-59, all without a fourth stump. The improved British diet from the early 50s also helped, no doubt.

The lessons are: enjoy the successes and don't overreact to the defeats. And challenge myths. For years it was popularly supposed that the prominent cricketer pictured on the front cover of *Playfair* would go on to have a poor season. James Anderson was chosen for the 2018 cover and would take 43 Test wickets. This does not disprove the myth but is evidence of its falsehood.

According to another popular myth, the song that was No.1 in the charts on your fourteenth birthday is the one that defines your entire life. It is fun to play the game yourself (this writer's is *Ballad of John and Yoko* by the past their best Beatles, morphing from pretty popsters to purveyors of bleared occult). Sanjay Patel celebrated his with Ben E. King's rereleased *Stand by Me* riding high. The song was part of the soundtrack for the eponymous and quite charming film, which ends with Gordie Lachance (Richard Dreyfuss) saying "I never had any friends later on like the ones I had when I was 12. Does anyone?" The sentiment is wise. Stand by a man we are lucky to have. Be on time and cheerfully accept his wisdom.

## Alan Haydn Baker

Alan Baker, ground manager of Old Tenisonians CC, died on 31 December 2018 aged 77. He was a wise and good friend to the Gents, easing us through the process of hiring pitches (surprisingly difficult at some grounds) and being a kind, flexible communicator. It was standing room only at Morden Crematorium, with several hundred mourners present. Those who could not get in to the chapel were able to view the service via a video link. Tributes referred to Mr. Baker's love not only of sport but also of vintage cinema and music hall, shared interests this writer should have pursued with him. It is always too late somehow. Old Tenisonians hosted the wake and put on a super spread. Some of his books were put out by the family for people to take away a memory of him. May he rest in peace.

Dhruv Patel wrote: "He was a true Gent and a charming person with a polite and wonderful nature. It is very rare to come across such nice people. I had played for Old Tenisonians when they approached me at the last minute on a few occasions. I used to use their nets to go and practice with Dhilan when the old groundsman was there and also got to know some of their players. When we were looking for options for our club I mentioned to their captain if the club would be happy to rent us the ground on days when it was free during the season. They gave me Alan's contact and I had a very pleasant chat about cricket and facilities and the rest is history."

## Ashton pays his debt to society

News has reached us from the In the Courts section of the *Northern Gazette*. We regret to inform you that we have a criminal in our midst. In January, Mark Ashton was caught speeding on the M1 and, having considered his options, chose a speed awareness course over the three points. During the course, he was lectured by two bearded public sectors about the perils of flooring it at 153 mph in a 70, an experience he said he never wanted to repeat. He has now taken stock and promised to research the position of speed cameras with greater diligence.

## Washed ashore



From time to time in the popular presses we read of adults masquerading as schoolboys or schoolgirls to gain scholastic or other advantages. This not a new thing and evidence is to hand of an occurrence from 2001.

Sailor Mark Jones was 35 when he was washed ashore at Weston-super-Mare. Confused, he infiltrated Cheltenham Bournside School and being an adept fast bowler was placed in their Under 12s. A popular player, he made lots of friends there and within four years would pass GCSEs in maths and media studies. He went on to play 38 times for the Gents, following his pal and future Gents captain Greg Newcombe. He held his four decades remarkably well, being up to date with the pop scene and so forth. Also pictured are future Gents Syed-Aguirre and Wright. Other Bournside alumni to wear the colours are Butler (a ton in his only game), Gibson and Wright Jr.

## Jack's best yet for Hale

The cricket correspondent of the Farnham Herald, Jack Davies, had quite the day on 2 September 2018, and filed the following report; "Hale lost an early wicket, but then Rob Knowles (39) and Steve Giles (33) enjoyed a good stand of 56. The home side ended on 125 all out. In reply, Easam's opening stand was broken by 13-year-old Ditrium Wadhawan who bowled a fine spell in his debut match. Veteran change-bowler Jack Davies was unplayable at times, picking up wickets regularly and ending with a career best of 6 for 16 as Hale completed an easy victory."

We congratulate Jack. He did well. Nothing is easy in this life though and we read recently of Farnham's 2019 Spring Litter Pick. Two-hundred volunteers from the Bourne 5th Farnham Cubs, Farnham Ramblers, Badshot Lea Bloomers, Farnham Brass Band, Bourne Conservation Group, Hale Scouts, Beavers and Cubs Wrecclesham, Rowledge Village Tidy Up and Heath End Gardeners removed rubbish from grass verges, pavements and open spaces. Among the litter pickers' flytipped trophies were a pair of garden shears, an umbrella, a bicycle and an old cricket roller. Draw your own conclusions.

#### A deserved award



Vamsee Krishna Reknar received an award from the Telugu Association of London (TAL) for his exemplary voluntary contribution to TAL sport. He was presented with the award by a very eminent man, Padma Shree Mallesan Garu. We congratulate Vamsee on his superb achievement. Padma Shree is the fourth highest civilian award in India after the Bharat Rana, the Padma Vibhushan and the Padma Bhushan. It is awarded by the Indian Government every year on Republic Day. We're proud to know you, sir.

# 2019 scorecards and results

10/1	36 11 IIII D 1	0 1 . 465 4 06 41 .	40 C Cl. 54 W/ 1	20)	W7 1 5 1 .						
13/4 Marble Hill Park Crossbats 167-4 (McAlpine 68, S. Skinner 51, Wright 20)					<b>Won</b> by 5 wickets						
		Gents 170-5 (Kota 57, Basker 55, Sudireddy 33*, Ross 4-18)									
21/4	Byfleet	<b>Byfleet 161-9</b> (Akhtar 57, F		<b>Won</b> by 4 wickets							
		Gents 164-6 (Namilikonda 56, Sudireddy 28*, Kota 20)									
28/4	Cavendish RG	Gents 138 (Dubey 45, Neal	Gents 138 (Dubey 45, Neal 3-22) Gubbays 109 (Aryuat 25, Namilikonda 4-17, Pentakota 3-10) Won by 29 ru								
Date	•	Gents	Result	Judd Street Tigers	Result						
Sat 13	April	Crossbats	Won by 5 wickets	-	-						
Sun 21	April	Byfleet	Won by 4 wickets	-	-						
Sun 28	3 April	Gubbays	Won by 29 runs	Harrowdene	Lost by 13 runs						
Sun 5	May	Millfields	-	Gubbays	-						
Sat 11	May	•	-	Porto	-						
Sun 12	2 May	Wimbledon United	-	Porto	-						
Sun 19	) May	Kempton	-	Shakespeare	-						
Sun 26	May	Northfields	-	N2 Casuals	-						
Recor	d	Played 3 Won 3		Played 1 Lost 1							
Home	•	-		Played 1 Lost 1							
Away		Played 3 Won 3		-							
Runs Kota 84, Basker 71, Namil		Kota 84, Basker 71, Namiliko	onda 63, Sudireddy 61	Ranger 85							
Wickets		Namilikonda 8, Mangineni 4		Jhangiani 4, Wright 3							
Catches/Stumpings		Sudireddy 2		Rennie/Warren 1							

# Ramkrishna and Ratnakar head early averages

Player	M.	Inn.	NO	Runs	Avg.	Ct./St.	О	M	Runs	Wck.	Avg.
Ahmed	1	1	-	2	2.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Basker	3	3	-	71	23.67	1/1	-	-	-	-	-
Caveney	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chatharaju	3	2	1	12	12.00	-	13.4	1	56	2	28.00
Corbett	1	1	-	0	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dubey	2	1	-	45	45.00	1	8	1	37	0	-
Francis	1	1	-	10	10.00	-	-	_	_	_	_
Gulati	2	1	-	19	19.00	1	9	1	36	0	-
Kota	3	3	-	84	28.00	-	11	1	58	1	58.00
Krishna	3	2	-	18	9.00	1	15	1	75	2	37.50
Kumar	1	1	-	9	9.00	-	7	1	20	0	-
Mangineni	1	-	-	-	-	-	8	2	16	4	4.00
Namilikonda	3	2	-	63	31.50	1	20	1	83	8	10.38
H. Patel	2	2	-	6	3.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
S. Patel	2	1	1	0	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Pentakota	2	1	-	12	12.00	-	15	2	34	3	11.33
Sudireddy	3	3	2	61	61.00	2	-	-	-	-	-

# Away end – Byfleet 2019



#### 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					
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, Boereboor	Ross, Boereboom, A. Skinner, Gumbly and *Gray dnb				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		<b>FoW:</b> 7, 123, 124, 160, 160						
Bowling: Dube	Bowling: Dubey 4-0-23-0, Krishna 7-1-30-0, Gulati 7-0-29-0,				Bowling: Gumbly 4-0-33-0, A. Skinner 7-0-36-1,				
Kota 7-1-30-0, N	Namilikonda 7-0-37-2, C	Chatharaju 3-0-14-0		Boereboom 4-0	0-37-0, Gray 5.2-0-46-0,	Ross 5-0-18-4			



Henrietta Howard. You might, George II did

The Palladian splendour of Marble Hill House dominates this scenic ground, the villa 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 13<sup>th</sup>. 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.

## Byfleet v. Gentlemen of West London

## Sunday 21 April, Byfleet. Gents won toss. Sunny, 25C

## Won by 4 wickets

Byfleet			Gentlemen of West London						
M. Hockin	c S. Patel	b Mangineni	18	†Basker	c Hansom	b Akram	16		
Hussain		b Mangineni	11	Krishna	lbw	b R. Hockin	7		
Akhtar		b Namilikonda	57	Kota	c Akhtar	b Harries	20		
Oxborough	lbw	b Mangineni	0	†Namilikonda	lbw	b Akram	56		
Harries	c Namilikonda	b Mangineni	0	Chatharaju	c R. Hockin	b Oxborough	8		
Deven		b Chatharaju	9	Corbett	lbw	b Oxborough	0		
Fahey		b Namilikonda	28	Sudireddy	not out		28		
R. Hockin	not out		17	Caveney	not out		2		
*Jones	c Sudireddy	b Krishna	1	Pentakota, *S. Pat	tel and Mangineni dn	b			
Hansom	lbw	b Krishna	2						
Akram	not out		1						
Extras	b8 lb1 w6 nb2		17	Extras	b6 lb1 w15 nb5		27		
Total	9 wickets	40 overs	161	Total	6 wickets	28.2 overs	164		
FoW: 29, 32, 32	, 32, 69, 120, 156, 157, 1	.60		FoW: 23, 37, 77,	92, 102, 158				
Bowling: Krish	na 7-0-33-2, Mangineni	8-2-16-4, Pentakota 8-1	Bowling: R. Hockin 5-1-21-1, Akram 3-0-26-2, Harries 6-1-25-1,						
Chatharaju 8-1-2	Chatharaju 8-1-25-1, Kota 3-0-25-0, Namilikonda 6-0-29-2				Akhtar 4-0-18-0, Oxborough 5-2-14-2, Hansom 4-0-36-0,				
				Deven 1.2-0-17-0	-				



A Byfleet XI including some colts and vets hosted generously but did not make quite enough runs as the Gents' seamers bowled with pleasing accuracy and, in the case of Mangineni, pace and hostility. Namilikonda's maiden 50 then saw Gents to victory at 12 minutes past seven, the eighth successive win batting second. It was an excellent if exhausting day out at a beautiful ground.

Gents made five changes from Crossbats with Caveney coming in after the late withdrawal of H. Patel. The inclusion of Pentakota and Mangineni, whose career bowling is now a formidable 33-6-98-13, gave the captain early control as he bowled them through. M. Hockin and Hussain started steadily before Mangineni struck four times in eight balls. The Gents' supporters had massed by the sightscreen and Hussain had them moved moments before losing his middle stump. The curse of HP Denton continues! In his next over, the eighth of the innings, M. Hockin cut powerfully only to see S. Patel leap to his right at gully to take a breathtaking catch. Oxborough was pinned for a golden and young left-hander Harries then edged to give Namilikonda a low diving catch. The tidy Chatharaju bowled Deven just before 20 overs drinks. Byfleet, 70 for 5, needed support for the untroubled Waheed Akhtar, 24 not out at the break.

Fahey gave it, the pair adding 51 in 52 balls. Akhtar went to his 50 (seven 4s) before Namilikonda, having ceded the pads and gloves to Basker, had him. Fahey and R. Hockin took the score over 150 before Namilikonda struck again. Krishna then carded 2 for 14 in his second spell of four overs, helped by a Sudireddy pouch at long-on, and it was tea. The second 20 overs had belonged to Byfleet. Kota took a bit of tap but the seamers bowled with control and in the case of Mangineni, a hint of spice. The tea, tasty and filling, cost £55, a bargain after the overpriced rubbish fed to us by some opponents. Play resumed after five o'clock in unnatural spring heat: were the game to go the distance, it would not end till eight.



The captain's wise advice about batsmen batting sensibly was not necessarily adhered to in all aspects as Gents stood at 23 for one off two overs. Akram bowled four aerial no balls in his first over, Basker smiting four twos before pulling a legitimate full-toss to colt Hansom at square-leg, a good catch.

Krishna was sound before being lbw (one of three in the innings and five in the day) before an outstanding piece of cricket by the 13-year-old Harries broke the Kota/Namilikonda stand. Bowling slow left-arm, he got one to turn and bounce, which Kota edged high to slip.

Chatharaju and debutant Corbett also fell before drinks, Gents 120 for 5, Namilikonda 31 not out. Sudireddy is becoming a good finisher, unbeaten now in three innings for 79, 56 in boundaries. He saw Namilikonda to an excellent 50 in 21.4 overs with seven 4s and two 6s, the second of which cleared the long square boundary to bring up the milestone. Sudireddy's fourth 4 saw the Gents home with 70 balls to spare, Caveney 2 not out.

Byfleet CC was founded in 1876. Its first five Presidents were boomingly named. The Rev. Newton J. Spicer was first, then Sir J. Whittaker Ellis, Rev. Spicer again, H.H. Dobree and Admiral The Hon. Francis Egerton. In return, the Gents can claim only one to set alongside their admirals, knights and vicars: Byfleet Tory Councillor Dan Todd, who presidented before the role was declared redundant in a typical AGM coup. The sculpture was carved in 2016 by Ella Fielding and Rob Beckinsale from an oak tree cut down when the ground was being refurbished.

## **Ground force**



Byfleet CC has two quirky ground rules. If you slam one into the oak trees, you will be rewarded with a six, even if it is a glancing blow to the branches overhanging the boundary. But if you hit the power cables strung above the ground, it is a dead (and possibly frazzled) ball. Captain Neal Jones confirmed that neither event is a rarity.

## Gubbays v. Gentlemen of West London

## Sunday 28 April, Cavendish RG. Gubbays won toss. Gloomy, 14C

## Won by 29 runs

Gentlemen of W	Vest London			Gubbays				
H. Patel	run out		4	Deepak		b Pentakota	4	
Gulati	run out		19	†Ash	lbw	b Pentakota	16	
Kota	c Aryuat	b Bharat	7	Raju	st Basker	b Namilikonda	10	
Pentakota		b Vinny	12	Neal	c Gulati	b Namilikonda	3	
Namilikonda	st Ash	b Bharat	7	*Aryuat		b Pentakota	25	
Dubey		b Neal	45	Vijay		b Namilikonda	0	
Sudireddy		b Neal	0	Nilesh		b Namilikonda	0	
†Basker	c Nilesh	b Vinny	0	Bharat	run out (S. Patel	)	13	
Kumar		b Aryuat	9	Vinny	c Krishna	b Chatharaju	4	
Krishna		b Neal	11	Aryan	c Basker	b Kota	0	
Chatharaju	not out		4	Shyam	not out		3	
*S. Patel	dnb			, and the second				
Extras	lb4 w16		20	Extras	b8 lb1 w20 nb2		31	
Total	All out	331 overs	138	Total	All out	31.4 overs	109	
FoW: 18, 27, 46,	58, 66, 67, 68, 90, 1	30, 138		FoW: 21, 31, 4	5, 55, 64, 91, 97, 101, 1	04, 109		
Bowling: Shyam	<b>Bowling:</b> Shyam 7-0-28-0, Aryuat 7-2-17-1, Vinny 7-1-31-2,			Bowling: Gula	ati 2-1-7-0, Krishna 1-0	-12-0, Pentakota 7-1-10-3,		
Bharat 6-0-36-2,	Bharat 6-0-36-2, Neal 6.1-0-22-3			Kumar 7-1-20-0, Namilikonda 7-1-17-4, Dubey 4-1-14-0,				
				Chatharaju 2.4-0-17-1, Kota 1-0-3-1				

Nilesh Dubey's wise, solid 45, well supported by the tail, dragged Gents up to 138 before Namilikonda and Pentakota won the day, sharing seven wickets. It was a gruelling game played in appalling light on a green, seaming pitch and a lush, slow outfield. Ball dominated bat throughout – only 15 boundaries were struck all day – and it was two haggard teams who shook hands at four minutes past seven.

Gubbays had had the better of the rubber over the years, winning five out of seven. This was their first game of 2019 but they know their home pitch intimately and the seamers were quickly into the groove. Despite some blows by Gulati (run out along with his opening partner after an April calling amnesty) and Pentakota's resilience, wickets fell regularly. From 58 for 3 in the nineteenth over, the visitors collapsed to 68 for 7 in the twenty-second when Basker, having conducted a policy review of the scoring rate, tried to make amends but skied immediately to mid-on. Dubey batted for 13 overs timing the ball well and with the usual intelligent support from Kumar (debuting his splendid Gray Nicolls Legend) and Krishna 62 came up for the next two wickets, including a stout 40 for the ninth, the day's highest stand. Neal produced a corker to bowl a dumbfounded Dubey, evidence to Gents fans that a score of a 120 or so might be defendable. Extras made a splendid 20 (everything down leg side was called wide after prior agreement between the captains) and would top-score in the second innings with 31. Tea included Coronation chicken sandwiches, the caterer reimagining the original 1953 recipe from *The Constance Spry Cookery Book* by Mrs Spry and Rosemary Hume, debuted at the wedding breakfast of Her Majesty.

The brief spells of sunshine during pre-match practice gave way to penumbral murk and chill more befitting November than April. After an early flurry of runs off Gulati and Krishna, Pentakota came on, bowling Deepak in his first over and pinning Ash in his fourth. Kumar was accurate and it was clear that 139 would be a stiff challenge. Namilikonda then caused mayhem to take his first four-wicket haul. Neal, a heavy scorer in this rubber, chipped to mid-on, Raju was smartly stumped by Basker after wandering out of his crease and Nilesh bowled after Vijay had briefly retired hurt with a nasty hand injury.

Aryuat, not at his most fluent, was dropped twice in difficult light as the tension cranked up. He added 27 with Bharat, who was run out attempting a second after a powerful throw from captain Patel to bowler Kumar. Accurate bowling forced the required run rate up. Pentakota then returned to bowl Aryuat to complete his best Gents analysis, Namilikonda bowled the returning Vijay to record his and the Gents had broken the back of the innings. Fourteen-year-old Vinny and 10-year-old Aryan batted bravely.

Indeed Aryan was a hit with the Gents, being a terrific help with the scoreboard while patiently waiting his turn in the gloom. Thanks are therefore due, because it is not recommended for the scorer to do both book and board. Support from the injured Dino Francis was also warmly appreciated.