

Millfields v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 5 May, Hilly Fields. Gents won toss. Cloudy, 11C

Lost by 21 runs

Millfields			Gentlemen of West London				
Street	c Namilikonda	b Dubey	1	Basker	c M. Cooper	b C. Cooper	11
†Collis	not out		66	Krishna	c Gardiner	b C. Cooper	1
Cordell	lbw	b H. Patel	20	Kota	lbw	b Ahmed	1
Hewitt	c S. Kumar	b H. Patel	2	S. Kumar	lbw	b M. Cooper	13
*C. Cooper	c Dubey	b S. Kumar	1	Sudireddy		b Ahmed	2
Bird		b S. Kumar	0	†Namilikonda		b Lemon	19
Mellor		b S. Kumar	0	Chatharaju	lbw	b Bird	9
Lemon	st Namilikonda	b H. Patel	4	*S. Patel		b Bird	5
Gardiner	c Sudireddy	b H. Patel	0	Dubey	not out		13
M. Cooper		b Chatharaju	2	H. Patel		b M. Cooper	1
Ahmed		b Chatharaju	0	R. Kumar		b C. Cooper	1
Extras	b1 lb1 w5		7	Extras	b2 lb2 nb2		6
Total	All out	30.5 overs	103	Total	All out	30.1 overs	82
FoW: 1, 67, 71, 72, 74, 74, 93, 97, 103, 103				FoW: 5, 14, 14, 20, 45, 56, 64, 66, 81, 82			
Bowling: Krishna 5-1-14-0, Dubey 6-0-20-1, S. Kumar 8-1-31-3, H. Patel 8-0-29-4, Chatharaju 2.5-0-6-2, R. Kumar 1-0-1-0				Bowling: C. Cooper 6.1-3-8-3, Ahmed 8-3-16-2, Lemon 5-0-23-1, M. Cooper 7-2-14-2, Bird 4-0-19-2			

The Gents bowlers used the conditions well to restrict a talented batting team to 103. They then made the mistake of batting, found out how hard it was, and finished 21 runs short. With the dismissal of Gardiner, Hemin Patel took his 300th career wicket in his 227th game. Stuart Snelling (399) and Sanjay Patel (411) remain ahead and perhaps out of reach. As Fairport Convention sang, Time will show the wiser.

A wet wicket helped the bowlers throughout and with an unmown outfield a low-scoring game was in prospect. Dubey had Street caught behind in his first over before Cordell joined Collis for what proved to be a match-winning stand of 66. Cordell was dropped three times before falling to Patel in the 18th over, Collis 20 not out at the time and looking ominous. He survived one chance to carry his bat for 66 (seven fours) and brought up his average in this rubber to 296, following scores of 80 and 150 not out. The only Gents to dismiss him was Jonny Small with a catch by Praveen Bocha.

The period of play after Cordell was out belonged to the visitors. Hemin Patel and Sumit Kumar loved the seaming, turning pitch and, assisted by improved catching and a fine stumping, fairly rattled through the middle order and tail. They shared seven wickets with Chatharaju cleaning up. The innings ended at 11 minutes past three.

In Test cricket, the lowest total not to include a duck is 75 by Australia at Durban in the 1949-50 series. The Gents were seven runs shy of that. By definition, all batsmen got a start, but were worn down by the pace of Cian Cooper and the leg-spin of his father and Ahmed. Kota and Sumit Kumar patiently blocked five maidens. With plenty of time and some good batsmen to come Gents were sanguine about their prospects. Ahmed then signed off with two wickets.

That the highest stand of the innings was 25 testified to the depressed and nervous condition that then afflicted the batsmen. Namilikonda was assertive, driving a 6 and two 4s, but that was as good as it got for the visitors. Kumar showed a lot of guts in his vigil of 18 overs and Dubey hit a 6 and a 4 before he ran out of partners, three batsmen falling leg-before. The Millfields attack was the best faced in 2019, and Collis the best batsman.

There was much subsequent discussion of the ball that got Hemin Patel, bowled by Cooper senior. We know that that he bowled it, Hemin missed it, and the ball hit the stumps. Efforts by *The Gent* to establish more detail have been beset, as inquiries often are, by contradictory evidence. The batsman, the bowler and his captain confirmed a leg-break that Shane Warne would have been proud of, dipping, spitting, turning and clipping the top of off stump. Non-facing batsman Dubey and umpire Kota saw none of that. Dubey believed it was a straight delivery that Hemin missed. He said “The ball went through the gate, as indeed a car could have too”.