

THE ARCHIVE

CLASSIC GENTS MATCHES

Fall of Wicket	Batter
68-1 (16.1 overs)	Burns
82-2 (20.5 overs)	Malan
83-3 (22.2 overs)	Crawley
92-4 (27.5 overs)	Stokes
101-5 (31.4 overs)	Root
107-6 (35.1 overs)	Billings
107-7 (36.2 overs)	Pope
115-8 (37.6 overs)	Woakes
123-9 (38.3 overs)	Wood
124-10 (38.5 overs)	Robinson

Inspired by England's collapse at Hobart (left), we recall here a similar fate for the Gents in 2011, the last losing season – played 22 won 9 abandoned 3 lost 10.

Standing proud at 108-2 chasing Raynes Park Former Pupils' 152 with some very good batsmen to come a win seemed assured, but the Gods had different ideas and brought them to effect in a mere 10 overs. Gents lost eight wickets for 32, eerily similar to England's nine for 42.

This was one of the worst collapses in the club's history, and can be set alongside the three against West XI of 4-4 (first four wickets in 1991), 7-7 (last seven wickets in 1993) and 15-6 (first six wickets in 1994).

Gentlemen of West London v. Raynes Park Former Pupils

Sunday 21 August 2011, Old Tenisonians CC. Raynes Park Former Pupils won toss. Sunny, 24C

Lost by 12 runs

Raynes Park Former Pupils				Gentlemen of West London			
†Ali	lbw	b Ragothamreddy	5	Denton	c Ali	b Kunal	25
Shominder	lbw	b Hibbert	2	Caveney	lbw	b Kunal	31
Amin	lbw	b S. Patel	17	†Cloete		b Mobeen	41
Mobeen	c S. Desai	b H. Patel	53	S. Desai	lbw	b Kunal	3
Naqvi	run out		8	S. Patel		b Amin	4
*D'Rosario	c Devunuri	b H. Patel	21	Hibbert	lbw	b Kunal	0
Iftikhar	c Devunuri	b Hibbert	22	Devunuri	c Ali	b Kunal	8
Suleiman	not out		5	Khan	c Mobeen	b Amin	15
Ravi	not out		3	Ragothamreddy	lbw	b Amin	0
Kunal	did not bat			*H. Patel		b Amin	4
				Toft	not out		0
Extras	b3 lb2 w9 nb2		16	Extras	b5 lb3 w1		9
Total	7 wickets	35 overs	152	Total	All out	25.4 overs	140
FoW:	11, 11, 61, 87, 111, 123, 146			FoW:	54, 74, 108, 108, 108, 118, 122, 122, 137, 140		
Bowling:	Ragothamreddy 7-2-12-1, Hibbert 7-1-35-2, S. Patel 7-1-32-1, Khan 4-0-27-0, H. Patel 7-0-31-2, Devunuri 3-0-10-0			Bowling:	Amin 3-4-0-11-4, Iftikhar 5-0-20-0, Mobeen 7-1-31-1, Kunal 7-0-40-5, Ravi 2-0-29-0, Shominder 1-0-1-0		

Captain Hemin Patel described this defeat, the Gents' first in seven games, as the worst in his time as a player. Harsh words, but it certainly takes some explaining how a talented batting side could lose eight wickets for 32 runs in 10 overs on a slow, low but not difficult wicket against steady rather than outstanding bowling. Research has revealed that not since England's 2-3 loss to West Germany in the 1970 World Cup having been 2-0 up has there been such a swift sporting reversal of fortune.

Perhaps the team thought the game won when the score stood at 108-2 after 16 overs, Cloete having pummelled 41 off 16 balls. Perhaps the sight of the club's great friend Ketan Patel acting in civilian clothing with some gusto as substitute fielder for Raynes Park spooked the Gents. Perhaps some batsmen

lacked moral fibre. Whatever the reason, panic spread through the ranks and Raynes Park FP won with 12 runs and 9 overs to spare. But the Gents could probably have withstood a batting tremor and won had their catching been up to par, for an unacceptable number of chances went down in the first dig, several to the better catchers in the club.

Replacing London Rams, who cancelled during the week, the visitors were a young crew of rookies and tough league players. Raghothamreddy and Hibbert had early successes with two of the seven lbws awarded in favour of the bowlers during the afternoon. Mobeen was dropped several times but played some cracking shots in his 53, while D’Rosario and Iftikhar gave the innings a late stimulus. Raghothamreddy was the pick of the bowlers.

Hibbert’s BBQ jerk chicken and food brought by at least two other players ensured that nobody went hungry and the Gents’ top three attacked their target as men possessed. When in form, Caveney is a nightmare to bowl to and the opening stand came up at five an over, Denton looking in complete control. A mighty Caveney six over mid-wicket was loudly cheered and when Kunal had them both it seemed to be of little relevance as Cloete savaged the spinner Ravi, pulling a six over mid-wicket and driving Kunal into a Tennyson Avenue garden.

Any reader who thinks that females have a monopoly on mood swings should have seen the changes in expression on the faces of the Gents with the dismissals on 108 of Cloete, wafting over a straight one, and Desai and Hibbert, lbw off successive balls. It was all very well the Jamaican saying that if his 4lb. bat had connected with his pull “It would have gone into the next postcode” but the fact is it didn’t and he was pinned. Kunal had Devenuri caught behind to secure the first five wicket haul of 2011. Sanjay Patel was bowled trying to pull Amin, who would complement Kunal’s batch of wickets with four of his own. The side was packed with able batsmen but the dismissal of Hemin Patel, driving over a yorker, was typical. Still, while the sensible, rational Khan stayed in there was hope but this too evaporated when he drove to deep mid-off, who took a low catch at the second attempt.

A score of 140 off 25.4 overs would usually be cause for mild celebration but not, perhaps, with 10 wickets down and certainly not when chasing 153. The visitors, who had only ten men (nine for a few overs before Ketan joined them) played to their strengths and deserved to win, but what a sombre day for the hosts.

Postscript

This match was the first loss in seven games after a creaky start to the season had seen only two wins in the first 11 outings. As if in trauma the Gents could only manage 75 chasing Southwark and Lambeth Imperials’ 185-8 a week later before rallying spectacularly to take West XI for 279-3 off only 30 overs. A loss to Salix and a win against Hale and the most inconsistent season was over.