

## Binfield v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 2 May, F.W.E. Goates Memorial Ground. Binfield won toss. Sunny, 13C

Won by 3 wickets

Binfield		Gentlemen of West London				
Jones	c Kota	b Krishna	1	Karnekonti	run out (Humphrey)	65
†Harvey		b Krishna	8	Krishna	c Docherty	38
Humphrey	c Kota	b Namilikonda	52	Kota	c Davies	16
Withana	c Sudireddy	b Karnekanti	15	Bocha	c Vines	42
Vines	c Sudireddy	b Karnekanti	13	Chatharaju	c Edgington	4
*Davies	c Sudireddy	b Snelling	16	Raj Patel	b Docherty	2
Edgington	not out		37	Puli	not out	0
Henly	c Bocha	b Krishna	15	†Sudireddy	b Vines	0
Daivasigamany	not out		12	Namilikonda	not out	7
Docherty and Potter	dnb			*S. Patel and Snelling	dnb	
<b>Extras</b>	b3 w11 nb4		18	<b>Extras</b>	b9 w4 nb1	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 wickets</b>	<b>40 overs</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>7 wickets</b>	<b>38.1 overs</b>
<b>FoW:</b>	2, 16, 50, 70, 116, 121, 160			<b>FoW:</b>	97, 109, 152, 171, 180, 180, 180	
<b>Bowling:</b>	Krishna 8-1-36-3, Chatharaju 7-0-36-0, Namilikonda 8-0-31-1, Karnekanti 7-0-29-2, Raj Patel 5-0-26-0, Snelling 5-0-26-1			<b>Bowling:</b>	Daivasigamany 8-1-20-0, Potter 7-0-43-0, Docherty 7-0-37-3, Henly 8-0-33-1, Davies 5-0-41-0, Vines 3-1-15-2	

A brilliant maiden fifty by Praneeth Karnekanti, well supported by Vamsee Krishna and the hard-hitting Praveen Bocha, took the Gents to the brink of victory. A convincing win looked likely at 97-0 off 20 overs and 152-2 in the 32nd. Players then got changed, never a wise thing to do, and the Gods punished the Gents' hubris when 14 year-old Docherty and the veteran Vines caused mayhem. The visitors just scraped home at a quarter to seven in an atmosphere of baffled excitement.

The match itself had been two years in the making, the Snellings now playing their cricket here. Covid put paid to it in 2020 but after some toing and froing on dates it at last went ahead and what a splendid affair it was. A pretty ground, a green but true and bouncy pitch, a sunny if cool day: all the ingredients were there for a classic and that is what we got.

Binfield batted consistently, with seven batsmen in double figures and notable if contrasting knocks from Humphrey, who batted 27 overs and hit three fours, and Edgington (12 overs, five fours). The visitors' bowling was steady, Krishna and Karnekanti the pick. Snelling took a wicket second ball, one of three catches by Sudireddy to set alongside two tough ones by Kota and a well-judged effort on the boundary by Bocha to give Krishna his third victim. The club's twentieth Patel, Raj, got turn and bounce with his off-breaks. The fielding was competent once everybody listened to the captain with Chatharaju outstanding.

Karnekonti and Krishna nearly became only the sixth Gents' openers to put up a century stand (opponents have done so 13 times). Runs flowed all over the ground and with brisk running only 91 were needed in the final 20 overs with all wickets in hand. A smart direct-hit run out did for Karnekanti first ball after the resumption and Krishna holed out to square-leg five overs later for his highest club score.

The weather was set fair for the Gents it seemed with Kota ceding the strike to Bocha, who lit up the afternoon with a flurry of boundaries, driving Davies's last three balls for the only six of the day, a four and a three. Zoe Docherty's first three overs were wicketless. Eighteen runs came from them. However, her second spell was deadly. Kota drove to mid-on, Bocha also holed out and Raj Patel was bowled. Two more wickets fell on 180 as Chatharaju edged to slip and a dumbfounded Sudireddy was castled.

Now came the undignified sight of puffer jackets, jeans and other items of civilian clothing being hurriedly discarded and whites being pulled on. The scene lacked only that immortal soundtrack to the Benny Hill Show, *Yakety Sax*, blasting away in the background. Namilikonda might have been timed out but Binfield kindly did not appeal. The burly all-rounder did the needful with Puli 0\* and Gents had won by three wickets with nine balls to spare. A feature of the innings was the high number of threes, 10 in all. Thanks to Binfield for being such gracious hosts and to Theo Snelling for scoring.