
THE GENT

No.169

August 2020

Heroes of Durston House

Gents defend 98 all out at Northfields



Around the circuit

The great tea debate

Two new partnership records set

Brick nab first win against Gents

Early averages

Match reports:

Battersea Eagles (won by 20 runs)

Bricklayer's Arms (lost by 6 wickets)

Kempton (won by 39 runs)

Northfields (won by 16 runs)

Clapham In (won by 98 runs)

Read about the Gents on www.gowlcc.org

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Around the circuit

Wycombe House 1sts have started strongly in MCCL Div. 3 and are joint top with North London CC. Had they remembered to remark the pitch against Barnes they would be top (NLCC also had a point docked, for a registration irregularity). Teams play each other once, with no promotion or relegation. This is cricket of a very high standard. New captain Hamza Khan, who introduced himself at nets, leads a young, vibrant team. Cup games have been moved to Sundays, so Gents had to increase the allocation at Old Tenisonians, and swap the Northfields game to Durston House. House 2nds are top of their league.

Not content with blasting 201-4 to smash the Gents on 26 July, Bricklayer's Arms went 100 better a week later against John McGirr's Sunderland SC, scoring 301-3. Poulter retired on 100, Tremain made 97 and McCracken 62*. Sunderland were dismissed for 125, a 176-run win for Brick who have gone completely potty since they returned from lockdown.

Steve Bignell and Stewart Taylor have retired, and Chris Wright has moved to Malaysia, but that hasn't shorn the tail of Winchmore Hill Tigers who have won four games out of five. Captain Matt Webster has taken 11 wickets in his four games including 6-11 against Acme.

On 19 July, Salix made the mistake of playing Rotten Livers and went for 346-8 in 35 overs. The editor was present on the baking hot day of 29 July 2001 for the all-opponents' highest score of 284-3 by 12 Angry Men. Those 40 overs felt like an eternity. Heaven knows what it was like for Salix.

Sudireddy's blast

You can't keep Bricklayer's Arms out of the news. Their wicket-keeper Chris Locke is the model for scorers everywhere. He notes each ball faced by the batsmen, which facilitates analysis of strike rates, as Frank Gallagher used to do for the Gents and Vamsee Krishna still does. The editor does not, which is usually fine but incurs extra work when it comes to backfilling the details of an innings. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned there. Anyway, the scorebook has been pored over and it is confirmed that Ratnakar Sudireddy's 96 against Kempton took 59 balls in 94 minutes (In 14:11 Out 15:45):

.1.4....4.1..4641..1114.41.144.1614411142.141..11.1211.4.44W



As you will know because you have studied your club records, the formidable South African Gregg Cloete (left) has hit both our fastest fifty and hundred:

Fastest 50 16 balls *v.* Cairns Fudge (Wandsworth Common, 28.4.13):
81 scored off 27 balls

This beat the record set earlier in the same innings by Praveen Bocha (50 off 21 balls out of 51) and equalled by Srimi Namilikonda in 2019 against Crossbats.

Fastest 100 41 balls *v.* London Saints (Old Tenisonians CC, 18.5.14):
111 scored off 44 balls

In 2012, previous record holder Rinku Lall hit 128 from 73 balls, also against Saints, going to 102 from 60.

Runs flow at Motspur Park

This strange season has already seen two individual scores in the nineties inspiring two record partnerships. The previous records may fairly be qualified as ground-assisted; the old second-wicket record stand of 127 by Shu Desai and Rinku Lall (August 2011 against Ham and Petersham) was on the artificial pitch at Crown Taverners, and the old seventh-wicket record stand of 110* by Thompson and Derriman against London Rams in July 2004 was at the minute Belair Park ground in West Dulwich.

Ten Gents (and 11 opponents) have now made a score in the nineties. Gregg Cloete, who hit a cricket ball harder and further than any other Gent, did it twice. He now exercises those powerful biceps and shoulders lathering seven bells out of his drumkit for his band Remedy Head.

The oldest extant Gents' and opponents' records date from 1993.

Record partnerships by wicket – Gents

1	121	S. Bignell (34) and N. Hubbucks (78) <i>v.</i> Enterprise	Victoria RG	2.5.93
2	144	S. Namilikonda (91) and P. Kota (49) <i>v.</i> Clapham In	Old Tenisonians CC	16.8.20
3	166	N. Husain (100*) and P. Kain (87) <i>v.</i> London Saints	Old Tenisonians CC	3.6.07
4	162	H. Desai (46) and R. Lall (128) <i>v.</i> London Saints	Old Haberdashers CC	14.8.11
5	152	M. Ashton (102) and M. Hughes (57*) <i>v.</i> London Saints	Victoria RG	15.8.93
6	212*	J. Small (131*) and S. Kumar (74*) <i>v.</i> St Anne's Allstars	Boston Manor PF	7.6.15
7	140	R. Sudireddy (96) and V. Gulati (66*) <i>v.</i> Kempton	Old Tenisonians CC	2.8.20
8	109	H. Desai (37) and P. Bocha (76) <i>v.</i> London Saints	LMPF Greenford	12.8.12
9	108	H. Hibbert (81) and M. Sciberras (22) <i>v.</i> Virgin Casuals	Shepherd's Bush CC	17.9.00
10	79*	S. Patel (73*) and R. Pentakota (31*) <i>v.</i> Salix	Imperial College	9.9.12

Record partnerships by wicket - opponents

1	239*	R. Bulmer (140*) and C. Maddock (87*), London Owls	Victoria RG	5.9.93
2	186	J. Elmes (165*) and Murray (56), Northfields	Durston House	24.5.15
3	215	R. Heyman (132) and R. Jones (89), Village XI	Old Hamptonians CC	30.7.06
4	138	A. Jaques (107) and D. Torbe (65), East Harrow Cheetahs	Beverley Park	4.8.96
5	90	V. Junani (74) and Ahluwalia (49), Gubbays	Cavendish RG	2.9.07
6	100	C. Dane (73) and P. Walton (53), West XI	KGF Morden	10.9.00
7	82	J. Wildman (76*) and Thomson (14), Clapham In	Old Tenisonians CC	3.7.11
8	65	Gaurav (38) and A. Tippell (50*), Ashford	Ashford CC	31.7.16
9	68	A. Heafield (40) and A. Wall (19), London Rams	Belair Park	28.7.01
10	57	Bendall (28) and Treen (27*), Crossbats	Raynes Park SG	9.9.18

98	G. Cloete <i>v.</i> Birdlip and Brimpsfield (Sinclair Field 9.6.12)	93*	M. Ashton <i>v.</i> New Barbarian Weasels (Peel Centre 1.9.93)
97*	G. Cloete <i>v.</i> West XI (Crown Taverners 4.9.11)	93	R. Gilkes <i>v.</i> Salix (LMPF Greenford 19.8.12)
96	N. Hubbucks <i>v.</i> Wandham (Beverley Park 5.6.94)	93*	P. Kota <i>v.</i> Wimbledon United (Old Tenisonians 21.5.19)
96	D. Thornicroft <i>v.</i> Rotherham SC (Victoria RG 4.9.94)	93*	J. Small <i>v.</i> Northfields (Durston House 25.5.14)
96	R. Sudireddy <i>v.</i> Kempton (Old Tenisonians 2.8.20)	91	S. Namilikonda <i>v.</i> Clapham In (Old Tenisonians 16.8.20)
95*	J. Wright <i>v.</i> London Rams (Old Tenisonians 25.6.06)		

Averages to 16 August

Player (*debut)	M.	Inn.	NO	Runs	Avg.	Ct./St.	O	M	Runs	Wck.	Avg.
A. Ahmed	3	3	1	46	23.00	1	-	-	-	-	-
Chatharaju	5	5	2	62	20.67	-	22	4	80	1	80.00
Dubey	5	4	0	32	8.00	1	14.2	1	86	4	21.50
Francis	4	4	0	45	11.25	2	-	-	-	-	-
Gulati	4	4	1	120	40.00	1	27	6	100	4	25.00
Kandakuri*	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kota	5	5	0	156	31.20	1	9	0	62	2	31.00
Krishna	5	3	1	26	13.00	1	32	7	76	3	25.33
Kumar	3	3	1	48	24.00	-	12	2	42	2	21.00
Mandava*	1	1	-	6	6.00	1	4	1	21	3	7.00
Namilikonda	4	4	0	130	32.50	1	22	3	99	7	14.14
Newcombe	1	1	1	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
H. Patel	2	2	0	19	9.50	1	13.5	1	73	7	10.43
S. Patel	4	2	0	39	19.50	2	8	0	48	2	24.00
Pentakota	2	1	0	0	0.00	-	11	0	61	0	-
Pingili	2	-	-	-	-	-	6	0	33	3	11.00
Sudireddy	5	5	1	161	40.25	7/1	-	-	-	-	-

Kandakuri and Mandava became the 388th and 389th Gents players. Northfields was the club's 600th game and a suitably memorable one to celebrate the milestone.

Gentlemen of West London v. Battersea Eagles

Sunday 19 July, Old Tenisonians. Gents won toss. Gloomy, 20C

Won by 20 runs

Gentlemen of West London			Battersea Eagles				
A. Ahmed	lbw	b Dawood	36	Naseem	c Sudireddy	b Gulati	23
Krishna	c Joel	b Shoaib Khan	4	Ali Omar		b Gulati	15
Kota	lbw	b Naseem	35	Farruqh		b Namilikonda	0
Francis		b Joel	7	†Combes	lbw	b Namilikonda	0
S. Patel		b Dawood	24	Atta	c S. Patel	b Kota	22
†Sudireddy		b Joel	3	*Harris	c Mandava	b Dubey	14
Gulati	c Suresh	b Siddiq	4	Siddiq		b Mandava	12
Mandava	c Shoaib Khan	b Siddiq	6	Joel		b Mandava	14
Namilikonda	c Atta	b Siddiq	10	Shoaib Khan	c Francis	b Gulati	38
Chatharaju	not out		21	Suresh	lbw	b Mandava	0
*Dubey	run out		11	Dawood	not out		10
				Ali	not out		1
Extras	b8 lb7 w8		23	Extras	b8 lb3 w4		15
Total	All out	39.3 overs	184	Total	10 wickets	35 overs	164
FoW:	16, 85, 91, 123, 130, 131, 141, 141, 154, 184			FoW:	40, 41, 41, 44, 68, 84, 102, 140, 150, 158		
Bowling:	Shoaib Khan 5.3-0-18-1, Atta 6-1-13-0, Suresh 5-0-26-0, Ali Omar 5-0-21-0, Naseem 3-0-17-1, Dawood 5-1-29-2, Joel 5-0-17-2, Siddiq 4-0-17-3, Ali 1-0-11-0			Bowling:	Krishna 5-2-7-0, Chatharaju 5-1-28-0, Namilikonda 6-0-20-2, Gulati 6-4-8-3, Dubey 4-0-27-1, Kota 5-0-42-1, Mandava 4-1-21-3		



Socially distanced around a bag of chips; a 2020 Old Tenisonians tea interval

After 13 cancelled games and two cancelled spring nets, we were back at last, seven days after the planned game against Golden XI in St Albans was pulled after the ground failed its Covid-19 inspection. Only seven members had been available for that, a contrast to the well-attended and hugely enjoyable open air net sessions at Wycombe House. Half the squad had been playing clandestine cricket at North Acton RG, bunking through a hole in the fence to access the ground. There was therefore a fair level of preparation for the new if truncated season. Eagles, well-organised, friendly and above all clear and early communicators were the perfect opposition for the restart.

In darkling gloom, Gents won a close game against talented opponents, the captains ensured that everyone was involved (16 bowled) and the new rules were respected by all but one player, who risked the whole of humanity by breaking out of the biosecure bubble and taking an illegal shower. Everyone contributed to the win and special thanks are due to Vamsee Krishna, who introduced guest Vinod Mandava, the Gents' 388th player. He made a meaty contribution, taking a wicket with his first ball and a fine catch, having earlier lost his own wicket to the best catch seen in years.

New captain Dubey chose to bat on a green wicket. After Krishna carved to gully, Ameer Ahmed (four fours and a six) and Kota (four fours) showed fine technique, adding 69 in 86 balls against good seam bowling, the first of three influential passages of play in the innings. It was a slow spongy wicket and they placed their ones and twos cleverly. After they both fell lbw, Sanjay Patel upped the rate with a brisk 24 off 25 balls faced including three fours and a six, Francis batting sensibly at the other end.

Patel's dismissal heralded a middle-order collapse as 123-3 became 154-9 in 45 balls. Francis and Sudireddy were undone by Joel's slow left-arm. Siddiq's skiddy seamers accounted for Gulati, Mandava and Namilikonda (10 with two scoring shots) thanks to excellent catches. Suresh's and the veteran Atta's were tough low ones at mid-wicket but Khan's at deep mid-off had to be seen to be believed. Mandava drove hard and high and the scorer had begun to inscribe a four with indelible pen, the usual pencil case having been left on the side at home. But no – Khan stuck out his right hand and clung on, to applause from all present.

Chatharaju and Dubey then batted wisely to add 30 in four overs to take Gents up to 184, Chatharaju striking three fours and the captain one, before a comedic run out with three balls left. They had done their job. Eagles had fielded soundly and bowled at 15 overs per hour, not bad given the frequent sanitation breaks and a somewhat otiose drinks break. Most had brought food, supplemented by sandwiches and water supplied by Harris's Asda run in an interval condensed to 20 minutes.

Harris spent much of his side's first-wicket stand in a state of alarm at the unorthodoxy of the opening batsmen, but effective it most certainly was. Krishna bowled with his usual guile, and he and Chatharaju beat the bat a few times, but Naseem struck three fours and a six and Ali Omar two fours in a frustrating period for the Gents. Dubey's introduction of Namilikonda bowling down the slope from the Tennyson Avenue end and Gulati from the Pavilion end improved the fortunes of the hosts. The score had progressed to 40-0 in 11.4 overs when Gulati bowled Omar with his fourth ball and, off the fourth ball of his next, had Naseem caught behind. Namilikonda then took his first wickets since 4 August 2019 – 32 overs of bustle with no reward – to out Farruq and Combes. The two seamers had carded in their first spells a combined 10-4-20-4.

Such niche statistics are not kept, but it must be a rare thing in a Gents game for Nos.5-9 to all make double figures. These chaps could bat. Harris is a brilliant player and with Atta the recovery was under way as Dubey and Kota took up the attack. But no sooner had Harris started than he was out, Mandava judging a skier perfectly on the long on boundary, taking the catch with his outstretched palms above his head in the approved international style (originally Australian). Atta then took up the attack and biffed Kota for two successive sixes before top-edging a pull to short fine leg Sanjay Patel.

At 84-6 Eagles were second favourites but how well their later batsmen played. Siddiq was the anchor, others played shots around him, but Joel fell first ball of the 26th over, bowled Mandava, 83 needed in 15 with four wickets in hand (Eagles had 12). Joel then ceded the strike while Shoaib Khan dismantled the attack, the pair scoring 38 in 37 balls. Mandava, having tried spin, reverted to seam and bowled Siddiq and, two balls later, Suresh. But Khan was now in the groove, hitting five fours and two sixes one, off Mandava, clearing the groundsman's garden to be lost in the trees in front of the allotments.

At 158-9 Eagles needed 27 off six but Khan was shot down by a worthy piece of cricket. He launched the returning Gulati high to long off where Francis judged the catch perfectly. Ali was allowed to bat for an over, victory was the Gents' by 20 runs, Dawood 10*. Gulati deserved his best club figures of 6-4-8-3.

This was Dubey's second match as captain and his first in this elected capacity. He set good fields and it was no coincidence that he had the right men in the deep to capture the vital wickets of Harris and Khan.

Kota bowled both right-arm off breaks and slow left-arm, permissible provided you tell the umpire who will then inform the batsman. This has international precedents: Pakistan batsman Hanif Mohammad, in the 1950s, was believed to be the first to bowl with both arms in a Test, former England captain Graham Gooch did it, and Sri Lanka's Hashan Tillakaratne (who was also a wicket-keeper) rolled out the trick during the closing stages of a win over Kenya at the 1996 World Cup.

Bricklayer's Arms v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 26 July, Abbey RG. Gents won toss. Showery, 21C

Lost by 6 wickets

Gentlemen of West London			Bricklayer's Arms			
H. Patel	c Waqas	b Otley	6	*Tremain	b H. Patel	40
Kumar	c Gul	b Lall	13	Sturm	b Krishna	9
Chatharaju	c Sah	b Lall	20	Gul	b H. Patel	46
Kota		b Sah	30	Thapa	b S. Patel	39
Francis	c Otley	b Sah	33	Waqas	not out	48
Pentakota	lbw	b Sah	0	Sah	not out	11
Gulati	c Waqas	b Basnet	38	Lall, Basnet, Khadka, Ottley and †Locke dnb		
†Sudireddy	c Waqas	b Basnet	20			
Newcombe	not out		20			
*Dubey	run out		11			
S. Patel and Krishna dnb						
Extras	b5 nb4		9	Extras	b3 w5	8
Total	9 wickets	40 overs	200	Total	4 wickets	38 overs
FoW: 7, 34, 41, 105, 105, 120, 161, 176, 200				FoW: 20, 83, 105, 176		
Bowling: Thapa 8-4-28-0, Ottley 8-1-24-1, Lall 2.3-0-3-2, Sah 8-1-42-3, Basnet 8-0-59-2, Tremain 0.3-0-3-0, Khadka 3-0-22-0, Gul 2-0-14-0				Bowling: Gulati 8-0-40-0, Krishna 6-0-23-1, Kumar 5-0-30-0, H. Patel 8-1-32-2, Pentakota 6-0-35-0, Kota 1-0-8-0, S. Patel 3-0-23-1, Dubey 1-0-7-0		



Mohammad Waqas

Bricklayer's Arms batted with guile and skill to beat the Gents for the first time at the eighth attempt, pacing a tough run chase perfectly. Captain Tremain led the way with a cultured 40, well supported by powerful blasts allied to excellent running from the Nepalese middle order trio Gul, Thapa and Waqas.

The Gurkha is a first-class fighting man to whom the UK will always be indebted. The Brigade of Gurkhas have won 26 Victoria Crosses, 12 in WW2 of which nine were awarded for action in Burma. On this cloudy, damp afternoon three members of the latest generation of Nepalese eviscerated the Gents attack ruthlessly, but with bat not kukri. Earlier, the Gents had accelerated from 58-3 at 20 overs to post a par 200.

Brick's achievement was notable in four respects: it was the joint fourth-highest score by an opponent not to include a fifty, the highest being Brentham's 240-6 dec. in 2010; only seven first innings totals higher than the Gents' 200 have been successfully chased; there was no Poulter; and the prolific Sunny Lall, whose first game against the Gents this was, did not even get his pads on. Their celebrations were completely justified.

Having studied stratagems and muses for what used to be Brick's preferred declaration format, captain Dubey was surprised to be offered a 40 over game. There then followed the usual courtship ritual, Tremain explaining that his team was weak and the Gents should bat first, make more of a game of it, otherwise all over by five o'clock, etc. That sort of thing. Dubey won the toss and batted. Gents ground out 20-1 off 10 overs of Thapa's seam and Ottley's off-breaks, each play and miss cheered to the echo by spectating former-captain Watson. Hemin Patel carved to cover before Kumar and Chatharaju fell off mistimed pulls, the slow but true wicket not helping their cause. Lall fell crook in his third over.

Kota and Francis batted well and took Gents to 58-3 at 20-over drinks but Sah had them both, then, for a golden, Pentakota, pinned on the back foot. It was a middle-order with much recent achievement on its CV and runs came quicker around a rain-enforced early tea taken after 31 overs, Gents 131-6. Gulati, Sudireddy, Newcombe and Dubey hit lustily to take the score to 200, 142-6 coming off the final 20. Brick had kept at it well in the field. Horace Hibbert, looking well, turned up to say hello, a delightful interlude.

Krishna bowled Sturm in the sixth over but the first ten brought 44 runs before Dubey changed the bowling. Tremain then smashed two Kumar long-hops through mid-wicket for four. The required rate was then 5.1, would briefly edge up to 6.6 when Hemin Patel and Pentakota were in tandem but was always achievable. There was no need for hysterical blasting by the batsmen, they seemed to have it under control throughout.

Hemin Patel, the pick of the bowlers, struck in the 18th and 24th overs, Tremain and Gul having struck seven fours each. Pentakota beat the bat a few times but the edge would not come and the pitch played true. Thapa (seven fours) and Waqas (six fours) were masterly.

Gents supporters were hoping for a Devon Loch collapse but a late wicket by Sanjay Patel could not induce it. The fielding was pretty good though a routine single upgraded to three by foolishness and subsequently analysed with unparliamentary language must be recorded. There was only one drop and it was not important. A deserved win came with two overs unbowed. Fours, 25 of the blighters, had come in 19 of the 38 over bowled, the short stuff being smashed to leg and anything full driven.

Abbey RG certainly produces good batting tracks. There were 417 runs in this game in 2019 and Brick and Railway Taverners had knocked up 479 here a fortnight before. Brick described it as “a great game, fine all-round team performance and a seriously good win.”



It was also a good day for fans of trains and toys. Chris Locke said that a railway line used to run behind the trees along the north side of the ground. The line, he claimed, served the Tri-Ang factory, where the Nelson Trading Estate now stands. Research soon confirmed that this astonishing piece of information was not, as first thought, a wild attempt to court popularity, but true.

The Lines brothers set up the Tri-Ang works, billed as “The largest Toy Factory in the World”, in Morden Road in 1924. It employed over 500 people. The site had its own railway siding and, in the centre of the factory site, its own football ground, which also came in handy as a space for testing out the model aircraft produced by the brothers’ International Model Aircraft company, which was on-site. The toys were famous but in 1971 the company went into administration. Girls were not forgotten, the 1950s range including a toy mangle for the housewives of the future. They probably had a Miss Tri-Ang competition. A poster from the 1930s recommended travelling “by Bus to the entrance of our Works” so the railway line would have been freight-only. Quite brilliant.

Highest successful run chases in Gents matches

Northfields 261-3 beat Gents 260-7 by 7 wickets (Durston House 24.5.15)
London Owls 239-0 beat Gents 235-9 dec. by 10 wickets (Victoria RG 5.9.93)
Northfields 238-3 beat Gents 237-9 by 7 wickets (Durston House 22.5.16)
Gents 235-9 beat 12 Angry Men 231-3 by 1 wicket (Victoria RG 3.9.00)
Judd Street Tigers 231-9 tied with Gents 231-10 (Old Tenisonians CC 14.7.13) ^{12-a-side}
Gents 217-10 beat Battersea Eagles 216-8 by 1 wicket (Old Tenisonians CC 22.7.18) ^{12-a-side}
Close PF 206-4 beat Gents 203-2 by 8 wickets (Old Tenisonians CC 28.6.15)
Bricklayer's Arms 201-4 beat Gents 200-9 by 6 wickets (Abbey RG, 26.7.20)
Gents 200-6 beat Close PF 196-5 by 4 wickets (Old Tenisonians CC 1.8.10)
Winchmore Hill Tigers 199-7 beat Gents 198-9 by 3 wickets (Paulin Ground 1.9.19)

We had never beaten the Gentlemen of West London – a few draws, many defeats, but nothing to rival this performance **writes Chris Locke**. They are always a strong side yet this time so were we. And thanks to some tight bowling, keen fielding and what their organiser Andy Burman described as a “superbly controlled run chase” we finally notched that first victory.

Somehow Greg Tremain had given their skipper the strange impression we were weak in batting, so they put us in the field. The opening bowling pair of Tara Thapa and Mike Ottley did an excellent job. Tara bowled four maidens in his six-over spell while some wily field placing brought Mike our first wicket on 7 as opener H. Patel slashed to Waqas at cover. Only 20 came from the first 10 overs.

Sunny Lall replaced Tara and on 34 got the other opener top-edging to debutant Riaz Gul at short backward square, followed seven runs later by tempting No 3 into a miscued hook to Khem Sah at midwicket. Unfortunately he then had to withdraw from the attack with a hamstring pulled reaching a wild return from Anil Basnet.

Halfway drinks saw just 58 on the board, but with Anil's bowling initially as wayward as his throw Gents accelerated through the next few overs. However Khem struck back on 105 with two wickets in two balls, the first jaggling back to take No.4's off stump, the second trapping their Hampshire League star back on his stumps, plum for a golden duck. Khem then had No.5 well taken on 120 by Mike Ottley at deep mid- on, atoning for an earlier dolly dropped round the corner.

That was the start of the last 10 overs, but rain forced an early tea with nine remaining and 131-6 on the board. The game was evenly poised for Gents' final assault. Some hard hitting, and hard chances spilt, saw them speed to 161 before Waqas took a steeper at extra cover, followed on 176 by an equally ice-cool catch at long off, both off Anil's second spell. Tara was unlucky to finish wicketless, Suraj Khadka bowled a promising spell and Riaz Gul was particularly unfortunate to see three sharp chances go down in the field. The last ball saw a run-out off his own bowling by Anil but 200 had been posted, including 80 off the final 10. Game on.

With the asking rate five an over Greg was determined we should bat time, and he and Tim Sturm got us to 20 before Tim was bowled for 9. Enter Riaz Gul, and he and Greg took us to 42 in 10 overs and 83 in the 18th before Greg's classy 40 was ended by a slow spinner which bounced over his bat onto the off bail. At halfway we had 92, well set to chase down the target with eight wickets in hand.

Riaz, also batting sensibly but punishing the bad ball, now took us up to 105 before being bowled four short of a deserved debut half-century. Now Tara, who looked out of sorts early on, and Waqas, who hit his first runs off his 10th ball, started to accelerate once they had played themselves in. They matched each other score for score with good running and the occasional boundary, taking us to 141 with 10 overs left and 176 before Tara was bowled for an invaluable 39 in the 35th over.

It's a measure of how disciplined our batting had been that Waqas gave our only catching chance, dropped at long on, and he and Khem saw us through, the only regret being that Waqas couldn't hit an eighth four for a fifty to seal the victory. Instead a single took him to our top score of 48 and the target of 201 with two overs to spare.

It was a great game, fine all-round team performance and a seriously good win.

Gentlemen of West London v. Kempton

Sunday 2 August, Old Tenisonians. Gents won toss. Sunny, 24C

Won by 39 runs

Gentlemen of West London			Kempton				
H. Patel	c Varma	b Marnes	13	Armstrong	lbw	b Namilikonda	43
Francis	c Axten	b Burson	3	J. Taylor	run out (Sudireddy)		17
*Dubey	c Axten	b Burson	10	W. Taylor	run out (Francis)		2
Kota	c Stock	b Mather	35	†Pipe		b Pingili	68
Chatharaju	c Axten	b Mather	0	Axten	c and	b H. Patel	45
†Sudireddy		b Burson	96	Mannes	c Sudireddy	b H. Patel	5
Namilikonda	st Pipe	b Mather	9	Varma	lbw	b H. Patel	4
Gulati	not out		66	*Walsh	c Kota	b H. Patel	3
Krishna	not out		5	Burson	not out		10
Pingili and S. Patel	dnb			Mather	c Francis	b Pingili	1
				Stock	st Sudireddy	b H. Patel	2
Extras	b10 w2 nb3		15	Extras	b4 lb3 w5 nb1		13
Total	7 wickets	35 overs	252	Total	All out	34.5 overs	213
FoW:	15, 27, 31, 40, 67, 82, 222			FoW:	51, 72, 72, 172, 191, 191, 198, 198, 203, 213		
Bowling:	Mannes 7-1-23-1, Burson 7-0-48-3, Mather 7-0-47-3, Stock 4-0-40-0, Axten 4-0-49-0, Walsh 6-0-35-0			Bowling:	Chatharaju 6-1-23-0, Krishna 7-1-23-0, Namilikonda 6-1-37-1, Gulati 5-0-31-0, H. Patel 5.5-0-41-5, Dubey 2-0-31-0, Pingili 3-0-20-2		



Ratnakar Sudireddy (above, 96) and Vinitesh Gulati (66*) set a record seventh-wicket stand of 140 in Gents matches to propel the hosts to 252-7, a total that had seemed most unlikely when they were reduced to 82-6 by sharp Kempton bowling and brilliant close catching. The youthful visitors, oldest player 28 and an average age of just 19, responded well with a century stand of their own but subsided in the evening gloom to the off-spin of Hemin Patel, his fourth five-wicket haul for the club and first since 2011.

Yet despite Gulati's and Patel's efforts this was Sudireddy's day, completed by a run out, a neat catch and a stumping. His fortunes had improved sharply after unfortunate recent incidents in the past two matches, when he had mislaid glasses and trousers. Air, land and sea searches had been launched, only for the missing items to be found in pocket and kitbag respectively.

Dubey won the toss and batted without hesitation on a breezy but warm day. The early overs were Kempton's as Hemin Patel carved to backward point and Francis, Dubey and Chatharaju all edged to the confident hands of second slip Axten. Sudireddy is a nervous starter so Kota sensibly took most of the strike and was beginning to accelerate himself when he hooked to fine leg.

Namilikonda gave Mather the charge and was stumped by the efficient Pipe (not their regular glovesman), remaining at the crease in his characteristic posture of self-loathing, bringing down the wrath of the Gods on spinners who flight the ball and mislead batsmen, wicket-keepers who can catch and remove bails, and umpires who do not give the benefit of the doubt to men stranded six feet in front of the popping crease. That was 17 overs gone out of 35, and 82-6.

Gulati then walked out to the middle to join Sudireddy, who had moved nervously to 10* after six overs at the crease. Thus was birthed a majestic stand of 140 in just 15 overs and 65 minutes which included 16 fours and four sixes. Mather and Stock suffered the brunt.

Triumphalism is defined as excessive exultation over one's success or achievements. It is a mental state worth avoiding in match reports. These were young bowlers, though not too young to play second or third XI cricket and, in the case of Axted and skipper Walsh, first XI. They fetched a bouncer or two to both batsmen, one hitting Sudireddy a fearful blow on the shoulder. Yet the attacking strokeplay was superb, and the batsmen deserved their success. The only controversy came when an appeal for caught behind off Sudireddy, which the umpire thought had brushed his arm, was declined.

Sudireddy went to his second club fifty with a six that cleared the fence, carried 80 yards and took out two tiles on the bay of a house on Tennyson Avenue. This vandalism prompted action by the groundsman, who smoothed things over after the householder had WhatsApped him a lurid picture of the damage. A better process all round than a solicitor's letter. He took his 14th and 15th fours off the returning quick Burson but played on next ball. He had scored 72 in boundaries. Gulati went to his own fifty with a fusillade of fours and with Krishna's intelligent support ended 66* (six fours and two sixes). The innings had comprised two hours 38 minutes of rip-roaring entertainment. The scorer kept up with events and somehow balanced the books.

In the inaugural game in May 2019 Kempton's overseas professional Jarod Little won the game single-handed with 108*, the last ton against the Gents. Here they relied on teamwork and with a little luck might have done it. Armstrong and J. Taylor saw off neat spells by Chatharaju and Krishna and laid the foundations before Namilikonda struck. At 72 Kempton suffered a double blow when the Taylor brothers were run out off successive balls, Sudireddy throwing down the stumps and cover Francis sensibly throwing in to the bowler.

Seventeen overs were up by this point, the required rate a formidable 10.1, yet Pipe (nine fours and two sixes) and Axten (seven fours) were not downhearted and added 100 in 12.3. The sprint had begun (46 off three overs) when Patel struck, running up the pitch to catch Axten. Mannes top-edged behind and Gents had regained a measure of control. Pingili and Patel then cleaned up, the spinner taking two in two and having the hat-trick ball shelled by silly mid-off. Long on Kota caught a stunner.

Both teams played some good cricket. There was little to choose between the sides' batting though the older, stronger Gents larruped the ball harder. Kempton's early close catching was admirable but Gents' outfielding was slightly better with Sanjay Patel, who neither batted nor bowled, putting in a faultless and energetic shift in the deep.

Nobody knows what the rest of the season will bring. One hopes that most of the games will be played and will add to the fund of memories over winter.

A new playing model



We include an interesting article below from the Club Cricket Conference website. Be prepared to discuss this at the A.G.M., but there is a growing feeling that self-catering is the way forward. The club spent £896 on teas in 2019, and very good they were too, but apart from Wycombe House they need a lot of effort and at away grounds the standard was variable. Cricket will look different in 2021.

The absence of teas implies a lower annual subscription or match fee though in order to balance the books we would need to be firmer in demanding pitch hire fees for one-off fixtures. Another consideration worthy of note is that a reduction in the tea interval means an earlier finish, no washing up and more time for socialising or returning to the family.

Just a reminder – please pay the agreed match fee of £10 to secure the club's liquidity. We will then review on the basis of £35 subs and £5 match fees and either refund the difference in cash, or use it as prepayment for 2021, according to the preference of the individual.

The great tea debate (from Club Cricket Conference website)

It's clear from what we've heard this week that the instruction for recreational cricketers to bring their own tea to matches could prove to be a long-term move, and one welcomed by what appears to be a majority of people involved in the club game. That may or may not surprise some people, but it does appear that one of the sport's great traditions could soon be given its marching orders - tucking its bat under its arm and exiting sheepishly stage left, after over a century as a staple of Saturday and Sunday afternoon cricket. Despite the speed of the debate over teas being hastened by the onset of the coronavirus, the argument over whether they should or should not form a fundamental part of league cricket is not a new one.

Back in 2017, in a bid to reverse falling numbers of players and teams in the Hampshire League, it was argued that cutting short the tea break wouldn't just encourage more cricketers to stay in the game, but would also save cricket clubs a small fortune. "Cricket teas cost so much money and take up so much time that most people now just don't have, that getting rid of them could actually help the league," said then Fair Oak chairman, Tony Oxley. He estimated that teas cost the club almost £2,000 a season, an amount not to be trifled with. His comments made the national press and breathed fresh life into the tea conversation.

What the Covid-19 crisis has done, however, is to take teas to somewhere near the top of the club cricket agenda. Given the financial constraints that most clubs are going to find themselves operating with for the foreseeable future, the cost argument is as clear cut as a finely sliced Battenberg. Put simply, most clubs would be financially better off if teas were scrapped entirely. They can then, arguably, focus on providing food if and when it's required by players or spectators during the course of the match – or at a change of innings that promises to be far briefer than was once the case. Not only will this cut down on the risk of tea being wasted in the advent of rain – costing clubs money they can never recoup – it also offers clubs the chance to bring in additional income on a matchday.

Some of those to contact us since the original article from Newsletter 17, have said that they would look to continue with teas for Sunday fixtures which are, by their very nature, more of a social affair than their Saturday equivalent. But what has become abundantly clear from the correspondence we've received is that the shortening of games, the cost savings, and also money-making opportunities, mean that most cricket clubs have already made up their minds on the issue.

This response from a cricket club treasurer seems to sum up the issues clubs have been facing very succinctly. "Long gone for us are the days of wives and girlfriends doing a tea rota. We have to pay commercial rates to our tea lady," he says. "We typically spend £3,500 per season on the cost of teas. Yes, this is partially recouped from match fees, but the players and the club all pay far more than if we had BYO. We are firmly in the camp of let's make the change permanent!"

With that kind of eye-watering cost, it's little surprise that they're hoping for an extension to the current tea experiment. The players themselves also appear to concur, as this response illustrates. "As a player I would say undoubtedly my biggest problem every week was teas," he says. "We were playing at a second ground with a very a basic kitchen area making everything even more difficult. We moved on to 'bring a plate' but even this took some organisation, save having cheese and pickle sandwiches for 22. It has staggered me that teas are still seen as essential, and if this pandemic brings an end to this, then I'm sure captains at the lower levels of league structures would breathe a sigh of relief. I'm sure there are many clubs who still have wonderfully prepared teas and that needn't stop, but tea provision is, by and large, a huge burden."

Others take a different view, with one respondent arguing that recreational cricket has far more important matters to concern itself with than whether tea should be removed from proceedings. Again, that's a valid point given the struggles that most have experienced this season.

But it's also possible to argue that removing teas and the costs associated with them, would put clubs in a far more robust financial state should the situation in 2020 ever arise again. This promises to be a debate that will run and run. In the meantime, there is clearly plenty to chew over.

Northfields v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 9 August, Durston House. Gents won toss. Sunny, 33C

Won by 16 runs

Gentlemen of West London			Northfields				
A. Ahmed	c Jas	b Egan	0	Iverson	c Sudireddy	b Krishna	7
Krishna	c Derr. Redhead	b Egan	17	†Kevan		b Gulati	4
†Sudireddy		b Egan	29	Hyder	c A. Ahmed	b Namilikonda	6
Kota	c Derr. Redhead	b Egan	7	*David Redhead	c Sudireddy	b Dubey	13
Francis	lbw	b Egan	2	Hamza	c Krishna	b Namilikonda	0
Namilikonda	c Ed	b Kent	20	Darren Redhead	c Namilikonda	b Dubey	22
Gulati	lbw	b Derr. Redhead	12	Jas	c Sudireddy	b Kumar	2
Kumar	c Hyder	b David Redhead	0	Derrick Redhead	c Gulati	b Dubey	18
Chatharaju	not out		8	Ed	run out (Dubey)		0
*Dubey	lbw	b Derr. Redhead	0	Kent		b Krishna	0
Kandakuri	c Egan	b Derr. Redhead	0	Egan	not out		0
Extras	w3		3	Extras	lb1 w7 nb2		10
Total	All out	23 overs	98	Total	All out	38.2 overs	82
FoW: 0, 40, 51, 65, 75, 81, 88, 94, 98, 98			FoW: 11, 15, 21, 21, 33, 38, 79, 81, 82, 82				
Bowling: Egan 8-1-50-5, Kent 8-2-31-1, Derrick Redhead 4-2-9-3, David Redhead 3-1-8-1			Bowling: Gulati 8-2-21-1, Krishna 8-3-9-2, Namilikonda 7-2-26-2, Dubey 6.2-1-8-3, Kumar 5-2-9-1, Chatharaju 4-1-8-0				

The Gents, having scandalously refused to use 17 of the 40 overs available to them, successfully defended their lowest total batting first since 2017 (Hounslow Hurricanes). Nilesh Dubey captained inspirationally and all his big decisions came off. A tense, draining game was notable for a difficult wicket and fine catching by both sides: 13 were taken, eight backward of square. The Gents even took a slip catch.

The story of the first innings can be told briefly. The bowled-through Egan took five wickets and Kent one before two of the three Redhead brothers finished things off, supported by perfect catching. The whole innings was over in 93 minutes. Ahmed clipped the day's fourth ball to square leg before Sudireddy, with sound support from Krishna, put on 40. Egan then worked his way through the top order, assisted by two excellent slip catches. Four made it into double figures but a grubber at the Motorway end or a lifter off the ridge at the Swyncombe Avenue end was never far away. Perhaps this played on the minds of the batsmen. Three fell lbw, none of the decisions controversial.

After a quick turnaround Iverson and Kevan were at the crease 13 minutes later. Gulati found the edge for a four through the slips but nothing much else happened until Gulati bowled Kevan after 6.4 overs. Hyder slashed his first ball for four over the slips. Krishna, bowling with guile and intelligence, had Iverson caught behind next over. Namilikonda, taking over from Gulati in the 13th over, had Hyder caught second slip Ahmed first ball. His next was short to the ribcage, Hamza top-edging a pull high to Krishna (what a good game he was having) on the long leg boundary, excellent field disposition by Dubey.

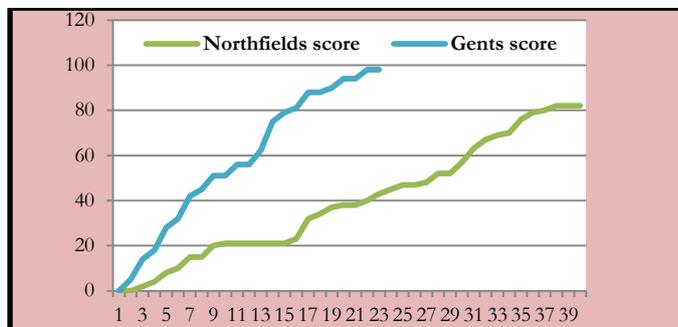
The Gents then bowled five maidens on the reel, Northfields creaking at 21-4 off 15. David Redhead on-drove two fours (of only eight in the innings) off Namilikonda. The Gents needed to see the back of this exceptional, brave player and were delighted when Dubey found the edge. Kumar, hitting the ridge every ball and getting fearful lift, struck with his fifth ball – another successful bowling change and a third catch at the wicket for Sudireddy. Northfields had lurched to 38-6 off 20 overs.

Darren and Derrick Redhead ground out a stand of 41 in 15.3 overs, resolute in defence but unable to dominate accurate bowling on a terror strip and sound fielding. After 30 overs it was 57-6 whereupon runs came more freely to take Northfields to 79-6 off 36, 20 need in four overs. By this point, the tension was crackling, each dot ball cheered by the away end (H. and S. Patel), and each run roared on by vociferous home players and supporters

Dubey then induced a mistimed drive by Darren to short cover Namilikonda and the Gents had their breakthrough. The end came quickly, Krishna's final over tilting the game firmly towards the visitors. Dubey ran out Ed with a direct hit from short mid-wicket third ball and Krishna bowled Kent with his last to card an attritional 8-3-9-2. Still, the target was not yet out of range.

Seventeen were needed off 12 balls, but after a dot Derrick Redhead drove Dubey to deep mid-off where Gulati dived forward to take a splendid low catch worthy of winning such a hard game.

Dubey's return of 6.2-1-8-3 was his best for the club. Seven catches (and eight fielding dismissals) are rare returns but not records; ten were taken against Enville on tour in 2004 when they batted 12. Gents have managed nine fielding dismissals three times (opponents once), and eight six times (opponents seven).



A rubbish graphic, to be fair the first for a while, illustrates the progress of the match. The big over from Northfields did not come. We leave the final words to their gracious skipper: "Yesterday saw a good game of cricket where you guys came out on top. I just wanted to thank your team for playing in the right spirit. It was thoroughly enjoyable and we look forward playing you both home and away next year."

Defending low totals

5/5/91	Gunnelsbury Park	Gents 52, London Owls 42	Won 9 runs
30/8/09	Victoria RG	Gents 59, Wombles 42	Won 17 runs
22/8/93	Victoria RG	Gents 72, Enterprise 45	Won 27 runs
29/8/04	Victoria RG	Gents 84, St Anne's Allstars 73	Won 11 runs
11/6/89	Boston Manor Park	Gents 85-4, West XI 77-4 (10 overs)	Won 8 runs
30/6/91	Gunnelsbury Park	East Harrow Cheetahs 89, Gents 69	Lost 20 runs
14/9/98	GSK Greenford	Gents 89, Salix 89	Tied
3/8/96	Arnos Park	Gents 90, Sunderland SC 89	Won 1 run
12/5/02	Hampstead Heath	Gents 91, 12 Angry Men 78	Won 13 runs
5/5/13	Old Tenisonians	Gents 97-7, Ramgarhia 93-7 (15 overs)	Won 4 runs
16/8/92	Victoria RG	Gents 97, London Saints 96-8	Won 1 run
9/8/20	Durston House	Gents 98, Northfields 82	Won 16 runs
8/9/91	Gunnelsbury Park	Gents 99, Enterprise 17	Won 82 runs
27/5/89	Cranford Park	East Harrow Cheetahs 101, Gents 54	Lost 47 runs
13/8/88	Windsor GS	West XI 102, Gents 95	Lost 7 runs
11/5/03	Hampstead Heath	12 Angry Men 103, Gents 85	Lost 15 runs
21/4/96	Alexandra RG	Gents 106, Lager Louts 71	Won 35 runs
5/7/98	Victoria RG	Gents 106, Sunderland SC 81	Won 25 runs
26/5/91	Gunnelsbury Park	West XI 108, Gents 87	Lost 21 runs
5/8/07	Fairfield RG	Gents 109-2, London Owls 87-3 (15 overs)	Won 22 runs

*short format

Wins defending a total of 110 or under have become rarer because wickets have improved. Instances are worth recording for newer members. Gents have carded such dismal scores 52 times, winning 14, tying one and losing 37: oppo have won 5 out of 62 such games. Before Northfields (above) the most recent occurrence was Wombles in 2009, a game that lasted only 30 overs of the scheduled 70.

There are other caveats. Enterprise only had seven men on 8 September 1991, when Mark Ashton took a hat-trick off the first three balls of their reply. Five years later, he showed no mercy on Andi Ansell, Sunderland's lady scorer, who was pressed into last batsman duties. Nine instances came on capricious batting pitches at Gunnelsbury Park and Victoria RG.

Forthcoming fixtures

Sun 23 August	Bricklayer's Arms	Old Tenisonians KT3 6LX 1pm
Sun 30 August	Winchmore Hill Tigers	Paulin Ground N21 3DN 12.30pm
Sat 5 Sept	Squirrels	Long Ditton RG KT6 5QE 1pm
Sun 6 Sept	Millfields	Wycombe House TW7 5PL 1pm
Sun 13 Sept	Holtwhites Trinibis	Holtwhites Trinibis CC EN2 0RN 1pm
Sun 20 Sept	Salix	Haydons Road RG SW19 1AW 12am
Sun 27 Sept	Hale	Hale Common GU9 0HN 1pm

Please study. Judging by recent comments, the early September double-header was news to some.

Gentlemen of West London v. Clapham In

Sunday 16 August, Old Tenisonians. Gents won toss. Cloudy, 24C

Won by 98 runs

Gentlemen of West London			Clapham In				
Chatharaju	lbw	b Goodman	13	Gregory	c S. Patel	b Chatharaju	14
Namilikonda	lbw	b Frecknall	91	Ferreira	c Sudireddy	b S. Patel	20
Kota		b Ferreira	49	Cheetham		b Namilikonda	46
S. Patel		b Gillard	15	O'Connell		b Kota	14
Kumar	not out		35	†Tooze	c Sudireddy	b Namilikonda	4
†Sudireddy	c Frecknall	b Goodman	13	Smith		b Pingili	7
A. Ahmed	not out		10	Frecknall	c Dubey	b Kumar	15
Pingili, Pentakota, *Dubey and Krishna	dnb			Stern	not out		8
				Royal	not out		10
				*Goodman and Gillard dnb			
Extras	b9 nb1 w8 nb2		20	Extras	b2 lb3 w1 nb4		10
Total	5 wickets	35 overs	246	Total	7 wickets	35 overs	148
FoW: 16, 160, 168, 189, 225				FoW: 27, 76, 95, 105, 111, 127, 134			
Bowling: Gillard 7-0-46-1, Goodman 7-0-52-2, Royal 7-0-38-0,				Bowling: Krishna 6-1-14-0, Chatharaju 7-1-21-1, Pentakota 5-0-26-0,			
Gregory 4-0-32-0, Smith 2-0-25-0, Frecknall 5-1-21-1, Ferreira 3-0-22-1				S. Patel 5-0-25-1, Namilikonda 3-0-16-2, Kota 3-0-12-1,			
				Pingili 3-0-13-1, Kumar 2-0-3-1, Dubey 1-0-13-0			

Old Tenisonians CC saw its second successive record stand as Gents avenged their 2019 defeat by Clapham In. Namilikonda (91 with 12 fours and four sixes) and Kota (49 with five fours and a six) were the offenders, scoring 144 for the second wicket in 24.3 overs and incurring much revision of club records by the editorial team.

On a muggy day, with rain never far away (though it stayed mostly dry), Dubey won his fifth toss in a row and for the fifth time batted first. Chatharaju struck two fours in the first over but was pinned lbw in the fourth. The partnership that followed was relentless and largely untroubled until spinners Frecknall and Ferreira, who bowled very well in tandem, got some turn. Namilikonda, ever the showman, had begun his innings with a selection of bizarre one-handed shots, but after he let go of his bat, perhaps thinking he was tossing the caber (see Note), he played with more orthodoxy. Kota too batted pleasingly.

An entertaining incident occurred with a Namilikonda six into a garden. The lady householder was kind and helpful, but in trying to throw the ball back saw it become lodged in the fence. It took a squad of Clapham engineers a few minutes to get the ball to bounce back into the garden whereupon the lady successfully threw it back second go to a grateful round of applause.

After the stand had been broken the remaining batsmen ploughed on at seven an over. Each batsman got into double figures and 246 looked a daunting score. So it proved, but Clapham In, though led something of a merry dance over the previous two and a half hours, never behaved like a demoralised team. They batted with guts and determination, but early on were unable to force the issue against tight bowling, limping to 29-1 off 12 overs. Cheetham was the pick of the batsmen and deserved a fifty. He was unfortunate to be dismissed. In the 2019 game Namilikonda had bowled a head-high beamer first ball of the match to Shinner, who cut it for six, leaving Clapham In 7-0 off 0.0 overs! Eager to reprise his party piece he bowled three beamers in his first over, narrowly escaping a Law 42.9 violation, before pitching one that somehow got through Cheetham's defences. The bowlers did their job, Chatharaju getting a deserved wicket before going on his paternity leave, and Sudireddy (twice), S. Patel and Dubey took neat catches. Nine bowled as the captain gave everyone a game.

The clouds lifted and the final overs were played out in bright late summer sunshine. This change in the weather was in defiance of the 76 different weather forecasts players had checked during the day. Something is amiss. If you can't trust the public internet, who can you trust?

Note: Mark Ashton once let go of his bat and lost his wicket. Against London Saints in 1995 it went flying off to mid-wicket. He padded off sheepishly to retrieve it and Speedtwin ran him out. There was no possibility of a repetition here because a visitor kindly returned Namilikonda's traumatised bat.