

Salix v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 12 June, Boston Manor PF. Salix won toss. Sunny, 21C

Won by 3 wickets

| Salix | | Gentlemen of West London | | | | | |
|--|------------------|--------------------------|------------|--|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| *Sadhra | c Nagpal | b H. Patel | 44 | Gulati | c Desai | b Ali | 38 |
| Dodd | c Parvathaneni | b Krishna | 15 | R. Patel | | b Ali | 1 |
| Sarif | c Nagpal | b Chatharaju | 4 | Chatharaju | lbw | b Ali | 0 |
| Spurr | c H. Patel | b Chatharaju | 6 | *†Sudireddy | | b Ali | 6 |
| Kulasingam | c Dubey | b Krishna | 40 | Puli | | b Spurr | 5 |
| †Desai | | b H. Patel | 0 | Parvathaneni | c Desai | b Unadkat | 40 |
| Balasubramaniam | lbw | b Gulati | 0 | Nagpal | | b Unadkat | 2 |
| Ali | c Gulati | b Krishna | 4 | Dubey | not out | | 15 |
| Mike | | b S. Patel | 4 | S. Patel | not out | | 16 |
| Irwin | not out | | 1 | H. Patel and Krishna | dnb | | |
| Unadkat | dnb | | | | | | |
| Extras | w6 nb3 b5 | | 14 | Extras | w5 nb5 b1 lb1 | | 12 |
| Total | 9 wickets | 35 overs | 132 | Total | 7 wickets | 26.2 overs | 135 |
| FoW: 28, 51, 61, 97, 101, 102, 115, 130, 132 | | | | FoW: 3, 3, 21, 26, 92, 99, 103 | | | |
| Bowling: Krishna 7-2-15-3, Dubey 4-0-23-0, Chatharaju 5-0-24-2, Nagpal 4-0-24-0, Gulati 4-0-9-1, H. Patel 6-0-18-2, S. Patel 5-1-14-1 | | | | Bowling: Ali 7-2-17-4, Spurr 5-0-29-1, Mike 4-1-24-0, Sadhra 3-0-19-0, Balasubramaniam 1-0-11-0, Unadkat 5-0-25-2, Kulasingam 1.2-0-8-0 | | | |

The match was originally scheduled for Barn Elms but had to be moved after a booking error by the ground authority. It is not only the Gents who suffer from variable communication and it was a pleasure to help Salix procure this ground. The previous Gents' game here was a rain-ruined draw in 2015 with Baker Street Irregulars on the top pitch. Only three players returned from that soggy day: Nilesh Dubey and Sanjay Patel, who had to use all their skill and experience here to steer Gents to their eighth successive win, and Ratnakar Sudireddy (who batted No.11).

This was a game of sparkling entertainment in which Salix fought well. As did Gents they had two gun batters who defied varied and skilled attacks. This led to an appearance by our much-loved old friend the lop-sided scorecard, with its multitude of single-figure contributions. In the end it came down to catching: Gents took six out of seven while Salix dropped Dubey on nought and Patel on 10.

Sadhra won the toss and batted solidly for his 44, falling at 97 well caught on the mid-wicket boundary by a tumbling Nagpal. The baton passed to Kulasingam who ensured that a competitive total was achieved on a slow wicket with occasional low bounce. The bowlers did well, Chatharaju achieving preposterous inswing. Krishna took two wickets in his second spell to bring up double-figure wickets for 2024. He is in the form of his life, also taking wickets regularly on Saturdays in the Essex league. Salix batted stoically but could not find any acceleration towards the end of the innings, only 35 coming off the final 13 as the bowlers dominated.

The Gents' innings had everything – a monumental 38 from Gulati spread over 20 overs, a blast from Parvathaneni of 40 off 32 balls, great wisdom at the end and in between a series of comedy dismissals as a series of batters failed to come to terms with either pitch or bowling. There was incisive seam from young Ali and demon leg-spin from Unadkat. It made for jolly entertainment.

Ali dominated the early overs as Gents fell in a heap to 26-4. Concentrating on the basics of line and length, the top-order could not cope with him. Puli was undone by a shooter but otherwise the batting was too tentative. Gulati, watchful and composed, then found the ideal partner in Parvathaneni as 66 were put up in 10.2 overs. They played Unadkat very well, though Parvathaneni edged behind, 92-5.

Salix were not done and it was soon 103-7, Gulati nicking off and Nagpal bowled. Run rate was not a problem when Dubey strode to the crease and after a nervous start when he drove a tough chance to mid-on, he exuded authority. Runs came quickly. Patel flicked a simple chance to short mid-wicket, dropped, but otherwise took everything in his stride as he has done so often. Ali was bowled out but Unadkat was still a threat and Kulasingam is a masterly all-rounder. But the batters grew in confidence and the stand was 32 off 30 balls when Patel straight-drove the winning four at 17.46, an early finish. Post-match socials were fun – roll on the September return.