

## ISLIP CRICKET CLUB



Although the weather has yet to stop us from playing and has improved slightly since that first 6 degree game in April at Kempsford, balmy sunny days have so far been conspicuous by their absence. For a while, so too was a win for Islip, until the second of the four matches covered by this report.

We shall gloss quickly over the away game against Isis. They batted first, their openers making 101 between them. Islip did hit back, eventually taking 9 wickets as Isis took their score to 158. At 54-4, an Islip win was not out of the question but along came the first major Islip Batting Collapse of the season. The last six Islip batsmen mustered just 5 runs between them, including an inglorious 3 ducks, with Isis's Ponsford brothers taking 7-30 between them - a defeat by 90 runs.

May's first game against Iffley Village CC was played at Abingdon Vale CC, a picturesque ground just past the bridge over the Thames not far from the centre of Abingdon. On a sunny but sometimes painfully cold day, Iffley batted first. Islip had Andy Epton making his first appearance of 2021 and father and son Mo and Neil Talmati making their debuts. Iffley batted first and their openers looked comfortable until some sharp fielding by Mo with a direct hit on the stumps saw the first wicket fall. 1-1. When a few overs later a direct hit from Jack Launchbury sent another man back to the pavilion, the surviving opener was heard to mutter something about expecting to eat a particularly socially distanced tea.

The most memorable moment of the innings came when a half-tracker from Ludo Bennett-Jones was launched quite a distance over square leg's head, easily clearing a two metre net put there to protect a number of caravans and a row of people in front of them who were sitting watching. The ball lodged between the inner and outer panes of a caravan window, shattering the plastic outer layer but leaving the glass intact. Our fielder's "Please can we have our ball back" request was met with a mixture of cooperation and recrimination. When the batsman joined the search team, the discussion continued. It is not completely clear whether the finer points of implied acceptance of foreseeable risk and *volenti non fit iniuria* were covered in detail. Those waiting on the pitch for the return of the ball were concerned about Ludo's contributory negligence in delivering such an awful ball, but someone did eventually point out that it was very much a foreseeable risk which the skipper had accepted on behalf of the team when he put him on to bowl.

These things do happen in cricket. Lord Denning's dissenting Court of Appeal judgement in *Miller v Jackson* [1977] is a warning to those with a limited tolerance of cricket's incursions into their lives and makes wonderful reading but is too long for me to include here – do look it up on Wikipedia\*.

When play resumed, Oliver Russ, who had hit the mighty blow, immediately retired having scored 49, saying that he was going to buy some flowers. Ludo stayed, and the remaining 4 balls of his over went for ten runs. Things did improve, with Shreyas Anand, held back as a secret weapon by Ollie Black, returning a creditable 7-1-21-3 and Andy Epton taking wickets in consecutive balls to end the Iffley innings on 167.

Islip started well, reaching 46 from 7 overs before Shreyas was out caught for 7. Ollie Black was hitting the ball hard, but at 70 in the 13<sup>th</sup> over, wickets began to fall. Ollie went for 45, bowled by Oliver Russ, back from his search for flowers, and ten overs later the score had moved to just 94-4. But Ludo Bennett-Jones was at the crease and, perhaps wanting to make amends for earlier events, was not giving up easily. Supported by Mo and Neil (the latter unlucky to be run out) and then Kevin Crawford he did his best to chase down the 50 runs needed from the last 5 overs, falling 17 runs short (Islip 151-6) and finishing on 50 not out.

Islip's first win of the season came on May 9<sup>th</sup> in our first home game. We had originally intended to visit Moreton that day but their previous opponents in the Village Cup had scratched and so they were in the next round that day. A hastily arranged game with Oxenford was played at Islip but too late for the outfield to be cut (we think that Green Scythe tried to make amends by cutting the outfield twice before the following week's game) so this really was coarse cricket at its finest with very few shots along the ground worth more than a single. Oxenford batted first and made slow progress to 22 from 10 overs before accelerating, making 50 off the last 48 balls to finish on 145-6 (2 run-outs); had their opening batsman not retired on 103 not out (14 boundaries including 5 sixes), it could have been more.

In reply, Islip did not start quickly, making it to 83-4 from the first 26 overs (Harry Brock 30). One of Oxenford's change bowlers was bowling at a fearsome pace and the light was dreadful. Ollie Black was still there and despite not being able to see some deliveries at all was hitting the ball hard. He had the sightscreen moved, his luck held and 64 runs came from the next 45 balls. Islip were home with 4 wickets and 9 balls to spare (Ollie Black 44 not out, Kevin Crawford 10 not out).

At home against Salix, a game that came close to being called off by the weather was restricted to 30 overs a side. Batting first, Salix's openers were not troubled by Islip's attack, and enjoyed first use of the freshly cut outfield. Late wickets saw them finish on 143-5. Islip's reply never quite took off until, coming in at 43-4 in the 14<sup>th</sup> over, Ben Crawford, in his first post-football season game, hit a quick fire 37. Islip finished on 125-9 (Ludo Bennett-Jones 17 not out, Kevin Crawford 10 not out). Perhaps we should have played 35 overs after all.

We may have lost a lot more games than we have won, but there has been some exciting cricket. There is plenty of the season yet to come and we are confident that things will start to go our way – eventually. Perhaps we should simply not cut the outfield before home games. Sunday cricket - with a 2pm start to games - continues in June, by when surely temperatures will have risen a little. The full 2021 fixtures are on the club website at

<https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/islipcricketclub>, and the club can be contacted via

6th June	Baldons	Away
13 <sup>th</sup> June	Middleton Stoney	Away
20 <sup>th</sup> June	Appleton	Home
27 <sup>th</sup> June	RUASCC	Home
4 <sup>th</sup> July	Cumnor	Away

[islipcricketclub@gmail.com](mailto:islipcricketclub@gmail.com). Do get in touch if you'd like to know more – we welcome players of all ages, abilities and experience – or if you'd just like to get involved.

*\*With thanks to Marc Howe for his input on*

*Tort, nuisance, negligence and cricketing case-law*