

ISLIP CRICKET CLUB



If the August weather has been mixed, so too has the cricket. Four more games to report on, one played at Islip despite Sunday morning rain, Islip scores ranging from 66 all out to 207-3 and our second last ball defeat of the season.

For our last July game, we visited Ascott-u-Wychwood for the first time. The previous week, 70 overs there had produced more than 400 runs, but this game was rather different. Islip batted first and slipped from 51-4 to 66 all out in 21 overs. Only Ben Crawford (26) made it to double figures and the usually reliable extras contributed only 9, but was still equal second highest scorer, matched only by Ollie Black. Six of our batsmen were bowled and the length ball that somehow floated gently over David Goodfellow's forward defensive landing gracefully on the bails rather summed up Islip's innings.

It turned out that all was not lost. Tight bowling (Kevin Crawford 11-3, Ben Crawford 11-1) and a spirited fielding performance saw Ascott slide to 35-7. A recovery to 50-9 did briefly put the result in doubt but fine death bowling by Harry Brock (3 maidens in his five overs, 7-2) left the Ascott number 8 batsman stranded on 17 not out in a total of 60 from 27 overs, a remarkable win for Islip.

On August 1st, the newly formed Oxford Afghan Cricket Club visited Islip, replacing Isis who gave us good notice that they could not raise a team. Overnight rain left the outfield very wet and the visitors won the toss, unsurprisingly asking Islip to bat first. Scoring runs was not easy; Ollie Black top-scored with 28 as Islip made 95 in 32 overs. Debutant Harvey Scott batted well before being caught for 7, and extras chipped in with a creditable 19. Harry Venables hit the ball hard and was unlucky to be run out for 9. As the outfield dried, run scoring got easier, and despite Ben Crawford's 22-2, OACC cruised home in 20 overs for the loss of 2 wickets.

Conditions were rather better when OCCSCC visited Islip the following week. Opening for Islip, Harvey Scott was in good form, making 22 before being caught. Oli Black top scored with 48 before also being caught with 10 overs of the 35 remaining and with Islip on 98-5. Kevin Crawford (17) kept the scoreboard moving before a flurry of run outs in the last 2 overs, Ed Croft falling for 2 and Kaito Bremner for 11 leaving Islip on 135-9 from their 35 overs (extras 12).

Kaito (11-0 from 4 overs) opened the bowling with Ethan Bird and Islip soon had the visitors well behind the run rate. By the end of the 20th over, OCCSCC were 59-2, needing 77 from 15 overs. Three catches that would normally be taken went down and things were finely balanced going into the last few overs. Ed Croft took his first wicket for Islip in the 33rd over with the score on 122 and it was Ed who bowled the 35th and last over with the visitors needing just 6 runs to win. After 4 dot balls, one run off the bat and 3 extras, it all came down to the last ball, with 2 needed from it for victory. In came Ed, pitching perhaps very slightly short of a length, and the ball went to the midwicket boundary, leaving Ed distraught on the floor being consoled by his teammates. OCCSCC finished on 137-5 (extras contributing a creditable 22) and so ended a fine afternoon's cricket.

Holton had to withdraw from their game on August 15th, and so we arranged a second visit to Ascott-u-Wychwood who offered to host us, perhaps hoping to take their revenge. This turned out to be a very different game from the low scoring July affair, although when Islip's first wicket fell with the score on just 2 it looked as though history might repeat itself. That concern receded quickly and the second wicket fell on 192, Ollie Black departing with 119 to his name, including 15 boundaries. Opener Ben Crawford (63) carried his bat as Islip reached 207-3 from 40 overs (extras 22), one of our best batting performances of the season.

With the score on 58 after 12 overs, Ascott were close to the required run rate, but the extra pace of Ben Crawford, replacing Ethan Bird in the attack, brought the breakthrough. After 2 overs Ben had figures of 1-1. Harry Brock then chipped in with two wickets in a single over, including that of the remaining opener who went for 69. After 30 overs, Ascott were 144-5 and in with a chance but a second wicket for Ben Crawford and 3 wickets in 7 balls for Andy Epton (10-3) saw the Ascott innings end on 174 (extras 22), an Islip win by 33 runs.

Late July/early August very nearly turned into a winning month. Ollie Black's return to form over the past few weeks has made a big difference to Islip's fortunes and while we have yet to master the art of winning consistently, the side is young enough to learn how to change that. Perhaps next year we should aim to play Ascott-u-Wychwood as often as possible.

5 th September	Kempsford (1.30 pm)	Home
12 th September	Enstone (1.00 pm)	Home
19 th September	Ibstone (1.00 pm)	Home
26 th September	Ouhcc (12.30 pm)	Home

The last four games of the season are all at home. We hope that the Terrace Room bar will be open for spectators and players alike for the last three matches. The full 2021 fixtures (and results) are on the club website

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