

## ISLIP CRICKET CLUB



Since last month's report, we have played four games and lost one more to bad weather, the first such casualty of the season. On the last Sunday in June, Reading University Alumni visited Islip and batted first. Things started well when Kevin Crawford had one of their openers caught behind with the score on 6. Having been reduced to 105-5, the visitors recovered to 181 all out with one ball to go. Their top scorer made 38 (just shading extras by 5 runs), but a series of double figure contributions helped them to a respectable score (Kevin Crawford 22-2, Jack Launchbury 38-2). Alex Hamp of North St. chipped in with a creditable 2 wickets on debut, but his off-breaks went for 59 runs in 4 overs. Islip's reply never really got going – 100 all out including 25 extras.

We started July with Islip's first visit to Cumnor in living memory. The pros and cons of playing friendly cricket against clubs with several league sides are finely balanced. On the one hand, many have beautiful grounds but on the other, they have an awful lot of very good cricketers. Islip batted first and gave a good account of themselves, scoring 209-6 in a 40 over game. Opening for Islip, Tejas Anand scored 84, supported by Ollie Black who fell for 75 hitting out with the score on 194. Sadly for Islip, Cumnor's team included two of Tejas' Magdalen School teammates, both of whom made big scores and hit some huge sixes. There was a brief moment of hope when Cumnor slipped from 125-1 to 128-4, but that was soon snuffed out and our opponents cruised home in 30 overs with 6 wickets to spare.

Bicester and North Oxford CC's (BNOCC) ground is functional rather than picturesque. The Islip team arrived in dribs and drabs, some confused by circular instructions from their satnav, others caught out by the early start (something to do with a football match that evening). Wisely, and to avoid embarrassment, Ollie Black opted to bat on a pitch where the batsman's calling had to be clear and loud to be heard above the noise of the nearby M40. Shreyas Anand fell early but Ollie Black was in fine form, and, supported by Ben Crawford (22) and Jack Launchbury (37), took Islip to 128-3 and was our last man out for 112 out of 224 runs. Islip took their total to 227-7, finishing the innings with David and William Goodfellow the two not out batsmen.

The Islip batsmen had been joined in the middle after about 5 overs by BNOCC's umpire, Len, who replaced your correspondent. Len was clearly very experienced and made even the senior members of the Islip squad look fresh faced. As one of the home side remarked, there is no doubt that Len knows all the rules but the interesting part is how he chooses to apply them. When Ben Crawford was dismissed lbw during the Islip innings there had been speculation among both sets of players as to which set of stumps Len was looking at. At the end of the Islip innings, without consulting the players, Len announced that we were in no hurry and would have a long tea break. When batsmen and fielders went out to the middle, and stood there, Len eventually abandoned his search for something with which to brush the wicket and play resumed.

BNOCC started well, posting 87 before their first wicket fell, assisted by erratic bowling (there were 19 wides in the innings). Ethan Bird, who has tended to mix the erratic with the unplayable produced a spell that was both erratic and unplayable to finish with 59-1 from his 7 overs. The introduction of Kevin Crawford began to swing the game Islip's way (7 overs,

20-2) but it was Jack Launchbury who really made the difference, taking 39-3 and causing Len a difficult moment, leaping to his left to take a caught and bowled and landing on his chest with the ball beneath him. Unsighted, Len looked perplexed and for a moment we wondered whether he was going to say that he could not give the catch because he couldn't see it. Those of us who could (including the square leg umpire who Len did not think to consult) assured him that the catch was good, and, sportingly, the BNOCC captain walked, taking with him our opponents' last chance of winning. After 35 overs, BNOCC finished on 197, a win for Islip by 30 runs.

At Blenheim the following week in glorious sunshine, Islip batted first. At 67-1, things looked reasonably healthy, at 74-4 rather less so. A recovery to 124-5 was followed by a collapse to 149 in the 34<sup>th</sup> over. Perhaps the long journey from the car park to the pitch had taken its toll on some team members. The standout batting performances came from opener Ben Crawford (27) and Ollie Black (62, made in around 27 overs). Opening bowlers Kevin Crawford (8 overs 18-2) and Tony Launchbury (8 overs 16-1) made scoring difficult, but Blenheim made the runs for the loss of 4 wickets. Had this been a 35 over match we would have been in for an exciting finish, as Blenheim scored their winning run off the last ball of the 35<sup>th</sup> over despite a late but expensive wicket for Harry Brock. With Harry in the form he showed last year, things might have been different.

Events off the field deserve special mention. Finally, after a series of delays, the cricket club has repainted the railway end sightscreen. We hope that we will soon be able to replace the rusting sightscreen at the Mill St end which has not improved with age. The changing rooms, with their new floor, are still unused except as a place to store the club's hand sanitiser and supply of cricket balls, but with the country opening up we hope soon to take delivery of new storage lockers and make them the tidiest they have ever been.

On one wall of the changing rooms, there was, until recently, an old wooden noticeboard which was once used by Islip football teams. It carries the inscription "Islip Boys FC Bobby Holloway Memorial". With help from Teresa and Dicky Carter, we now know that it commemorates a tragedy. Bobby Holloway was killed in a traffic accident on his way home from Dr Souths for lunch something like 46 years ago, aged 9 or 10.

The Holloway family used to live in one of the red brick farm cottages in the Kidlington Road, more or less opposite Chesters on the Kidlington Rd. The family has left Islip, but Teresa has managed to track down Bobby's younger brother Mark who was with Bobby that fateful day. Mark works with wood as a hobby, and has taken on refurbishing the noticeboard which we believe was originally made by Alan Jackson who used to do work for the Ashmolean. Once the refurbishment is complete we hope that it can be put to good use somewhere in Islip – all suggestions welcome.

1 <sup>st</sup> August	Isis	Home
8 <sup>th</sup> August	OCCSCC	Home
15 <sup>th</sup> August	Holton	Away
22 <sup>nd</sup> August	FFTMCC	Away
29 <sup>th</sup> August	Brock's All Stars (1.30pm)	Home

Sunday cricket - with a 2pm start to most games - continues in August when we hope that the Terrace Room bar will be open for spectators and players alike. The full 2021 fixtures are on the club website at

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