

ISLIP CRICKET CLUB



A mixed month with four games of which two were cancelled, one won and one lost. Perhaps the most disheartening days in the life of a village cricketer are those when, having removed the wicket covers, put out the boundary rope, rolled and marked the wicket, set up the sight screens and scoreboard and returned from detailed pre-match preparation in the pub to find that, as the teams assemble to start the game, it starts to rain. That was Islip's fate on July 30th when the skies opened around 10 minutes before 2pm, sending both teams scurrying for the changing rooms and leaving an uneaten cricket tea, potentially condemning Stan Nelson to a diet of sandwiches and home-made cake for the week ahead.

The week before was very different, with Islip travelling to Chesterton, added to our fixture list for the first time. Quite a few of Islip's squad have played league games for Chesterton in the past and Lee Price was a regular member of their squad for many years. The Appleton brothers, Jim and Alfie, and Richard Dumbleton have played for Islip many times and indeed Jim once scored a memorable fast bowler's half century for Islip, almost inevitably against Appleton CC, so a friendly rivalry was pretty much guaranteed.

An Appleton family festivity meant that Jim was absent and Alfie, in at number five, stayed just long enough to score 3 runs before leaving to join him. By the time Alfie was fourth out, Harry Brock's third victim (7 overs 3-33), Chesterton had reached 78 in the 20th over having recovered from the loss of a wicket in the fifth over to Ben Crawford (5 overs, 1-6) and then collapsed from 62-1 to 78-4. With five overs to go, Chesterton had reached 115-7 before their tail began to wag. At the start of the 35th over they had reached 141-7 but two wickets for one run in four balls from Ryan Hambridge kept the Chesterton total to 145.

At 32 without loss after 10 overs, Islip's reply was solid rather than spectacular. To bowl the 11th over, Chesterton brought on L Brain, a move which was warmly welcomed by Tejas Anand; after 11 overs, Islip had moved on to 55. Encouraged by Tejas' exploits, Harry Brock went on the attack but was less successful and in the 13th over was bowled. 62-1. And Brain struck again in his third over, Ryan Hambridge caught and bowled for 11. 74-2 in the 15th over and Shreyas Anand joined his brother at the wicket. Perhaps having a left hander in the side makes Islip harder to play against, perhaps it takes us just a little closer to mirroring the England Test side, but the Anand show accelerated the run rate. When Tejas fell for 57 to the last ball of the 20th over, the score had reached 106. There was a brief hiccup at 124 when George Roper fell for five and Lee Price stayed at the wicket for just two balls without troubling the scorer, but Shreyas (28 no) and Ben Crawford (14 no) took Islip to 148-5 in the 26th over. Islip had scored 116 runs in the last 16 overs, a Bazball-like performance of which England's Test team would rightly have been proud had it been theirs.

The visit of Far from the MCC on August 13th was rather less successful. Under overcast skies, FFTMCC batted first. After a rainy week, runs were hard to come by on a very damp outfield but Islip's performance in the field was as gloomy as the weather as a series of catches, some difficult, others less so, went to ground. Bowling as first change, Kevin Crawford's 3-11 in seven overs took our opponents from 55-0 to 63-3 in the 20th over, but by the 30th over, their score had doubled to 126-3 and the innings closed on 149-5 with their opening batsman, dropped on 3, finishing with 51 not out.

Sometimes in cricket things start badly and then get worse. When Islip batted, that is roughly what happened as FFTMCC held on to a series of stunning catches, turning 5-1 into 26-6. No Anands this week, but Ollie Black was in a determined mood and led a mini-recovery, well supported by Ryan Hambridge until he was disastrously run out for 10 with the score on 52-8. Kevin Crawford was not at the crease for long, victim of a second run out for a duck. Stan Nelson kept his end up as Ollie went after runs but Ollie was last out for a creditable 37, the innings closing on 85 with just three batsmen making double figures, one of Islip's worst batting performances for quite a while.

There is more cricket to come and, we hope, some improved batting, but all too soon, the season will be over. Our last three games are at home.

10 th September	Enstone	Home (1:00 PM)
17 th September	Oxenford	Home (1:00 PM)
24 th September	OUHCC	Home (12:30 PM)

There is still time to see some cricket so do consider coming to join us as a spectator or, even if only for the occasional game, as a player. For more information go to the website (<https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/islipcricketclub>) which has the full '23 fixtures or email islipcricketclub@gmail.com.