

ISLIP CRICKET CLUB



It has been a month when nothing was what it seemed – not quite a series of the philosophers' Black Swan events, but close. In the new normal, Ollie Black who last year played more than anyone else, missed three games, for Islip 75 was a winning score and 183 a losing total, Islip arrived at a match with 12 players in whites and ready to go, and Brian Deeley, so callously written off last month by your correspondent, made an unexpected return. Four games have been played since our season began at Blenheim. In the first, Stonesfield turned out to be Aston Rowant; Stonesfield's Sunday side was a victim of the pandemic and Aston Rowant have seamlessly taken over their fixtures.

Islip batted first and lost their first wicket without troubling the scorers, but Tejas Anand, batting at three, made things look easy for a while. With Tejas and Ollie Black at the crease, Islip looked set for a reasonable score until a familiar batting collapse arrived. Three wickets fell on 64, helping Islip from 64-4 to 75 all out, with Tejas contributing 31 and extras chipping in with 21.

The Stonesfield game also saw the return of one of Islip's all-time greats, Brian Deeley, who, arriving in cycle shorts to spectate, very kindly volunteered to umpire. Never a man to shirk controversy, the warmth of his welcome was thrown into doubt when his left arm went out to signal that Harry Brock's high full toss was a no ball just as it landed comfortably in the hands of Tejas Anand at square leg, allowing Stonesfield's batsman a reprieve and the chance to press for an unlikely victory. The atmosphere was tense when Neil Brock stepped up to bowl the 29th over with Stonesfield needing three runs to win with one wicket standing. Fielders crowded the bat, two dot balls and then a loud and passionate appeal and up went the Stonesfield umpire's finger. Islip had shaded it by two runs and winning ways were back.

Brian's contribution the week after was even more unexpected. Just before 2pm he arrived in whites and announced that Ollie Black had told him he was playing. With Ollie absent, keen to spend more time with his golf clubs, Brian was taken at his word and your correspondent returned home to change out of whites and prepare himself for an arduous afternoon outside the Terrace Bar. Brian's selection was later confirmed by Ollie (he just forgot to mention it to anyone other than Brian), although Brian's assertion that he had filled out the track and trace form and was familiar with the CV-19 guidelines stood up to scrutiny less well.

Isis won the toss and the newly reinforced Islip team started well, with Crawford father (Kevin) and son (Ben) opening the bowling. Ben struck first in his second over and soon Isis were 16-3, with Kevin eventually taking one wicket for four runs in five overs and Ben two for 18 in six overs. But from then on, it was the Harry Brock show. He ran through the Isis batting, taking five wickets for the first time and capping his display with a fine caught and bowled to dismiss Isis's opener who made 39 of their total of 72.

When Islip batted, it was just like old times. Facing his first ball for nearly three years, Brian Deeley made hitting an on drive for four look easy. A second boundary followed but a few balls later, a familiar scene; his defensive shuffle down the wicket, more pad than bat, was deemed inadequate and Brian left for 10. David Goodfellow has yet to hit top form this year but with Tejas Anand at the wicket, soon joined by Andy Epton, Islip's innings looked secure. Tejas finished the innings with consecutive sixes, taking him to nine boundaries and 51 not out in an Islip total of 77. A win by eight wickets.

OCCSCC was less straightforward. The visitors batted first and made 209 in their allotted 40 overs. Pick of the Islip bowlers was James Dolleymore making his first appearance of the year and bowling both of OCCSCC's top scorers to return 2-32. At 2-2 in the third over the chances of an Islip win looked vanishingly small and when Tejas was out bowled for a duck all hope seemed lost but James Dolleymore was not going to go down without a fight. Supported first by Andy Epton (23, and victim of a ball that kept low) and Josh Swadling (21, caught in the deep), James hit 13 boundaries including four sixes in a fine innings of 88. When he was out, a 21 run cameo from 14 year old Shreya Anand was not enough and Islip's innings closed in the 37th over on a creditable 183, by far our highest score of the season and probably one of our highest ever losing scores.

That left the season's record at W2 L2 when we travelled to play Kempsford at Fairford CC's lovely rural ground on the edge of Gloucestershire, taking probably Islip's strongest side of the season so far, with Adeel Rehman and Faizaan Abbas making their first 2020 appearances. There had been torrential rain the previous day and the weather forecast was not good so the captains settled on a 25 overs per side game. It became clear very quickly that Kempsford did not have their strongest side out as Adeel took five wickets for eight runs in three overs. When he was taken off, Jack Launchbury (3-8) and Harry Brock (2-12) finished the innings off in 16 overs, with Kempsford posting 47. It took Islip just six overs to knock the runs off for the loss of one wicket, with – another dose of the unexpected – Faizaan bowled for a duck going for a big hit. So a nine wicket win (T Anand 35 no), the third victory of a topsy turvy season. A beer match followed, and then drinks at an open air bar before the weather began to close in.

Somehow hand sanitiser and arriving at the ground in whites has become perfectly natural. Why would we do anything else? And the cricket is every bit as much fun as it ever was. There are five more games scheduled, all at home, and including the Islip-on-Islip All Stars game on August 30th. Here is our updated fixture list which is also available on the club website at <https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/islipcricketclub>. The club can be contacted via islipcricketclub@gmail.com

Sunday	23 rd August	FFTMCC	Home (2:00 PM)
Sunday	30 th August	Brock's All Stars	Home (1:30 PM)
Sunday	6 th September	Kempsford	Home (1:30 PM)
Sunday	13 th September	Wolvercote	Home (1:00 PM)
Sunday	20 th September	Holton	Home (1:00 PM)

Anthony Dandridge is expecting to open the Terrace bar (outside seating only at present) for the home games. We very much hope that you will come and join us there in the new normal.