

## ISLIP CRICKET CLUB



Not even a mixed month to report, I'm afraid. After defeats at home to Holton and Neil Brock's All Stars, we cancelled our September 3<sup>rd</sup> away game at Kempsford, thus avoiding another defeat, with seven of the squad travelling to Edgbaston to England's T20 against New Zealand. While Islip spirits were lifted by Lee Price paying his dues in beer for the fivefor he took for Neil Brock's side the previous week, England's spirits were not, as they were all out for 128 chasing a New Zealand total of 202-5. Have we reached the point where we can't even watch a game without being on the losing side?

This month's report opens with our home game against Holton. The start was quite promising with Lee Price taking a wicket in his first over leaving the visitors 4-1. Wickets continued to fall and Holton's number 5 Amit came in at 34-3 in the 7<sup>th</sup> over. His arrival changed the whole complexion of the game. Holton reached 200-8 in the 35<sup>th</sup> over and Amit was still there, undefeated on 109 with four 6s and 13 4s.

When Islip replied, Tejas Anand was all aggression and in the third over Islip were on 32 before Mike Henderson (4) fell cheaply. He was quickly followed by Harry Brock (6) and Ryan Hambridge (1). 39-3 after five overs. Arguably, it was the dismissal of Tejas Anand (27, including six boundaries) that settled the result - 45-4 after seven overs. Ollie Black fought hard for his 29 and the tail wagged but a little too gently, and Islip were 145 all out in the 24<sup>th</sup> over.

The Brock All-Star game is enjoyed by players and spectators alike. In 2022 the enthusiasm of one spectator for the buffet supper at the Red Lion provided by Neil Brock led him to fall



*Neil Brock regained the All Stars game trophy in this year's match*

slowly off one of the benches in the garden. With the Red Lion then not open that Sunday evening, this year's August 28<sup>th</sup> celebrations were a little more muted, based in the Village Hall Terrace Room and the bar provided by Antz Dandridge.

Last year, who played on which side was the subject of some negotiation between Neil and Ollie Black. Neil thought he had pulled off something of a coup by securing the services of Mike Henderson, scorer of more than 500 runs in 2022, but Mike's innings in that match was brief, out to the first ball of the match for a golden duck. This year, with sides picked by drawing lots, Mike again turned out for Neil Brock's side, prudently batting at four and this time contributing 24 runs. Star of the All Stars innings was opener Harry Brock who was disappointed to fall to the liquorice-all-

sorts bowling of Mark “Chalky” Richards (2-18) for 47. After the All Stars reached 161-4 in 30 overs (Ben Crawford 21, Josh Swadling 34), Lee Price ran through the rest of the batting, taking 5-55 in 13 overs and leaving Islip a target of 185.

The Islip innings did not go well. Ben Crawford with 3-14, including Ollie Black for nought, did a lot of the early damage and only an innings of 42 from Lee Price showed any real sign of resistance. Mark Richards retired on 10, having taken a blow to the head. Courageously returning to the crease later in the innings, he added two more to his score before being bowled. Two runouts and two more ducks added to the misery and Islip’s innings ended on 101 after 20 overs; this year the trophy went to Neil Brock’s side.

After a week off searching in vain for inspiration at the Edgbaston ODI, there was guarded optimism about the visit of Enstone on September 10<sup>th</sup>. On paper, Islip’s side looked reasonably strong and we had beaten Enstone comfortably on their ground earlier in the season. At 16-4 in the fifth over, the optimism looked rather misplaced, but supported by Mark Russell (2), Ben Crawford guided us to 46-5. He was joined at the crease by debutant Simon Hague, recruited during the week when Ben Crawford and Lee Price caught him using the Islip nets. When Simon departed (26), the score had moved to 101-6 with nine of the 30 overs left. The tail did its best to support Ben’s valiant effort, and the innings closed at 132-9 (Stan Nelson 5 not out, Ben Crawford 66 not out).

Enstone’s reply began slowly and tight bowling from Kevin Crawford (1-5 in seven overs with four maidens) and a run out took Enstone to 21-3 at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> over. Cue Chaminda. Chaminda has caused Islip some heartache in the past, most notably two or three years ago when an explosive century saw Islip fielders spend a disproportionate amount of their time in the woods across the road from his home ground looking for a succession of cricket balls, most driven back over the bowler’s head. This year his start was less explosive, but the overall effect was similar. He departed in the 26<sup>th</sup> over with the score on 108-5, stumped off the bowling of Ben Crawford having scored 61. Further drama was in prospect. With five overs to go, at 102-4 Enstone needed 31 runs to win. The score crept up but wickets fell and at the start of the last over at 126-8 seven were needed, with 16 year old debutant Kieran Matthews bowling the last over. A dot ball, two singles, a two and then another dot ball. What could possibly go wrong?

What happened next is the subject of internal debate. Ollie Black said that it was four byes. Wicketkeeper Tejas Anand is adamant that it was (or should have been) called as wides. Most importantly, the ball went to the boundary and celebration triumphed over scorebook exactitude as, in the words of Ryan Hambridge Enstone “celebrated like they won the World Cup”. An entertaining game of cricket, with Islip on the wrong end of a close result.

Sadly, by the time this report is published the 2023 season will be over. There are two more matches to cover in next month’s report, and perhaps space for a review of what has been one of Islip’s more successful seasons of recent years. Meanwhile, as ever, we start work to prepare for the 2024 season and we welcome anyone who would like to get involved, whether as player, supporter, or just as a helper with day to day tasks for both junior and senior sides. For more information go to the website (<https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/islipcricketclub> ) which will soon have the full ’23 results for the senior side, or email [islipcricketclub@gmail.com](mailto:islipcricketclub@gmail.com).