

MATCH REPORT

LAMBS VS RAMS

5 MAY 2022

You do not have to look far to find great rivalries in cricket. One needs only think of Pakistan vs India (possibly cricket's two biggest rivals. England vs Australia - one of sport's oldest rivalries, dating back to the 1800s), West Indies vs either England or Australia (while the West Indies are no longer quite the ruthless side, they were in the 1980s, their rivalry against both England and Australia was the basis of many a classic game), and closer to home, Australia vs New Zealand - a rivalry that gave us Indore 1987 (The Black Caps needed seven off the last over. Steve Waugh stood up, taking wickets on his first two balls and effecting another run out to leave New Zealand three runs short), Chennai 1996 (Australia pulled off what was at the time their biggest chase in one-day history to knock New Zealand out of the 1996 tournament), Scotland 1999 (Roger Twose and Chris Cairns took the game away from Australia with a 148-run stand as New Zealand cruised to victory), and the CWC 2015 (Kane Williamson clearing the rope with the first ball of a Pat Cummins' over and end the match in the best game of the World Cup). Against such international matches LNCC have their own brand of fierce competitions, most notably the North vs South and also the Lambs vs Rams. It is the latter inaugural fixture that I report today.

This year's game was being hosted on a grass wicket in Battersea Park in the London Borough of Wandsworth. The park is situated on the south bank of the River Thames opposite Chelsea and was formed in 1846. The park is home to the home to the King's Road Cricket & Social Club. The club, whose members wear distinctive orange caps, can be seen sometimes playing on weekends in the Summer months. Also, of interest, prior to 1846 the area now covered by the park was known as Battersea fields, and was a popular spot for duelling - an apt comparison in context for our own sporting contest!

The best of early summer weather had broken on the day following showers from earlier the week. An early start time had been set by the organizer (and author) **Peter Bellamy**. As is usual, player arrival times were staggered and inconsistent and it was noon before we felt we had reached a requisite number of attendees and the selection of team undertaken. The latter is a mathematical affair, players are ordered by age and the median provides a cut-off **Adam Khanbhai** was the oldest Lamb, and confirmed as the Lambs Captain, and **Richard Fish**, as the most mutt of the mutt, was thrust into action as captain of the Rams. By this stage we had also completed a video report on the wicket (slightly green but firm - a good surface for seamers), set up the stumps (thanks **Sam Martin**), had collected a bulk order of beer (thanks **Brogan McIllwrick**) and stowed the match tea (thanks **Richard Brooks**). There was also rumour of some discussions, by elder statesmen in the ranks, on how best to interpret the laws of the game in their favour. This, of course, is supposition.

Game 1 - Superiority is forged by the wisdom of experience

For the record, two T20 games were to be played. The Lambs for the first game were **Andrew Haines, Vaughan Robertson, Dan Robinson, Benji Flacks, Cal Askins, Adam Khanbhai, Owen Burgess, Brogan McIllwrick, Tabitha Martin, Shaun Raumat, Tim McClean**. The Rams team were **Richard Brooks, Richard Fish, Josh Wright, Sam Martin, Peter Bellamy, Scott Anderson, Ben Fulton, Cheyenne Voss, Vance**

Thomson, and Alan Thompson.

As other players got themselves ready the two captains were taken mid-wicket and a coin toss was taken. The Rams won this initial engagement with a choice of heads and the wizened **Richard Fish** chose to bat.

Peter Bellamy and **Ben Fulton** were selected to open for the Rams, facing **Cal Askin** and **Vaughan Robertson**. The first over from **Cal** was expected with a bit of zip and bounce that **Bellamy** struggled to keep on top of. A fine stroke that paddled the ball to the boundary past the slip cordon produced the first runs of the day. A chance of bowler then produced the first wicket of the day with **Bellamy** (4) succumbing to a fine yorker from **Robertson** that skittled the castle in the last ball of the second over.

Alan Thompson was introduced as bat 3 and looked settled from the off. A couple of quick singles and then a mighty six showing skill and intent. **Ben Fulton** and **Thompson** were looking to build on a fine initial start. **Fulton** was starting to find some rhythm with a number of boundaries coming from fine stroke play. However, a long pairing was not to be as **Vaughan** struck again in just his second over, with **Ben Fulton (15)** caught by Askins of a fine delivery,

The next batsman was **Scott Anderson**. **Scott** started strongly with a solid shot to the ropes. Scott Anderson and Alan Thompson saw off the first two bowlers with the first bowler change introducing **Dan Robinson** to the attack and then a further chance seeing the introduction of **Brogan McIllwrick**. The change proved decisive with **Brogan** bowling **Alan Thompson** (16) in this first over.

The Rams had **Cheyne Voss** next in with the willow. With plenty of overs to bowl and a fine temperament for these internal games **Cheyne** was in no hurry to lose his wicket to stray shot. Unfortunately, at the other end his partner was about to change with **Scott Anderson** playing the first ball from, a newly introduced, **Tabitha Martin** only for the ball to find the waiting hands of **Cal Askins** and a leaving **Scott** (7) a short walk to leave the wicket. It is noted that this wicket was taken from **Tabitha's** first ball from her first over playing for LNZCC. This is an amazing achievement and something I know she, and our Club, will not forget. Least her father, **Sam Martin**, who ominously was next to the batting crease and determined not be to the next victim of her daughters bowling action.

A quick collapse was not to be the order of the day. To have though so would have disregarded the fine batting skills offered by both **Cheyne Voss** and **Sam Martin**. Rather than a quick dismissal a fine partnership ensued with both settling in and no less than 70 additional runs (including 13 fours and a six) being added on before **Sam Martin** (45) was caught short of the crease and run out.

Josh Wright was next to bat. With the overs running out he was here to play tiddly winks and, having picked the slower ball, dispatched **McIllwrick** over the ropes on the first ball sent his way. Unfortunately, there was not time to build something more and both Batsmen left the field with 20 overs played and a total of 165 set for the younger side to chase. **Josh Wright** having lost his wicket on the last ball of the day stumped following a communication breakdown on the the call to run.

A quick turnaround ensued. and with the field set, **Andrew Haines** and **Vaughan Robertson** took to the crease for the Lambs and **Richard Brooks** and **Sam Martin** opening

the bowling for the Rams. This was set to be a battle of the big hitters against the cunning and guile. Cunning and guile were to win the initial battle with **Richard Brooks** taking the early wicket of **Robertson** (quack) on his 5th ball.

There was, however, to be no respite for the Rams. Next in with the bat was **Dan Robinson**, a player who needs little introduction as a strong player. **Dan** and Haines held their own as **Sam Martin** and **Richard Brooks** tried their best to unsettle them. The runs were not necessarily flowing but neither were the wickets.

A change of bowler was enforced and the cherry was handed to **Peter Bellamy** to see if the batsmen would succumb to his little bag of liquorice all-sorts bowling. One could not fault the tactics of **Richard Fish** with the significant change in pace initially beguiling **Andrew Haines** into a thick top edge that skied towards mid-off. A sure catch was on offer but was not to be as **Cheyne Voss** run a good 15 meters only to see the ball slip between his fingers. At this stage **Haines** was still in single figures. Only time would this prove to be a costly mistake for the Rams?

Sam Martin was replaced by **Scott Anderson** in the bowling taking the pace completely off the ball and giving the **Dan** and **Andrew** the task of having to hit through the ball. No longer threatened by speed **Andrew Haines** and **Dan Robinson** quickly adjusted and a firm partnership was created. A change of bowlers, introducing Ben Fulton to throw down some spin, did little to deter the pair. **Andrew Haines** went on to retire (50) replaced by **Benji Flacks**. Another bowling change was made to introduce **Cheyne Voss** before **Dan Robinson** followed suit shortly after with 60 runs from 39 balls, being replaced by **Cal Askins**.

With the overs counting down, and the required run rate steadily rising, **Richard Fish** decided to bring back some pace with **Vance Thompson** and then **Richard Brooks** coming into the attack for the final spell. It was a change that proved the right decision with Vance taking the wicket of **Benji Flacks** (5) in his first over (replaced by **Adam Khanbhai**) and then striking again in his 3rd over to dispatch **Cal Askins** (15) (replaced by **Owen Burgess**). **Richard Brooks** made short work of **Adam Khanbhai** (10) with a stray shot going to **Josh Wright**.

With balls running out **Brogan McIllwrick** took guard but by this stage the Rams had inflicted the fatal wound and the Lambs could do no more than watch as a Rams victory was secured. **Brogan McIllwrick** (0) and **Owen Burgess** (4) left not out ready to open in the next game that was scheduled post lunch.

Lunch

Special thanks are made to **Richard Brooks** for supplying the tea, it was, as expected a fine affair with well-made sandwiches, scones and a devilish soft brownie. All players were well fed and watered pending the start of the second T20.

The break also gave the opportunity to mark a few milestones. Most notably - **Vance Thompson** playing his **150th game**, **Sam Martin** playing his **100th game**, **Andrew Haines** playing his **50th game**, **Tabitha Martin** (youngest daughter of **Sam Martin**) playing her **1st game** (she is also only the 3 or 4th woman to play for LNZZC) and **Ollie Burgess** (oldest son of **Richard Burgess**) playing his **1st game**. Both debutants, who both had sterling initial performances on field, showing up their older teammates from both

teams.

Game 2 - Youth is to be regarded with respect. Their future may be equal to our present.

After an brief preliminary chat and consultation with the revised rules of the day, it was decided that the Lambs should be allowed to bat first for the second game. With playable hours failing fast, and a number of players thinking of the evening's entertainment, it was also decided to limit the 2nd game to just 15 overs each. Due to a few dropouts the median age rule resulted in a small change in teams with **Richard Brooks** dropping down into the Lambs. For continuity, Adam retained the Lambs captaincy.

For the record, the Lambs for the second game were **Andrew Haines, Vaughan Robertson, Dan Robinson, Benji Flacks, Cal Askins, Adam Khanbhai, Owen Burgess, Brogan McIllwrick, Tabitha Martin, Tim McClean,** and **Richard Brooks**. The Rams team were **Richard Fish, Josh Wright, Sam Martin, Peter Bellamy, Scott Anderson, Ben Fulton, Cheyne Voss, Vance Thomson,** and **Alan Thompson**.

Team's feed and changes made; **Richard Fish** led his Rams side onto the field. **Scott Anderson** was given the cherry to start with **Ben Fulton** to hold up the other end. Having finished the last game not out, **Owen Burgess** and **Brogan McIllwrick** were sent out to bat.

Having had an earlier chance to get their eye in neither **Brogan** or **Owen** were going to fall for any early tracks from the Rams. Despite their best efforts Fulton and Anderson struggled to get a breakthrough as the two batsmen settled in their action and were scoring at a steady rate. **Anderson** was able to secure a breakthrough late in his innings albeit not with his bowling but by securing **Brogans** (17) wicket with a runout.

Tim Mclean was quickly brought in but returned equally quickly to the changing sheds from a lucky piece of bowling from **Peter Bellamy's** first over. A slow ball managed to catch a seam, squirting low through **McCleans** (3) guard to skittle his middle wicket.

Richard Brooks was next in and, having helped secure victory for the Rams, was in no mood to lose when playing for the Lambs. He immediately took a liking to the pace on offer hitting a number of balls over the boundary in quick succession. This was to be the order of the day as his strike rate held at ~200% as **Brooks** cut through a number of bowling changes, forming a tidy partnership with **Owen Burgess** at the other end. Owen by this stage was also looking more than comfortable and the pair were turning over the strike almost at will.

An in-form **Richard Brooks** soon retired having scored 58 or 20 balls. His replacement, and Lambs Captain, **Adam Khanbhai** looked ready to continue where the former had left off with **Adam** and **Owen** settling into a new partnership

Vance Thompson was eventually given the ball and proved why he is consistently one of the top bowlers in the Club by bowling **Owen Burgess** (33) in the first ball of his spell.

Vaughan Robertson came on as bat number 5 for the Lambs. Having not performed as he would have preferred in the first game **Vaughan** was hoping for a stronger showing in this

second game. **Vance Thompson** had other ideas with **Vaughan** (3) falling again, bowled, before he could get going. Next in was **Benji Flacks**.

Benji and **Adam** proved to be unmovable. Some very good chances were made but they managed to hold their wickets and keep the score-line ticking over. Both bats remained not out as the last ball of the innings was bowled. A score of 177 was set for the chase

As with the previous game a quick turnaround was made. There was a desire from both sides to get this game done before the shadows grew too much longer.

As with the Lambs players who were not out from the first game got the option to open in the second game. In this case **Cheyne Voss** returned to batting duty alongside **Richard Burgess** who had been queued at 8th in the original batting order. **Vaughan Robertson** and **Tim McClean** opened the bowling for the Lambs.

Having seen the Lambs score and calculated the run rate **Cheyne** and **Burge** were not going to mess around. **Cheyne** generally bats with a gusto, so this was no surprise and **Richard**, having held the batting LNZCC trophy a number of times was also up for the chase. Both got stuck in early and soon the ball was repeatedly finding the rope. However, this was to be short lived with **Richard Brooks** taking the wicket of **Richard Burgess** (16) as the ball caught an edge and was picked up by **Adam Khanbhai** behind the stumps.

Vance Thompson trundled out for the Rams as their number 3 bat. Much alike the 2 below him in the order, **Vance** is more than capable of absorbing a bit of pressure and turning the score over at a good tick. He and **Cheyne Voss** were to add another 20 odd runs in their pairing before **Cheyne Voss** (37) was run out by a fine piece of **Dan Robinson** fielding.

The Rams Captain, **Richard Fish**, was next in. **Richard** started with a finely timed 4 of his first ball but then was unfortunate to hit another fine shot but, this time, right towards **Dan Robinson** at square leg. **Dan** happily obliged with a fine catch and the Rams skipper was sent packing unfairly before he could get going. **Josh Wright** returned to the crease with the view continuing where he left off in the first game.

Shortly after **Dan Robinson** also picked up the wicket of **Vance Thompson**, finding a way through to the stumps as Vance (36) looked to keep the scorer busy.

With the available overs running out **Alan Thompson** came to the middle. A well struck six on his 3rd or 4th ball indicated what he was planning to do.

Now, it is at this stage, with the game poised for a thrilling climax with two batsmen on form, an interpretative error was made in the less than automated scoring system. The net result was that the final over was called a tad early leaving the Rams needing to score 40 odd in 6 balls, something that was never going to happen. The over was played out and the run chase was found wanting giving a victory of sorts to the younger side. There were some calls of match fixing, for the game to be null and void, and a rather questionable comment about someone getting a new gold watch for Christmas. Consensus was eventually agreed that it was the right thing to let the Lambs have their game and the result is now set in the history books.

With the day closed both sides regathered at the side lines. Cold beers and stories were shared and the bonds of friendship, that can only be made through sport, were refreshed or

strengthened. Following some closing thanks to those who played man of the match were awarded by each Captain - **Richard Brooks** and **Cheyne Voss deservedly** taking honours on this day.

Results aside, and to pull a somewhat cringe worthy cliché, cricket and the London New Zealand Cricket Club, were the real winner on the day.

Thanks again to all those who played or came down to watch.

Nag Mihi Nui

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