

MATCH REPORT  
LNZCC vs THE GRANNIES  
23 JULY 2022

For the first time in forever the weather was in no way causing any doubt as to whether this match was going to happen. There were however some issues with the team selection, and we were down to only 6 players a week ahead of the game. Some Tory styled leadership lobbying by the wider whanau soon saw the numbers swell and we were all set. The Grannies, our honourable opposition were also struggling ahead of kick off and had to call in a few favours.

A glorious, sunny Sussex Saturday dawned and the team of 12 began their journeys to the ground. We had **Shekhar** and **Shayan** kindly joining us from nearby Leeds, the majority coming down from London and surrounds. The start time of 12.30 soon came and went as a few of the team and opposition struggled to find the ground.

As we hurriedly assembled, we took a look at the pitch and outfield and were surprised that the previous three weeks of sunshine and record temps of the previous week had resulted in a very green and quite grassy wicket. I'm not sure the curators have been spending as much time and attention as needed to get the ground up to the standard the location befits. Even the umpire, usually bastions of impartiality, was quite upset that the pitch was being rolled and not mown!

As soon as the opposition captain arrived, we took a wander out to the middle for the traditional coin toss. I called heads and heads it was. Although the pitch was a bit green, I thought a limited 40 over match demanded we bat first.

There were a few minutes to conduct a very hasty **Nottman cap** presentation to **Shekar Aryan** who has proven to be a great addition to the club, along with **Shayan** of course.

The XI batsmen were scribble down and out we went, with **Daniel Robinson** seeing off the first few deliveries. Unfortunately, I came and went within that first over, but in hindsight it was the perfect strategic move, a selfless sacrifice and very clever captancy. **Richard Boon**, who was due in at 3 had left his spikes in the car and had to walk back Taranaki styled, barefoot to the car. With my quick departure and **Boonies** lack of footwear, **Ali Jaffer** was forced to come in at no3.

This of course allowed Ali the most time possible at the crease and he and **Dan** soon started to take to the Grannies bowling as they began to establish an ultimately match winning 165 run partnership. Both players played some great shots, and it was a pleasure to watch. A word of warning to those playing against **Ali**, don't hit him on the inside thigh, his next 6 scoring shots were boundaries.

As the overs rolled on and the sun shone there was less in the pitch for the bowlers, other than the odd gremlin, which made picking and playing the length ball difficult.

Part way during this partnership, Christmas came early for a number of the LNZCC batsman as Santa turned up with 9 new Keeley bats. **Tim Keely** had been invited along to the match and was told by **Richard** that there would be a few LNZCC players (each with a fistful of crispy quid's) interested in picking up one of his latest, and best quality bats. I think 6 of us were able to cash in, and even one of the Grannies went home with some new wood. It was great to

meet Tim and have a quick chat about the bats and his background. Big thanks to **Richard** for extending the offer of a new bat to us all.

Soon after these transactions took place, we lost Ali (83) who was caught in the deep, to a great one-handed catch. Having looked on for a looong time **Boonie** was in and out pretty quickly, but not before he melted a cover drive for four with his new bat. No knocking in needed!

In came one of our LNZCC debutants **Jackson Ellis** who can certainly bat. It didn't take long for us to see the difference in the way younger players are taught to attack bowlers, and the fielders were searching in the long grass on more than one occasion. By now the ball was really covering some distance, but we lost **Dan** (67) out bowled. Such was the depth of batters we were able to bring in **Tim** at 6, and still had **Ben** at 7 and **Josh** at 8.

**Jackson** (29), **Tim** (32) and **Ben** (28) increased the momentum and shared the runs between them, all being out caught as they tried to score as quickly as possible. The fielding by the Grannies and in particular their catching in the deep was really impressive, but after 40 overs, LNZCC had compiled a very very handy 296.

After a traditional lunch of sarnies, scones and a few cakes we were out to bowl, with the 297 on the board as the target I was feeling confident, but we all know never to get ahead of yourself!

We started with **Shekhar** and **Shayan**, both bowling a good line. The strategy was to attack the off stump and if the bowlers could keep it on off and with a 6/3 field, we knew it would be difficult for them to score the runs required. **Shekhar** got the breakthrough in his second over bowling the opener and a second in his third, with **Josh** taking the catch behind. **Shekhar** finished with 2-11 off his five overs. Having had to score at 7.5 from the first ball, the scoreboard pressure was already mounting.

We had a double change with **Greigan** and **Cam Wilson**, also on debut, taking the ball from the **Aryan's** after their tidy opening spells. **Cam** was straight into the action with a wicket in his first over, his first for many years too he reckons! **Daniel Robinson** catching the Grannies skipper at short cover, the ball stopping on the pitch and the drive lobbing up to **Dan**. **Greigan** unfortunately went wicketless but his 23 off five overs kept the RRR climbing.

**Jackson** took over from **Greigan** and bowled at a good clip, keeping the batsmen guessing, The Flashmen keeper was playing his exaggerated Steve Smith esque gestures and offering chances to the bowlers as he accumulated runs with his unorthodox shots. Another double change saw Dan come on to bowl for Cam and he too kept things fairly subdued as the Grannies tried to catch up.

After the seconds drinks break, we took another wicket which made life even harder for the opposition. Taking the pace off the ball and giving the bowlers a break, we went with the part timers, **Tim (aka Mike)** took two wickets and **Ben** and **Ali** finished off the last 6 or 7 overs. With not many overs left and more than 100 to get the Grannies bats really took to the bowling with some great stroke play and clean hitting. They had nothing to lose at this stage as the rate was well over 12 an over and despite a couple of 20 run overs, they were unable to get close, finishing up on 244 which would normally be a very good score.

After a quick photo opp, we gathered up our new bats and headed to The Griffin in Fletching where we conducted our **MotM ceremony**, awarding **Ali** a bottle of Mission Cab Sav for his

83 runs and **Pete Schutzer-Weissmann** for some impressive hitting at the end of their innings.

The beers at The Griffin went down nicely, maybe it was the result! All in all, a great day against a very different Grannies team from last season and so satisfying to get that first win of the season!

Pictures below for a picture of the post-match drinks at the Griffin (undoubtedly one of THE best pubs on our playing circuit), **Shekhar Aryan** (undoubtedly one of the nicest players we have been lucky enough to bring into our whanau) receiving his **Nottman cap** from **Nick Ratcliffe** in between innings, and a team photo (all smiling faces after a deserved victory).