

## **LNZCC v St Paul's School Staff XI**

24 May 2023

Match report by Peter Bellamy

LNZCC were fortunate to have a mid-week fixture against a new side for our Club, St Paul's Staff XI. The school has a long history with cricket. The first Duke of Marlborough, John Churchill, was at St Paul's School in the early 1660s and there is much evidence that the practice of playing cricket had already reached London from Kent. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that St Paul's School was one of the first schools to take up the game of cricket. The school played at the Oval for 25 years, up to 1884, and Surrey uses the present ground for junior county matches.

We weren't sure what to expect as we all trundled up to the gates of this fine school. What we got was a very fine offering of the best that cricket has - an immaculate wicket, a grand vista, a fine tea and a friendly opposition that included some very capable players to test our mettle.

Initial pleasantries over, Adam Khanbhai (captain for the evening) and this opposite number took the obligatory toss and LNZCC was put into bat. Adam and Angus Philpott were our opening pair but it was not long before Adam was back in the sheds à la le grande canard. A contentious decision but not one that the umpire was prepared to change. Despite some initial promise from Angus and Cheyne Voss, LNZCC were not able to establish a fruitful partnership and a number of low scores followed until Russ Kyne (33\*) and Peter Bellamy (30\*) were able to establish some order before both retiring leaving Nik Puri (25\*) and Andrew Barkle the last set of overs for a final flourish. LNZCC closed out 154/5 and it was obvious that the game would be tight.

Tea gave an opportunity for Sam Jefferies (playing in front of his son, who is a pupil at St Pauls) to finally receive his Nottman cap after a wee sojourn away from the Club - it's great to have you back and playing.

Ball in hand, LNZCC sought to dominate early with Leith Cowie and Andrew Barkle providing an opening bowling pair of pure force and tenacious guile. However, the St Paul's opening pair were up to the challenge and set to our attack with a steady flow of runs resulting. Numerous bowlers (including Shaun Raumati, Nik Puri, Mickey Gardiner (on debut), Russ Kyne) later LNZCC had still not managed to get the breakthrough they needed. Respite finally came in the form of a forced retirement of the St Paul's top bat. From this point LNZ were then able to enforce some more control over the proceedings - the run chase slowed (thanks in part to some great fielding - Andrew Barkle and Mickey Gardiner) but wickets would not come. Leading into the final overs the game

slowly drifted out of St Paul's reach and the final coup de grâce came with a wicket in the last over to Cheyne Voss's unique style of bowling. LNZCC winning by 14 runs.

The game concluded both sides chose to retire to a local pub offering all the chance to further consolidate our new friendships and confirm our intent to make this fixture a repeat event. We also completed the MoM awards in the same pub - Angus Philpott took the honours for LNZCC with a strong opening spell with the bat and a fine performance with the ball. Well done Sir. Thanks also to Adam Khanbhai for setting this game up - we are really lucky to be able to get such great opportunities.