

## **LNZCC v Follies Farm Old Spots CC**

10 June 2023

Match report by Kristy Havill

The day dawned brightly, and with it came the usual scramblings of carpooling and train station pick ups, a not so usual trip to Guildford beforehand to get a phone fixed, and an unfortunate bout of sickness to young Maggie Martin that left us with 10 players. Regardless, we ploughed on – which wasn't hard to do at such a beautiful location in the Chiddingfold countryside at the home of Guy Gibson and his whānau (once I got through the front gate, that is – thought I was in the wrong place to begin with).

In case you missed the cracking pitch report, graciously filmed by Shaun Raumati, the pitch was indeed drier than Choc's jandal and the general consensus the winner of the toss would want to bat first.

Bat first we did, and the pitch proved to be reminiscent of how the World Test Championship wicket on day three was playing up north at The Oval – varying unpredictable bounce and plenty of movement off the surface.

After cautiously navigating our way through the first few overs, Shaun Raumati and Kristy Havill's opening partnership came to a close at 22/1 when Shaun departed for 8. A spritely Tim Barringer strolled to the crease, and proceeded to tell me how much he was struggling to get his timing before then walloping 10 boundaries on his way to 44 while I contributed bugger all down the other end.

85/2 quickly became 87/4 as Vance Thompson and Dickie Coury came and went in the same over without nudging the scoreboard. Josh Wright decided enough was enough, and put our gracious host Guy Gibson back over his head first ball of his spell for a huge six.

With the sun beating down and everybody sweating like politicians taking a lie detector test, Josh's dismissal for 14 (only one of three to make it to double figures...) as Guy exacted his revenge saw the skipper stride to the crease. If Dickie Coury was worried about having to take the gear bag home, he needn't fret any longer as Samuel Martin fell victim to the worst bit of shithousery a la sledging you ever did see - "The last bloke who faced my first ball hit me back over my head for 6!". We all know what happened next, and it wasn't a blazer-laden umpire raising both arms in the direction of the scorers. Speaking of scorers, shoutout to whoever drew a lovely picture of a duck in the score column beside Sam's name rather than the dreaded zero.

Kristy's defiant knock of 35 ended not long after in the 27th over, but thankfully Jack and Tabby Martin both scored more runs than their old man to help us stagger to 128 all out.

Bill Gibson treated us to a simple yet delicious spread at tea, consisting of warm roast lamb and mint sauce sandwiches, and lemon cakes aplenty.

Thankfully our fearless leader pulled his finger out in the second innings and got two key breakthroughs in the 7th to leave Follies at 16/2. But it was us that found ourselves in a state of folly as a couple of errors in the field meant we didn't take another wicket until the 23rd over when a jubilant Vance Thompson was rewarded for his perseverance upon his return to the bowling crease after a shoulder injury.

At 80/3 with 12 overs to go and the shadows growing longer, so too did the odds of LNZCC forcing their way back into the contest with conviction. With spin taking four wickets in the first innings, the Kiwis' lone spinner strolled impatiently from point to point, raring to rip into the action and rolling her shoulders anytime her and the captain locked eyes. Alas, she wasn't given the ball until the 31st over when the Farm were a mere 12 runs from victory. After taking a wicket with her third ball and knowingly wagging her finger at Skipper Martin, she was promptly taken off at the end of the over and replaced by the cheeky geezer himself. Results of the independent inquiry as to how the hell she didn't get a bowl earlier in proceedings will be published at a later date.

Needless to say, LNZCC didn't manage to add to the win column that day, but a cracking afternoon was had by all. A huge thanks to Guy for hosting us, Tom Gibson for captaining Follies Farm and their lovely father Bill for ensuring we were all fed and watered. Thanks also to Sam for corralling us all and steering us around the park with his good nature and humour.

The player of the match bottle of vino was awarded to Kristy Havill, and god knows who the fielding points went to because Sam hasn't told me. Probably Tim Barringer though because he was diving all over the shop. We awarded the reciprocal bottle of vino to Giles Pascoe who opened the batting and notched a fighting 68 to lead Follies to victory, and reliably informed me it had been about 30 years since he last opened.

Special mention also to the respective families who came to cheer us on, and to Dickie's friends who came to support while indulging in many rosés throughout the course of the day, and took a very wonky group photo as a result.