

LNZCC vs Hagley CC
Sunday July 9th

MM: Tony Penman
Author Vaughan Robertson

It was a sunny Tuesday London afternoon with some dark clouds on the horizon when the whatsapp group was created. With the team named and the ungodly hour on a Sunday of departure confirmed. Cars were sorted, people were happy and the LNZCC team was as ready as Sonny's shoulder to hit some red (highly recommended hiring a large vehicle for transport).

After an enjoyable ride to Hadley, TP strolled out to the middle of the picturesque ground to figure out what we would do. In true B Mac fashion we lost the toss on an either way pitch. The locals sent us to bowl thinking the heat and sun would be too much... maybe only for Dylan and his glorious porcelain complexion.

Put into bowl we were. We felt we had a chance with the line-up of lads. In strolled Jimmy Walsh to bowl some left arm fizz, we knew things would be "good" when he tried to move his field and had the voice of a mix of an 80s DJ and a 15 year old boy going through puberty. Sketchy start with a 12 baller thanks to more swing than a seventies disco (we only knew that cos Jimmy told us). After that gentle start and the hangover clearing up Jimmy bowled really well and was rewarded with a Skied catch to debutant Devon Nihghtingale at second slip. He was also unlucky not to get a second (two or three edges) when Richard Boonie Boon ad a stellar effort at first slip - unfortunately, he copped it hard on the wrist and had to leave the field for some icing - off their man who scored 155 (more on that later). We lost Boonie for the rest of the innings. This was ok as we had brought an extra man.

Jimmy ended on his spell much less hung-over with figures of 48/1 off 8. His bowling partner Dylan Kirschberg bowled well for no reward 60/0 off 11; turning it up from the other end in the swing conditions. TP decided to change his tactics and give the new man Devon a crack, after a warm up for the first he bowled well 46/0 off 7.2, Dev had to head off with a dislocated finger when trying to catch Alex. Hagley stepped up and loaned us a fielder, cheers lads.

We were the audience for an incredible knock by Alex Millard who scored his 155 off 97 balls. I believe some in the Hagley side might have said was a slow rate and he should swing harder. Great to watch some glorious shots but not so good when you are the fielding team and have to go in to the deer paddocks to find the ball. It must be recorded that we were not too flash in the field dropping him 5 or 6 times. He must have heard the record top score in the fixture was close at hand (and the Australian who scored it, against us I believe, was playing for them).

Cole Hunter was then to the fore and he snaffled Alex in his third over, the first of his 4 wickets for the day (the 5 for went begging when sub fielder from Hagley, the West Australian club pro Zane shelled one cold). Very well bowled by Cole; back in the mixer after

having to leave the UK to accommodate his new work permit (not a club problem is it Mr Kyle?) finishing with 83/4 off 8.4. Vaughan bowled well with Cole getting the Australian who holds the record score for 25 and the current pro two balls later for a duck, finishing 38/2 off 7.

Time for some slow stuff - Josh Denise bowled well in his first but finished up going 42/0 off 3. Jeri Thompson bowled one at the end 13/0. Hadley finally declared at a whopping 343/8, which we thought was always going to be too much of an ask especially with time lost for looking for balls smashed all over the show.

Before batting there has to be a special mention to the people in charge of the teas. Holy moly, were we spoilt!! Not just for choice but for flavour and the spread. Running definitely became much harder but totally WORTH IT. Not only was this a single session but there was amazing food all day. Thanks again for the amazing spread.

Back to the cricket. With a mammoth total to chase in limited time we opened with Justincredible Fredrickson and Boonie. JCs trade mark low square leg shot off the quick bowler's was quickly replaced by the block as they tightened their lines. JC lasted 16 balls before nicking one to the keeper for 11. In strode Adam Khanbai to join Boonie at the crease. They had a partnership of 140 before Boonie fell for a good-looking knock of 55ish. Adam and Jimmy put on another 58 together, with Adam getting his maiden century for LNZZCm before he fell for 109 off 73. It was an innings that featured more forehand shots than a day at Wimbledon (thanks JC great quote and accurate). TP made the wise captain's decision to make sure it was a draw instead of unleashing the porcelain LMS beast that is Dylan. This being evident as we lost Matt and Jerry due to Matt being on call (effectively making use 7 down) and Devon to finger issues. Jimmy now not suffering so much from his hangover went out and batted well for 55 off 42, out last ball of the innings. Leaving us 258/5 off 37 overs, match drawn but with over 600 runs scored on the day the 343 declaration made a lot more sense.

This was a great day all round, the Hagley lads were good fun and good competition, the food was top notch, location grand and the pitch was great. I highly recommend playing this fixture if possible. It is definitely family friendly so worth taking them along for the day.

My hunt for a job/wife (same thing right?) for a Vvsa going well I will be back for another crack at this fixture next year.