

London Erratics v FC London

It has been a while since the Erratics have visited this windswept venue, and offered themselves up as a sporting spectacle both to the traffic on the A316 and to the aircraft roaring low directly overhead. In this 35 overs game, ten Erratics lined up against nine of FC London CC. The latter won the toss and elected to field.

On the green wicket, the ball popped off a length and openers Jim Head and James Rivington would have been in trouble early on if there had been some fielders in silly positions. But the pair persevered, and a good 9th over got the rate above 4 an over and saw off the initial attack.

The change bowlers immediately removed one opener each, and had the next three batsmen popping up dolly catches: five wickets had fallen in 6 overs and the Erratics had slumped to 56 for 5. Step up Andy Hosken and Chris Dunabin to rebuild the innings. Having got the measure of the conditions, they were then able to exploit the opposition's lack of a good fifth bowler. Chris in particular played a succession of attractive shots, and he seemed destined for a half century when the pitch finally got the better of him.

It was now crucial that the Erratics at least bat out the overs: but the last three wickets fell quickly – Andy being the last man out.

One of the FC Londoners, just back from a camping holiday, had erected at the edge of the ground an awning, which was referred to throughout as 'the gazebo'; when the rain started to fall during the tea interval, it was under this that the two teams sheltered.

The Erratics seemed unusually keen to take the field in the rain, and skipper James struggled to hold them until it had eased. After just one over, the wind-driven rain sent the players scurrying for cover again. Without the gazebo, the teams would certainly have called it a day, but instead they huddled and scanned the horizon for glimmers of hope.

Finally, it brightened and the game resumed. A silly mid-on and mid-off were poised, but the spooned catches didn't come. Fortunately George Dabby wasn't relying on those, and added another four scalps to his already impressive tally for the season – the second courtesy of a good slip catch by Jim, at the second attempt.

This brought to the crease the FC London skipper, just as the rain revisited with conviction. Scenting victory, the Erratics seemed less inclined this time to seek shelter – indeed their resolve was stiffened by the opposition skipper's whingeing about the conditions. However, the breakthrough didn't come, and when the wind gave the rain that extra bit of penetration, it was the Erratics skipper who led the way off – being as much concerned by the increasing difficulties his spinners were having in controlling the ball.

Another long wait (with much discussion of Duckworth-Lewis) until – fatally – the rain stopped once more. It was the batsmen who now trotted out with more enthusiasm. Albert Alla did incredibly well with the wet ball, but the key wicket wouldn't come. The rain came again, miserably for the damp Erratics, but they couldn't argue that it was worse than when they had stayed out earlier. Richard Heller and James had no control at all over the bar of soap in their hands; through his wet glasses, Michael Stephenson fielding on the boundary couldn't see the ball even when hit straight towards him. The flurry of boundaries merely promised to hasten the end of a miserable game already lost. Jim delivered the penultimate verdict – walking off even before the winning runs had been scored!

JR

LONDON ERRATICS — batting

		4s	6s
Head	caught	14	2
* Rivington	bowled	25	3
Alla	caught	7	1
† Scudamore	caught	6	1
Dabby	caught	0	
Hosken	bowled	26	4
Dunabin	c & b	40	7
Stephenson	caught	0	
Green J	run out	1	
Heller	NOT OUT	4	1

140 all out in 30.1 overs

Fall of wickets: 1(Head)-41, 2(Rivington)-41, 3(Scudamore)-49, 4(Dabby)-54, 5(Alla)-56, 6(Dunabin)-134, 7(Stephenson)-135, 8(GreenJ)-136, 9(Hosken)-140

FC LONDON — batting

1	b Dabby	22
2	b Dabby	3
3	c Head	1
4	not out	39
5	lbw	5
6	not out	59
7		
8		
9		

143 for 4 in 29.4 overs

LONDON ERRATICS — bowling

Stephenson	7	0	28	0
Dabby	7	1	19	4
Alla	7	0	26	0
Head	5	0	29	0
Heller	2.4	0	27	0
Rivington	1	0	10	0

Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-23, 3-28, 4-46

ERRATICS LOST BY 4 WICKETS