

Saturday 13 June 2009 — Griffin Club, Dulwich

Brian is back! Where is everybody else?

London Erratics v *The Times*

Ten-a-side. *The Times* won the toss and elected to field.

Early Erratics wickets looked ominous. Matthew Neal hooked at one that got big on him and he was well caught at square leg. Bill Coales looked solid until one got through; and two balls later, Peter Osborne assayed a cavalier pull to one that didn't get up.

Debutant David Garforth-Bles was joined by Brian Berrigan. David played some sumptuous cover drives. For one so stylish, he proved curiously vulnerable to the full toss: he was bowled by one and was lucky to be saved by its adjudged height; but shortly after, he played around a ball that hit him full on the pad – ending a valuable partnership of 64.

Debutant Justin Reynolds looked promising and saw the hundred up, then misjudged one. Brian and James Rivington then batted sensibly to build a respectable score. James was generally happy to push singles to give Brian the strike – though uncharacteristically he did tonk three boundaries in one over. On this sunny afternoon, their running was quite gentle, so when James first chanced a tight single he was well short. Partnership worth 67.

The Brian of old had been emerging throughout the innings, and by the end his characteristic skip down the wicket was on show. As tea approached, he was unluckily bowled off bat and pad, just ten short of a deserved century. George Osborne punched some nice shots, and Chris Dunabin sacrificed himself in the last over – as the Erratics posted a decent total of 205 (off 39 overs – quite a slow rate of overs bowled, a lot of tweaking of the field).

When the Erratics came to bowl, Justin enjoyed almost instant success, most satisfyingly removing for nought one of the batsmen who last year had shared that unbeaten opening partnership of 236. However, his partner seemed intent on building another big score; shortly after the fifty came up, the Erratics were relieved to see him gift a catch to Chris at gully.

Having done all the work with the bat, Brian was now giving his all with the ball, and was rewarded with a second wicket – a snick to keeper David. Justin had to depart early, so skipper Richard Heller replaced him as bowler, and a spectating rugby player kindly replaced him as sub in the field. When the final 20 overs were called, the game was well balanced with *The Times* needing to score at just under 6 an over.

The game swung back and forth. Brian took another wicket. The youthful new bat attacked Richard's bowling – then gave him a return catch. But it was the No. 3, Sunil Julka,* who was driving forward the *Times* innings, too easily finding the many gaps in the immobile field. Young George in particular suffered at his hands – though a run out, courtesy of another rugby sub, brought a lucky wicket.

Finally Brian's marathon spell came to an end. With 30 needed off the last 8 overs, it fell to Matthew and Bill to try and take the crucial 3 wickets. Bill's nicely flighted spin offered the batsmen a different challenge. With the 200 passed, Matthew finally bowled the centurion Julka. But *The Times* got home with 2.3 overs to spare.

* I think this is the Sunil Julka who played for the Erratics in one of those awful Black Rose games, in 2003 (www.londonerratics.com/2003/12blackrose.html).

JR

LONDON ERRATICS — batting

			4s	6s
Coales	bowled	6		
Neal	caught	0		
† Garforth-Bles	lbw	34	7	
Osborne P	bowled	0		
Berrigan	bowled	90	12	
Reynolds	bowled	8	1	
Rivington	run out	26	3	
Dunabin	caught	5		
Osborne G	NOT OUT	8	1	
* Heller	NOT OUT	0		

205 for 8 dec

Fall of wickets: 1(Neal)–5, 2(Coates)–17, 3(OsborneP)–17, 4(Garforth-Bles)–81, 5(Reynolds)–109, 6(Rivington)–176, 7(Berrigan)–193, 8(Dunabin)–201

The Times — batting

1	c Dunabin	b Berrigan	22
2		b Reynolds	0
3		b Neal	119
4	c Garforth-Bles	b Berrigan	10
5		b Berrigan	1
6	c & b	b Heller	13
7	run out		7
8	not out		18
9	not out		0
10			

207 for 7

LONDON ERRATICS — bowling

Reynolds	7	2	32	1
Berrigan	14	1	68	3
Heller	5	0	38	1
Osborne G	2	0	30	0
Neal	3	0	18	1
Coales	2.3	0	13	0

Fall of wickets: 1–1, 2–56, 3–74, 4–98, 5–121, 6–166, 7–201

ERRATICS LOST BY 2 WICKETS