

London Erratics v Harpsden

A 40 overs match. Harpsden won the toss and elected to bat. The home side kindly provided a succession of subs to give the Erratics eleven in the field.

When Michael Stephenson's sixth delivery was snicked through the hands of keeper and first slip and ran away for four, the Erratics should have realised that this was not going to be their day. For the first 8 overs, Michael and Brian Berrigan kept the scoring down to about 3.5 an over; but the rate for the next 8 overs was over 9.

A combination of the drinks break and two good slip catches by Brian enabled Richard Masters to remove the two openers. But the other change bowlers were not able to exploit the breakthrough. Rather, the youthful Harpsden bats launched themselves at the fragile attack. Bill Coales and James Rivington picked up fortunate wickets, but other chances weren't held.

The final 10 overs went for 102. The total conceded by the Erratics is the highest formally recorded (beating the 293 scored by the Beamers in 2008). It sadly equals the 330 that Chris Dunabin hazily recalls from a Kirdford match in the mid-1970s* – thus turning a disownable statistic of folklore into an undeniable truth.

As the Erratics ate their tea, they looked to the black clouds swirling around the ground for salvation.

After Peter Andrews had departed at the start of the 5th over, James and Richard M settled into a determined partnership. With Richard striking sweet straight drives, they rattled along at 6.5 an over. They put on 76, then Richard failed to clear the covers, just short of his half century.

This was a blow to any fantastic hope of chasing the target, but James pushed on to his own half century, scoring all round the wicket. Brian played sensibly at the other end, and they put together a steady fifty partnership. Just as Brian looked as though he might be ready to accelerate, he holed out at deep mid-off in the 31st over.

Chris Dunabin came in next, because he had to depart early. With James now flagging, the run rate dropped – and it was the skipper who fell next, to a leggie, the only batsman to be bowled all match. Chris was caught in the following over, the 38th.

Tony Poulter and Michael played some pleasant shots at the end, suggesting that the Erratics might have made a reasonable attempt on a less impossible total. As the final deliveries were bowled, it finally began to rain...

Five hundred runs in an afternoon, for the loss of just 9 wickets – not a day to be a bowler. Because the Erratics posted a respectable (if on this occasion sadly inadequate) reply, this was nowhere near being a record defeat. But a scarring experience nonetheless.

JR

HARPSDEN — batting

1	c Berrigan	b Masters	50
2	c Berrigan	b Masters	60
3	c sub	b Coales	50
4	not out		64
5	c Masters	b Rivington	25
6	not out		55
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			

330 for 4 in 40 overs

LONDON ERRATICS — bowling

Stephenson	8	0	71	0
Berrigan	8	1	41	0
Masters	8	2	49	2
Heller	3	0	42	0
Coales	3	0	36	1
Poulter	6	0	43	0
Rivington	2	0	16	1
Dunabin	2	0	24	0

Fall of wickets: 1–121, 2–139, 3–189, 4–232

LONDON ERRATICS — batting

			4s	6s
*	Rivington	bowled	76	8
	Andrews	caught	1	
	Masters	caught	49	8 2
	Berrigan	caught	12	1
	Dunabin	caught	3	
	Poulter	NOT OUT	18	2
	Stephenson	NOT OUT	8	2
†	Bush			
	Coales			
	Heller			

176 for 5 in 40 overs

Fall of wickets: 1(Andrews)–12, 2(Masters)–88, 3(Berrigan)–139, 4(Rivington)–148, 5(Dunabin)–151

ERRATICS LOST BY 154 RUNS

* www.londonerratics.com/archive/beginnings.html