



## West Chiltington & Thakeham Cricket Club

### 1<sup>st</sup> XI Review

### 2017 Season

### Division 5 West SPCL - CHAMPIONS

#### Part 2: The Middle Order

This batch of 9 timed games was always going to be the most testing of the season, as teams would have the option of trying to stop us winning rather than trying to beat us so our bowling would play a much bigger role. I can tell you that these matches threw more things our way than we could ever have imagined, but at the core of it the character and resilience it built in all of us will live deep within the heart of our great club. Going into this phase level on points with Broadwater also threw an interesting angle on the league with our first fixture against them taking place at home in game 8.

Pagham at home were the first on the agenda and winning the toss Tim Jarvis inserted the opposition. A very solid all-round team bowling performance saw Reubs, Jake, Northie and Ben "Crispy" Lucking pick up a couple of wickets each. Jimbo also bowled a tidy 4 overs, but Reubs was the pick with figures of 2/19 off 13.1 overs. A total of 137 all out was below par but we managed to make hard work of chasing it down. TC was in his usual positive mood hitting 7 fours in his 33, but after losing skipper Jarv early and then wickets at regular intervals, it was left to build the chase around Reubs "The Rock" Taylor who ended up on 48\* and very easily picked up the man of the match award.

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June saw us visit Billingshurst away and dropping our first points of the campaign. After losing the toss and being inserted the Windmills got off to a fantastic start, however TC hadn't realised the warm up was over and he wasn't supposed to be hitting catches to the fielders. Poor Roshan the opening bowler from Billingshurst had him dropped 7 times off his bowling! I hope he did not buy a lottery ticket that night! Anyway, Jarv and TC put on 100 for the opening stand but then the cricketing gods showed us what a middle order collapse looks like. The pressure really started to toll when CD was run out by his "friend" by at least 43 yards and it looked like we would struggle to reach 200 with 10 overs left. It was left to our colonial duet of Moneydeep and Medusa with the former making his debut for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI it was time to show what he was made of. A few lusty blows later we ended up on a respectable 221/9 off our 53 overs. In reply Northy359 bowled a magnificent spell, but we lacked penetration after picking up a few early wickets, and our fielding was extremely poor as well which did not help. It was however a great test of a proper game of cricket and was a wake-up call with our fixture against league leaders Broadwater looming next weekend. A very exciting end saw Billingshurst end 7 runs short with only 1 wicket in hand with a bit of controversy with an appeal for interference in the last over of the game! Highlight of the day was a fantastic lunch with cans of Pepsi in an ice-bucket.....say no more!

Having lost our first points of the season the previous week and losing our share of the league lead with our opponents it made the home clash against Broadwater even more significant! Losing the toss and being inserted the Windmills got off to a fantastic start against the best bowling attack we had faced all season. Tom Chambers led the way with 46 supported by the ever-reliable Adam "TJ" Trees in an opening stand of 74, but then things were held back a bit taking us to 121/5 and Broadwater getting very excited. Medusa tried to keep things calm with youngsters RT and CD working towards a very defendable total of 200, and with Higgs playing his part and CD striking a few Goweresque lofted cover drives at the death it was game on with the opposition thinking we were well short. They

did not factor in an injured South African who was like an angry rhino stampeding through a marshmallow factory!

Following a very good opening spell by Hodgson and RT which accounted for the opening pair of Waller and O'Sullivan, Medusa picked up 7-17 off 13 overs off his short run and ably supported by reams of Timbo's KT tape, with Broadwater ending up well short on 137 all out and sending a loud message across the league.

Crawley away was going to be our 3<sup>rd</sup> challenging game in a row as they had a couple of players who could deliver match winning performances, and coupled with a slow low wicket, things were never going to be easy! Things did not get any easier when we had to play with 10 men due to some miscommunication and Hags performing with Guns & Roses at Hyde Park. A simple few throw downs in the nets ended up in "Leaf Blower Gate" with the Crawley groundsman adamant that removing invisible leaves from the net was more important than letting players warm up for a Sussex League fixture. Medusa did not find his behaviour very accommodating! Losing another toss, we were inserted, and TJ managed to not score any runs off a lot of balls and with Hugo batting with his elbow at the other end it was going to be a long day! It got even longer when Howgate was bowled by a pea roller and threw his bat like one of his Storks.....and Medusa was forced to run two all-run 4's neither of which counted to him as well as running out RT on 44!



*An interesting boundary formation at Crawley*

In response we bowled and fielded poorly with catches going down at regular intervals. Ritchie Harrison pushed for Medusa's job with some very informative and technical coaching from behind the stumps during the Crawley innings! With 6 needed off the last over Medusa managed to serve up a juicy length ball which settled the match in one lusty blow disappearing over long-off. The highlights of a very unsuccessful day were the service in the bar and the skills shown by many players playing boundary golf....which was an extremely curvy course indeed!

*"A beautiful sunset for a beautiful human being – RIP Timbo....we miss you so much."*



***Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2017***

Following the tragedy of the previous weekend, and an emotional and painful week it was never going to be easy to take the field at the picturesque Goodwood Ground to take on an improving Chichester 2<sup>nd</sup> XI. With a minute's silence observed across the leagues it was a very surreal and reserved day with emotions bubbling close below the surface. On another slow low wicket scoring was never easy but Mick channelled his energy into a very fine knock of 77 which along with some starts from Huggs, RT, Hags and an elusive Eddie Miller allowed us to put 228 on the board. In response we only needed 21.4 overs to bowl them out with Medusa taking his second 7 wicket haul of the summer with support from the remainder of the Foreign Legion in Mick and Moneydeep. JT did a fantastic job scoring but was not the most attractive scorer involved in the match.



*Action from the picturesque Goodwood Ground vs Chichester 2<sup>nd</sup> XI*

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July saw us rained off at Worthing followed by another frustrating abandonment at home the following Saturday against Goring when we had 155/2 off 24 overs. Huggs with 54\* and RT with 41\* looking set for big ones before the rain hit!

A third wet weekend in a row made it seem like the gods were against us as if other fixtures were completed we could lose points against our main rivals Broadwater.



*Jarvis losing 9<sup>th</sup> toss in a row vs Findon much to the amusement of the umpire!*

With Jarvis losing his 9<sup>th</sup> league toss in a row Findon managed 108/7 off 40 overs. Jake bowled beautifully for 4/38 off 17 overs and then with the thunder clouds building and lightning striking all around Jim “the weather doctor says wayhoo” Gee made us all grab the biggest metal object we could find and put it on the pitch! With much frustration and mopping up we managed to chase down the revised target of 108 for the loss of 3 wickets to secure 26 points. JEM and Reuben finishing things off with a steady 60 run partnership after we wobbled at 41/3!



*Money mopping up the carnage with Jarvis' new towel.....*

**Coming soon.....**

### Part 3: The Tail-enders

*The final push for promotion back to the limited overs format for the final 4 games including an epic encounter with fellow title-chasers Broadwater!*