

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May**

**Old Rutlishians CC 1<sup>st</sup> XI v Kingstonian CC 1<sup>st</sup> XI**

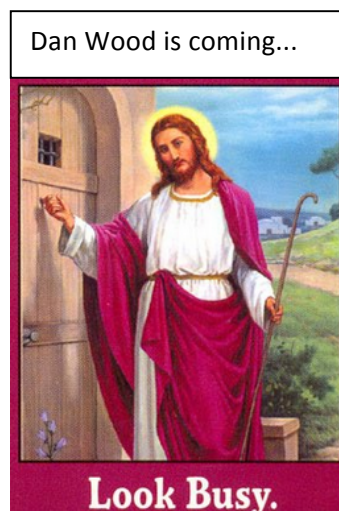
**ORCC 270 – 6 beat Kingstonian 107 a.o by 163 runs**

**'I looked up and saw a white horse standing there. Its rider carried a bow, and a crown was placed on his head. He rode out to win many battles and gain the victory.'**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. Contrary to popular belief, he didn't rest on Sunday; luckily for the Ruts he played a game of pyramid and created Birmingham. God was not pleased. However, as the Ruts are witnessing this season, his lack of focus and invention in creating Birmingham and its surrounding areas has led to his eldest son rising again in the form of Dan 'Jesus' Wood, making his ORCC debut.

And what a debut it was! Losing the toss and with the sermon of Joe Riches' team talk ringing in his ears, he strode out to the damp, uncovered wicket with Elsdon - both men looking like they could walk on water. After the disappointing early loss of both Elsdon slashing at a wide one and Egg, pushing at a leg cutter, Jesus and Mohammed were brought together in an incredible never-seen-before partnership. Smashing the bowling to all corners of the ground, they quite superbly took the Ruts from 8-2 to 171, a partnership of 163. Mohammed batted with great concentration, especially after top edging his first ball tantalisingly close to mid wicket and having to sit through a rain break which saw a considerable down pour, luckily for us, nothing of Noah proportions. With play resuming, the boundaries came two by two, and after the loss of Mohammed for a well made 67, Wood comfortably moved in the 90s including a towering 6 over long on. Joined by another ORCC debutant, James Shackleton ensured the score kept ticking but he couldn't quite hang on to congratulate his former Birmingham University disciple on bringing up his debut ton. That pleasure fell to Jon 'Jagger' Mapp and it was a pleasant moment for the Ruts to provide a well earned standing ovation to a delighted Wood.

Showing that they are both servants to the team cause, Mapp and Bailey batted without selfishness in the final couple overs, scampering 1s and 2s putting on 46 for 6<sup>th</sup> wicket. The middle order managed to resurrect an excellent total of 270 after losing Sonny first ball, so it really was a genuinely impressive effort.



With our last supper watched over by the Kingstonian CC tea man, the Ruts took to the field with great enthusiasm ready to get off to a good start. Shack and Sonny took the new ball aiming to conjure up some miracles. We were not to be disappointed. The vital early wicket was snaffled by Elson at 2<sup>nd</sup> slip from a Shack delivery, the Ruts began to smell blood as number 3 was dismissed in similar fashion caught at first slip by Egg. The seas were beginning to part when the skipper came in at number 4. I am not being disrespectful when I say the lad had a mare. He kept 5 in the ring throughout our innings, got no balled for walking into a catching position and he was trapped LBW by Shack for 4. However, we did not have it all our own way early on. Khalid was punishing anything pitched up for either 6 or 4 off both Sonny and Shack, and when he was put down by Bailey, it was looking like a big score was on the cards. The skipper decided to mix things up and brought Shack's (3-29) and Sonny's spells to an end. The change worked. Mohammed was straight into his rhythm bowling really good lines and Barnicott had the dangerous Khalid caught at slip with his first delivery. Wickets then continued to tumble as Kingstonian began to offer little resistance to the Ruts attack. The pitch also began to really grip and once Barnicott settled into his line after struggled with turning it too much (!), he trapped the keeper LBW and was backed up by two good catches from Sal. Richard came in to bowl at the tail proving himself too good for their number 10 who gave up trying to play properly, reverse sweeping to Mapp at point. See ya. The final wicket fell to a really good Mohammed catch at mid-on and the Ruts had won by a whopping 163 runs and 10 points, including the bonus.



Sonny opening up

So there we have it, the long awaited first league fixture and the Ruts off to the best possible start. Great batting from Woody and Sal and good bowling backed up by sharp fielding on the most part. Let's not get carried away at this result, and at times like this, it's important to remember Matthew 6:34: "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today." And of course the classic from David 5:32: "Searching for the Virgin Mary in Wimbledon on a Saturday night will largely bear no fruit at all."

On a final note, a great weekend of results for the club as a whole – 6 adult wins out of 6 Saturday / Sunday. Fantastic stuff, wine and wafer all round!

**Alex Barnicott**