

Old Ruts 3rd XI v Egham 3rd XI

11th May 2013

The 3's started their Surrey Championship Division 2 campaign with a fair old trek to Egham (nearby Staines). Myself and Corbey had a fantastic journey in the luxury of Salim's Range Rover. Mike on the other hand had somehow got himself wedged in the back of Joe's run around like the Nutty Professor expanding in his Ferrari. Luckily he managed to get out! We turned up to shock horror. A 3rd XI ground with covers on! A blessing with the skies looking grey and rain looming, as I walked up to confirm we were in the right place I heard whispers behind me of "oh sorry lads you're Egham's 1st XI are you". Fortunately they weren't!

We won the toss and elected to field with a strong bowling resources it was a good toss to win giving us a chance of shortening the game by bowling them out under their full 50 over quota. Usman began his first over erratically, 5 out of 6 were poor deliveries. He seemed downbeat and said he wasn't sure about the new ball insinuating he wouldn't mind being taken off. Bilal at the other end seemed rusty too. I continued with Usman as I felt his extra pace could still be a handful if he got it right. His second over improved 3 out of 6 were good. Still he wasn't sure. In his third over he confirmed his ability. Removing their opening bat with full delivery. 2 balls later he did it again removing their number 3 LBW. Bilal in his fourth over got one to duck back and grabbed one for himself. 3 down you could feel the confidence grow in our team and the fear sink into theirs. I took Bilal off as he seemed to be tiring and I didn't want loose deliveries letting off the pressure. Enter Waseem, arguably the pick of our bowlers Waseem was relentless in his attacks he ripped out Egham's middle order with 3 wickets and could have had more. At the other end Salim played his part going for less than 2 an over keeping the pressure on. At 60 for 6 the rain came down. The Egham lads were very sporting and helped push the covers on quickly. After a 15 minute break we took the field again but after an over or two Waseem ended his spell unable to use a wet ball. Rob came on from the other end and took a wicket in his first over, caught and bowled it was a good one for his fantasy groupies! Nadeem could be a vital man for us this season his left arm gives us a variety to throw at any settled batsmen and he accounted for the lower order taking 3 wickets in just 10 balls. Rob copped a bit of stick from the guys for being despatched to the boundary a couple of times by their number 5 but thanks to Nadeem Egham were dismissed for 92.

Their skipper reminded me it wasn't over until both sides had batted and he was right. However Dinesh has started the season in great form and seems much happier back opening the batting. It wasn't just that he made 44 supported steadily by Joe's 17 but the nature of his innings. In his 44 he hit 10 boundaries. A devastating statistic for any opposition trying to defend a low score. It looked as though we would canter home without loss but towards the end a couple of rash strokes meant Joe, Dinesh and Waseem all got out. Corbey took us home unbeaten on 14. The victory was never really in doubt. Egham finished above us last year so the win is a good one with a bonus point for good measure. The value in terms of the confidence it brings could be even greater. Historically our 3's have started slowly so a good start could be worth its weight in gold and despite the absence of SPM, Errol, Tom Donegan, Matt Vandeppeer, Wilf, Nick Beavitt and others who may have been out for the 3's last season, the team looks strong and ready for a challenge.