

**Saturday 4 May 2013**

**Old Rutlishians CC 3rd XI v Merton CC 2nd XI**

**ORCC 164-8 loss by 4 wickets to Merton 165-6**

Eshen Patel 14, Muhammed Basit 15, Callum Holden 16, Rob Lewsey 17 and Ian not much older than the rest. Youth was definitely the name of the game for the 3's friendly against Merton. In a shift change from previous years we turned up at Nursery Road early enough to do a couple of fielding drills and warm ups. Gone are the days of standing around doing not a lot!

Winning the toss the captain decided to bat, feeling the Ruts' young team may fair better with runs on the board. Dinesh got the innings off to a flyer in his usual flamboyant style latching onto anything loose. Unfortunately Eshen perished early on going over the top but not clearing Mid Off. Wrighty came in and played sensibly supporting Dinesh in a 50 partnership. Dinesh on 42 looked odds on for his 50 but was bowled by the cunning bowling of Merton's Waqas Khan. Nasir came in and joined Wrighty. A couple overs in controversy struck. One of Merton's bowlers lost his temper with the umpire and let his dissent get the better of him. At the non-strikers end Nasir reminded the bowler that it was a friendly and his dissent was ill-placed. To his credit he moved on quickly and got back to his mark however the break in play broke Wrighty's concentration and he perished the next ball. The captain, Nasir, began to find my stride however wickets tumbled at the other end. Sumair gone for 4, Rustom and Ian both for ducks. Rob Lewsey didn't make many but he stopped the rot by sticking around. On 39 with 8 overs to go Nasir decided it was time to open his shoulders however was struck on the pads given out LBW (Thanks Wrighty!!). Muhammed the Under 15 came in and a mix up between him and Rob led to Rob's dismissal by run out. The situation probably not helped by Dwar screaming "run again" when the fielder had the ball in his hand (worth noting that Dwar wasn't playing he dropped out the day before and generously assumed the role of Team Cheerleader). However Muhammed unphased showed great spirit clearing his front leg to smash the ball taking 16 off the final over and lifting us to 164 off our 40. Merton's Waqas Khan finished with 3-27 the pick of their bowlers.

In response Merton started positively lead by Naveed Sarwar. Nadeem was threatening for the Ruts when he got his line right but after a long absence it may take him a couple of games to get back to his usual discipline. Ian sprayed the ball around and probably fair to say it was an off day for him. Muhammed struggled too dropping the ball short allowing their batsmen to pull him through the leg-side. A learning curve for the 15 year old. Dinesh stuck to his disciplines finishing with figures of 2-22 accounting for Sarwar (40) and Sen for a duck. Callum looked a threat at the other end his figures of 1-40 probably not a fair account as he defeated the batsmen on numerous occasions. Eshen swapped the keeping gloves to bowl his spin and picked up a couple of wickets reward for bowling a good length aided by

an excellent high catch by Callum and a spectacular diving catch by Ian. At this point Merton were just a few runs away from winning the game however the spirit of our team was excellent, taking late wickets and never losing heart.

Overall it was a spirited performance by an under-strength and inexperienced side. Nasir and Dinesh showed some early form with the bat whilst Eshen and Callum showed promise with the ball. Some reinforcements into the middle order, a bit more discipline with the ball and a more experienced keeper will have this team ready for the league!

**Nasir Sayed**