

Henley CC U15 161 for 9 beat Hurley CC U15 64 for 8 by 97 runs

The picturesque Harpsden Bowl played host to the much anticipated cup clash between local rivals - a game that will surely go down in the history books as the first Hurley colts side to contain 2 sets of siblings (Hills and Dawkins). Big thanks to Hannah for stepping into the breach at the last minute.

Hurley bowled first on a sticky wicket that saw the ball popping from a length and hooping around more than Lords on a muggy day. Sensing opportunity, Dawkins (4-18-1) and Hill (4-18-4) put in a fine spell of opening bowling to leave the Henley confidence wavering and the score on 26/3 from 6 overs. The early wickets set the tone for what turned out to be a stellar fielding performance, Hammersley fell to a sharp slip catch by Dawkins, Hilditch first ball to an athletic diving effort by Bagri and Connell to a solid catch by Patrick going to his left in the covers. The opposition were rattled, the skies darkened, the Hurley supporters club sat up a little straighter and the Henley chirp was briefly silenced. The fine bowling and fielding continued as Bagri and Patrick (3-15-2) turned the screw once more, leaving Henley on 49/5 at the halfway point. The talented Mr. Thomas fell to a brilliant run out by Ben Howell, the crowd cooed as he hit the one stump he had to aim at and even Father Howell had to admit '...not bad that...'. A juggling effort behind the stumps by Skelton removed Jordan and Perez-Quane flat batted a screamer straight down Calliss' throat at mid off (well done James, a lot of adult players would have shied away from that one!). Despite the fall of wickets Henley showed their strength in depth, and as a couple of difficult chances went down, the middle overs saw Henley put the hammer down. Cow corner was the preferred location for plenty of boundaries - in a flash they past the 100 mark and a sizeable total looked on the cards. Still though the Hurley fielding impressed - Dawkins pulling off an audacious 'no look through the legs reverse flick' that left Hanshaw trudging back to the hutch in disbelief. Ma and Pa Hill looked pleased as punch as Jack threw the ball to Issy for a couple of confident overs - including a brave caught and bowled effort from a powerful drive that only just went down. The run rate was pegged back in the last few overs and another stunning Bagri catch running in from the boundary left Henley on a challenging 161/9 from their allotted 20 overs.

The Hurley innings started amidst a cacophony of chirruping and hollering from the fielding side that continued unabated for the rest of the game. As the famous old Chas and Dave number goes, they definitely had more 'Rabbit than Sainsburys'. A succession of Hurley batters were pinned down by the accurate Henley attack, and thoughtful field placing meant that gaps were hard to find and boundaries at a premium. With runs tough to come by, frustrations set in and wickets began to fall steadily - Henley showing they had bowling depth to match their batting and didn't step off the gas. Dawkins (12) and Hill (10) were the only top order batsmen to battle into double figures, and so the task was set to make them bowl out the full 20 overs. The sound of the home side's 'banter' was briefly drowned out by the noise of Issy's knees knocking as Henley put on their quickest bowler for the last over in the darkening gloom - 'But jack told me I wouldn't have to bat' was heard from beneath the helmet. Just proves Issy...older brothers are not to be trusted... Fortunately though for Miss Hill, Bagri and Ballard stayed cheerfully belligerent in the face of the Henley verbal and pace assault and her U15 batting debut will come another day. All in all a great effort by our boys and girls - the fielding performance in particular was top drawer and the Lions can be very proud of their efforts.

MOM Jack Hill

PMOM Arjan Bagri