

## Mayfield Saturdays vs Whittington



25<sup>th</sup> August 2018



**Superstar**

**Whittington 160-5d**

**Mayfield 162-5**

**Mayfield won by 5 Wickets**

***“For no particular reason I just kept on running...  
then after that I couldn't stop!”***

**Forest Gump**

The week started like any other week for Mayfield in 2018, with the tireless efforts of Shaf trying to piece together a team from what has been this year an ever diminishing pool of players, like Dr Frankenstein trying to create the perfect human from a bag of left over limbs and the tired old bodies of some once vibrant cricketers. The horse trading began on Tuesday when he could lay claim to having about 6 live bodies available for Saturday, which crept up to 7.5 on Wednesday (the 0.5 being Jujhar), before rising and falling between 9.5 and 8.5 on Thursday. A bad curry, then threatened the participation from the 1.5 Sondhs and, like the English weather at this time of the year, Sunny was in and then out on Friday. As it turned out, we fielded a full side including both Sondhs, the small one.... and his son (boom-tish!), and a guest debutant procured by Ren called Sachin who had apparently kept wicket a long time ago.... sounds like he would fit in perfectly then!!

As it turned out Whittington had also experienced their own difficulties assembling a team and were fielding 10, all of whom were sent into bat by Asnad after he won the toss.

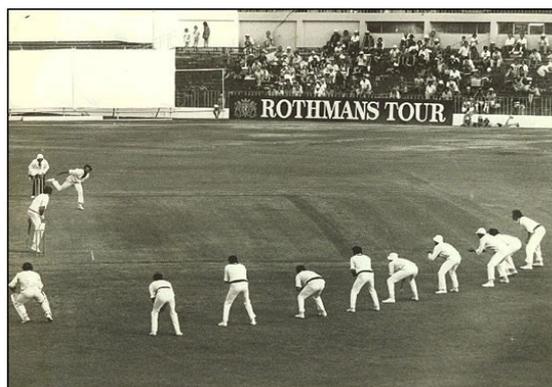


**Shaf: I've done it!! With the head of Cullen, a leg of Shaw and an arm of Sondh,  
I've created another player for Saturday!!**

At one 'O clock (the start time) the Mayfield 10.5 were already on the field and waiting while a slightly less organised Whittington busied themselves with trying to find useful things like stumps, flags.... and each other. We thought we'd help our new recruit by tossing the ball leisurely in his direction to see if he could remember what it felt/looked like etc and to our surprise found it fizzing back at us with twice the speed with which it had been dispatched to him! Within a few minutes Sachin had corralled a virtual slip cordon of about 8 of us and was schooling us with some pretty nippy slip catching practice. What started out as a gentle welcoming chuck around had been turned into a slick, military, catching regime. Let's hope it would prove it's worth in the game itself.

Sporting 600 matches between them as well as over 650 wickets, (not to mention nearly 100 years!) it was like a Lennon and McCartney reunion opening the bowling (although some might prefer Waldorf and Statler) as Sondh and Shaw opened the innings. Ravi's first delivery was a Sondh classic, which was as much a shame for Whittington as it was for us, because it meant he was crowing with delight from ball one! Swinging into the left handed Topi, he castled him straight away and we were off an running before Whittington!

In truth that was the high point of a fairly uninteresting opening salvo which owed much to the accuracy of both bowlers but little to their potency. That said, when it was observed from the field after 14 overs that it was "time to get the real bowlers on", Shaw's stinging retort came, "What, the ones who actually get runs scored off them?!". The combined totals of 14 overs, 10 maidens and 1-11 told it's own miserly story and had some Mayfield batsmen wondering if they were going to have a chance to score any runs today.



**Catching practice with the new W/K Sachin!**

The younger faster replacements, Asnad and Ash came and went without troubling the wickets column, whilst Whittington were casually going about their business with precious little urgency. Perhaps it was the fact that they had elected to play a timed game, that was giving them a false sense of laissez faire? In any case something needed to be done as the game was at an impasse. We needed a game changer, someone who could really alter the course and momentum of an innings.... step forward Karl Cullen! Standing on the precipice of greatness at 597 wickets he strode forward with the anticipation of a man about to achieve his much sought after target, like a big game hunter with his cross-hairs trained on his prey, finger lightly held on the trigger. Using all the skill acquired over years of bowling and 1000's of deliveries, he sent down a rank half tracker that got splatted to the only fielder on the leg side, and he was off and running at 598. Surely this would be the day!!

Juhjar had a brief cameo and performed well off his long run for a couple of overs, but Karl's selfish wicket had exposed a slightly more potent middle order and Whittington (finally) began their charge, with much relief on all sides.

With Shaf replacing Juhjar and getting an early wicket thanks to a neat stumping from Sachin, the game was really starting to motor. With two predominantly leg-sided attacking

batsmen at the crease, setting a field was proving an easy task, surely it was just a matter of time before the next victim. Karl obliged tossing one up and Mohammed, a player who seemed to dislike the confines of his crease so much that he ignored every opportunity to remain in it, came flying down the track to meet it. He duly hoicked it down to Steve at long on, waiting like a greedy school boy at the front of the lunch queue. Sadly for Karl, as '598' was flashing through his mind, the usually safe pair of hands of our newly returned Reverend, spilled the contents and Karl would have to look elsewhere for inspiration.

A sharp chance to the diving Shaw saw another one missed, until another airborne half tracker found it's way winging towards the waiting Ash at Cow Corner. This one however, rather comically, (except to the now misty eyed Cullen), went through his hands and bounced off his chest, and to add insult to injury, bounced over the boundary for a six!! It was not going well in Camp Cullen, but still he twirled and persisted.

The waiting Mohammed was pretty much taking what little guard was needed in the middle of the pitch and the next chance flew again to our ever keen minister once more. The flight of this was trickier, he galloped a few quick strides in.... reassessed his position.... took a couple of steps back and..... BINGO! pouched a beauty. His momentum took him a couple of steps backwards towards the boundary. Relief flooded his body as he awaited the thunderous cheer of his jubilant flock of team mates which never came, as they all watched him sail over the boundary ball in hand in silence.... and still he kept on running!!



**“Where's he going? Why is he still running..... Steve?”**

There was sadness, amusement, shock, great joy and a whole mixture of other emotions on display, not to mention disappointment though mainly from Ash whose own flirtation with the boundary had, up until this point, been the nailed on Golden Moment of the day.

Finally, and with great relief, Shaf put an end to all the nonsense, with two quick wickets (including another stumping), and despite getting carted around by an 11 year old for the last over finished with the most prolific figures of the day on 3-29 as the Whittington innings drew to a scratchy and inelegant finish on 160-5.

After, what can only be described as a chaotic, though not unpleasant tea, (largely due to the fact that Whittington's preparation for it owed much to their organisational skills displayed at the start of the game), we headed back out, though not, it has to be said, with Whittington leading the way. Perhaps it was a lack of eagerness or more likely organisation, in any case the game was

eventually restarted and Adrian and Steve took the opening berths, the latter keen to make up for his fielding misdemeanours and after a cracking boundary, things looked on track, that is, unfortunately, until a top edge flew into square leg's hands and with no repeat of the comical catching in Mayfield's innings, it was curtains for Steve who was left to reflect on a tough day at the office. There will be better ones of course and it was great to have his energy and enthusiasm back on the field.

Shaf strode eagerly out to the wicket and with a Saturday record that boasted nothing under 50 from his three previous innings, he was as keen as a man with a hot tip for the National and a thousand pounds in his pocket! He didn't disappoint. The trademark flourishes of his bat clipping and driving the ball to all parts soon had the scoreboard racing, without ever a hint of danger. Adrian meanwhile, was playing a secure and sensible innings at the other end. Shaf reached his inevitable 50 before uncharacteristically missing a ball that never turned and although 86-2 was a strong position, there was always the opportunity for a Mayfield wobble.

Next in was the rarest of sights.... the Treasurer. Doing his best to sure up our flagging finances by making himself available for only his second game this year, Nigel strode to the wicket with his bushy beard bristling in the wind. Some could be forgiven for wondering whether he could remember where to go and what to do, but let me reassure them, his only other game was on the same ground in May, and like a dog (a shaggy one obviously), with his favourite bone, he trotted out to familiar territory.

Keen to get his money's worth and with due deference to Shaf, this was definitely the eye catching innings of the day. He cut and he pulled for all he was worth, was merciless on the all too offered short ball, the highlight a straight, flat six dispatched over deep square leg and was finally caught for an entertaining 33 with the game all but won.

Our new man Sachin confidently stroked the winning couple of runs to impress the Captain at the other end and the target was reached 5 down and with 9 overs to spare to allay any potentially silly arguments about time (which we'll save for another day!).



**De Niro as Nigel Ball - hunting down the opposition bowlers!**

All in all a highly entertaining and enjoyable game, played for the most, in good spirits against a decent bunch of guys. It was the perfect mix of an old timers reunion, with a blend of youth and a debutant in the mix. Some might say, the perfect day. Although perhaps not Steve and probably not Karl, though no doubt, they will have their own days in the sun soon!!

MoM – of course was Shaf

GM – I think we've covered that haven't we?