



## Sanford v St Anne's Allstars CC

The Urn Field, Guildford, Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

Toss: Sanford.

Weather: sunny.

Debuts: T. Murray, E. Townend, E. Creswick.

Format: time.

### REPORT

*By James Morgan*

It was a game that had everything, producing a host of champagne moments which Allstars stalwarts will be toasting for years. The likely result oscillated wildly as our reply to Sanford's 173-9 got off to positive start, capitulated limply, recovered magnificently, and then stuttered apocalyptically with a creditable draw within reach. In the end it was left to inspirational club captain, Maxie Allen (0\*), to save the day, as he heroically blocked out the final over to salvage our pride.

But he wasn't the only hero – far from it. When stoic tail-ender Jon Ryan joined me, as skipper-for-the-day, at the wicket, our innings was teetering on the edge of the abyss at 36-7. Yet we dug deep\* to withstand a fired-up attack and a badly deteriorating wicket for almost 20 overs, whilst fashioning a face-saving eighth-wicket of stand of 49.

Yet with just 14 balls remaining, and a draw seemingly within our grasp, disaster struck. Having made my way to 39, I received a brute of a delivery which rose incomprehensibly off a length and took the shoulder of the bat. Gully grasped the resulting catch like a hungry hippo and suddenly Sanford smelled blood.

Lightning struck twice five balls later, when Ryan copped an almost identical lifter. The unlucky batsman, who is swiftly developing a reputation as the Allstars' immovable object, looked devastated as the ball flicked his glove on its way through to the slips.

It was a moment of sheer frustration. The cricketing Gods had abandoned us when we needed them most – but fortunately the game wasn't up. Maxie, and debutant Liz Creswick, negotiated the final 9 deliveries to seal, at 85-9, what can only be described as a triumphant draw. The capacity crowd of twelve (which included nine of our payers, the Sanford scorer, and two unknown local youths having a kickabout) were sent into raptures. It was a special moment.

Earlier in the day, we had bowled tightly enough through 41 overs to restrict Sanford to a gettable total. Special mentions must go to Tristan Haddow-Allen (4-49) who bowled unchanged from one end for the duration of the innings. It was an impressive feat of stamina from our pugnacious all-rounder, who mesmerised a number of batsmen with his smorgasbord of looping off-spinners and deadly quicker balls. Jon Ryan also cranked up the pace in an opening burst of seam bowling which claimed two wickets. There was a wicket for Ed Townend in his first ever Allstars over, and another useful bowling contribution by fellow newcomer Tim Murray. The fielding also showed a marked improvement from the previous week. Obviously this can be attributed to the intense fielding drills that we didn't do before the game.

**Man of the Match** Jon Ryan. His key innings of 1 resisted Stanford's bowlers for 19 overs. Never before has so much been done, for so many balls, for so few runs.

**Champagne Moment** Jon Ryan (again). He arrived at the crease to bat wearing a helmet, but just one pad... two is usually traditional.

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*\* Editor's note: Morgsy is being modest. He, as did Jon, played a magnificent innings, not just epic in its resilience, but garnished by a sequence of imperious square-drives. As a partnership, this was the greatest rearguard action in Allstars history. MHA.*