

Decorum was put aside for the afternoon on Saturday, as Alec Pettigrew brought his team of misfits, ringers and Charlie Morgan to Cleeves Farm to take on Chilmark in the annual Hong Kong clash. The format for the day was two T20 games, with the first not taken too seriously and the second being the trophy game - one Hong Kong have won seven years running.

Ricky Corbin captained Chilmark in the first game, telling Alec that he was flipping a double headed coin to decide who batted first. Alex still called tails.

Jake Taylor and Max Allen opened the batting, the former taking a boundary on his way to eight, before being bowled. Guy Woodroffe came in at three and left six runs later, and was followed by his son, Felix, similarly bowled for seven. Will Thompson unleashed his down-on-one-knee cover drive to everything that came his way, but only connected once and was bowled having scored a single. Reg Allen then came in and left soon after having not troubled the scorers.

With barely 50 runs on the board there was plenty of work to do for Chilmark to make a competitive total, but with the natural batting order flipped somewhat, the potential was there.

Rod Taylor was first to attack, cracking two sixes and two boundaries on his way to 30, the score on which batsmen had to retire. Max Allen had been a mainstay, but after accelerating towards the retirement score with a six over square leg, he was caught by Alec in the covers.

Brand King then came in and raced towards his retirement score, hitting three boundaries and three sixes en-route, before Jason Stearman (2) and Ricky Corbin (8) provided brief cameos.

The real fireworks came right at the tail of the innings. Darren Lee had swung at everything in his normal golfing manner, but had managed only to mistime a few singles. However during the final over, bowled by Hong Kong's best and fastest, everything suddenly clicked. The first ball raced away for two runs; the second was driven down the ground for four; the third went over the sight screen for six. On the fourth delivery Lee whipped it to deep midwicket. It should have only been a single but a greyhound like Carl Jacobs scampered back and gave Lee the strike again. Lee didn't let the gift go to waste. The fifth ball he hit over deep mid off for six, before launching the final ball of the innings over the sight screen once more. 26 runs had come off the over and Lee had raced from five to 31 with six lusty blows.

With a very healthy 183 runs to defend Chilmark were feeling confident. 'Windmill' Will Thompson took the new ball and troubled the batsmen with some accurate bowling, before conceding a boundary and a six towards the end of the over. Guy Woodroffe stumbled in from the non-Pettigrew end and went for a few runs, before getting his revenge by knocking back the stumps. Windmill then struck in his second over, getting a rare stumping thanks to swift work from Jason Stearman behind the stumps.

Rod Taylor struck twice in his two overs (including the prize scalp of Charlie Morgan), both wickets bowled, before also contributing to a run out, to leave Hong Kong well behind the eight ball in the run chase.

Some solid batting from Alec Pettigrew gave the visitors hope, however two more wickets from Brand King and a run out by Ricky Corbin soon put the game to bed.

Chilmark CC 183-8 (B King 35 not out; D Lee 31 not out; R Taylor 30 not out) defeated Hong Kong 155-8 (R Taylor 2-10; B King 2-18)

After a tea that relied heavily on Carl Jacobs's cheese and pickle sandwiches, game two - the trophy game - got underway. A couple of changes were made to the Chilmark line up, with John Hodgson, Jack Stearman and Ben Fowles coming in to the team, with Hodgson also taking the captain's armband. Once again Chilmark batted first.

Brand King and Stearman opened the batting, intent on seeing off Hong Kong's best bowler and attacking the rest. After taking a few early boundaries, the score was moving along nicely at 20 without loss after four overs.

The first six of the innings came in the ninth over, with King launching a straight hit into the paddock beyond the Pettigrew End fence. A few singles later he brought up his 30 and jogged off the field to retire his innings.

Jon Hodgson joined the fray and swiftly increased the scoring rate. Three sixes came from his bat in quick time, before he was caught going for a fourth. His innings of 24 was the boost Chilmark needed though, and after Rod Taylor went cheaply it fell once more to Darren Lee to put runs on the board for the home team. Lee started the season on the verge of becoming Chilmark's all time leading wicket taker, however after taking just five wickets from ten games his pursuit of bowling immortality seems to have gone on the back burner. Where he has stopped taking wickets, however, he

has started scoring runs. Another 28 came off his bat during this innings, 20 of them via boundaries primarily struck sweetly down the ground.

The oddly subdued Jack Stearman finally reached the retirement score of 30 in the dying overs, his 18 singles highlighting how seriously Hong Kong were playing for the trophy with their defensive field placements. He was replaced by his father, Jason, who bashed his way to a quick and undefeated 10. Meanwhile Guy Woodroffe was bowled first ball and Reg Allen lasted just one more. Ben Fowles had waited patiently on the sidelines during the first game, making sure the beer fridge was well stocked and no cake went to waste. When he finally got a chance to bat in game two he faced two balls and scored one run.

148 was probably a little below par for the ground, but Chilmark still went out to bowl feeling confident that their young bowling attack could take care of the ageing batsmen from Hong Kong.

And so it proved on the very first ball, when Felix Woodroffe bowled a lightning quick in swinger that curled from outside off to take out middle stump and put Chilmark right on top. Jack Stearman wasn't to be outdone, striking in his first over also, as Hong Kong were immediately on the back foot at 5-2 after two overs.

The wickets continued to fall early. Stearman struck again, bowling Hong Kong's number three, before Woodroffe got his second when a batsman hit a catch to mid off.

At 32-4 after seven overs Hong Kong desperately needed a partnership to drag themselves back into the game. Alec Pettigrew and Lester Smart were the pair to take the responsibility, taking more singles than Pettigrew was prepared to run, while finding the occasional boundary to keep the target within sight. However Chilmark kept things tight and despite the batting pair's best efforts, they weren't able to break the shackles.

It was Darren Lee who got the crucial breakthrough. Bowling a straight line to Pettigrew the ball was hit straight back along the ground at Lee, who picked it up and found Smart had over-anticipated the likelihood of there being a run to get. When he fell trying to make back his ground, Lee casually knocked the bails off and Hong Kong's best bat was dismissed.

Pettigrew tried to increase his scoring rate, but when he was bowled for 18 by Jake Taylor the end was nigh and the trophy almost in Chilmark's hands for the first time. Guy Woodroffe then contributed the most balletic piece of

cricket for the day. An elderly batsman knocked the ball Woodroffe's way at mid on and, perhaps optimistically, began hobbling down the pitch for a single. Woodroffe had to take three paces to his right to collect the ball, and he took these at his leisure, before adding a dive/fall for athletic affect. Where his body had failed him, however, his mind was razor sharp. Noticing the batsman was struggling to make the 22 yard trip down the pitch, Woodroffe tried to throw down the stumps at the bowlers end. Bear in mind he was still horizontal on the ground at this point, which meant the throw was more of a swipe at the tips of the grass blades. The ball emerged from his hand at a very pedestrian pace and rolled gently towards the stumps. By now the game was being played by just two cricketers, with the balance watching on patiently for this episode to reach some kind of conclusion. Finally it came, as the ball nudged the stump at the bowler's end and a single bail toppled off apologetically. The batsman was still a yard short of the crease and Hong Kong had lost their seventh wicket with less than 60 runs on the board.

Reg 'Golden Arm' Allen claimed Charlie Morgan's wicket as the trophy engraver warmed up his tools in the pavilion. Morgan can count himself as the unluckiest batsman of the day, as it was generally agreed that LBW's wouldn't be given; however no-one had told Bryan Cross, who had come down late and been given the umpire's coat before he had a chance to argue.

It was turning into a mauling, but Chilmark, after a season laden with dispiriting defeats, weren't interested in taking their foot off the pedal. A wicket to Brand King and another for Allen soon wrapped up the game, giving Chilmark an 80 run victory and bragging rights for the next year.

Chilmark CC 148-6 (B King 30 not out; Jack Stearman 30 not out) defeated Hong Kong 68 all out (R Allen 2-6; Jack Stearman 2-16)

After the game three trophies were presented. Somehow Alec Pettigrew managed to find a way to present two of them to his losing Hong Kong team. Chilmark stole them back later.