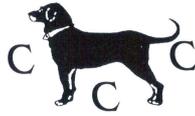


**CHILMARK CRICKET CLUB**  
Affiliated to the Wiltshire Cricket Board



**CCC v Old Bedfordians – Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2017**  
**CCC v Fonthill Bishop – Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2017**

The losing streak is over! Technically, kind of.

Your correspondent was absent from the Old Bedfordians game on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May, but eye witness accounts from those that were there paint a picture of a close match that was Chilmark's to lose. Which they did.

Ben Fowles had his best innings of the season, when he batted at seven for a short staffed Old Bedfordians and was bowled first ball by Jack Stearman. 'Windmill' Will Thompson had a game to remember also, taking his first wicket for the club and hitting his first boundary (which he has been telling everyone about ever since). Meanwhile Sam and Will Packer returned after a long absence and shared a 118 run fourth wicket partnership, as they batted Chilmark to the cusp of victory. However they were two of only three batsmen to reach double figures as a batting collapse of epic proportions saw the home team crumble from 208-3 to be all out for 229. The Coup de grace came from the second ball of the last over, as Carl Jacobs tried to hit all nine runs needed for victory in one go\*, but was instead out for a duck.

**Old Bedfordians 237-6 (J Stearman 3-44; W Thompson 1-16; B Fowles 0) defeated Chilmark 229 all out (J Stearman 60; Will Packer 54 not out; W Thompson 5)**

Following this fourth loss in a row, Club Chairman Carl Jacobs exploded into a pique of dictatorial rage and fired the selection committee\*. Unwilling to risk losing a fifth consecutive game, The Chair assembled an unbeatable team for the game against Fonthill and demanded a victory. Of course by game day the line up had to be changed, as Jack Stearman (studying or playing computer games) and James Stevenson (a war?) pulled out. Their replacements, Jason Stearman and The Chair himself, were not exactly carbon copies...None the less with Ollie Clayton in for his first game of the season and a sober Chaz Sheppard raring to go, hopes were high that Chilmark might get back to winning ways.

It started slowly, but without incident, as Brand King and Ben Fowles batted cautiously on the rain affected pitch. Four runs came from the first three overs, before Fowles broke the shackles with a glorious drive to the extra cover fence. Boundaries were few and far between though and the next one didn't arrive until the eighth over, with Fowles again imitating Botham as he stroked it through the off side. Meanwhile in the pavilion Carl Jacobs was padded up and ready to go, despite being pencilled in to bat at 10.

King's form was scratchy, as he picked off occasional singles and waited for the right ball to attack. When he did finally get one in the slot, he invariably hit it straight to a fielder. Eventually a boundary did come however, albeit in unconvincing fashion, as he edged wide of slip and saw the ball run away to the fence. After ten overs Chilmark were 28-0.

A change of bowlers saw an increase in the run rate, with Fowles and King turning the strike over with more freedom and occasionally locating the boundary. Then in the 15<sup>th</sup> over King finally opened his shoulders and cleared the mid-on fence twice, taking Chilmark's score beyond fifty in the process.

The early caution was paying off and the pair discussed reaching the drinks break unbeaten, so they could hatch a plan of attack for the second half of the innings. However Fowles, Frog Lane's sixth best cricketer, didn't make it that far, playing an ungainly drive at a straight ball and losing his stumps for 20.

Ollie Clayton came in at first drop for his first bat of the season, and after listening politely to King's cautious advice about the demons in the pitch, hit his first delivery to the cover boundary, repeating the dose two balls later. For some the game just looks easy. Carl Jacobs, meanwhile, remained padded up in the pavilion.

Drinks were taken with Chilmark sitting comfortably at 80-1. At the resumption of play Clayton continued to demonstrate his batting prowess, taking boundaries to all parts of the ground. King tried to keep up, however his innings came to an end when he scuffed an attempted drive and was caught at cover a few runs short of his half century.

His demise ushered in a determined Chaz Sheppard. Chilmark's best ever batsman has been on the receiving end of some criticism this season, as he promised much but delivered little (to quote the man himself, during a discussion about who should bat where in a game earlier this season: 'Number four has been filled....with runs!' He was later dismissed for one). But as he took strike under gloomy skies at Cleeves Farm, there was a certain aura about the big man. Five minutes later he had cleared the mid-on fence and was on his way to a healthy score.

The partnership between Clayton and Sheppard was moving along nicely, with both batsmen finding regular boundaries, when Clayton surprised all by edging behind. The wicketkeeper fumbled the tough chance but managed to hold on to it, as a promising innings ended on 33.

Despite the menacing presence of Jacobs in his pads, Jason Stearman shouldered his way to the wicket for a bat next. He hit two singles, then a catch to mid-off. Chilmark were 140-4 in the 29<sup>th</sup> over.

Patrick 'The Doc' Craig McFeely entered the fray and played the measured foil to Sheppard's blitz, collecting singles as his counterpart hit sixes. Sheppard was living dangerously though, being

dropped at deep square leg with his score on 35, then just clearing the same fielder a few balls later. Finally his innings came to an end on 46, a victim of his sword, as he lofted the ball into the hands of the fielder at deep mid-on.

Still no Jacobs. Ned Pattenden, instead, came in at seven, dressed in his Tardis-like whites, which have a remarkable capacity to seem snug fitting when he is waiting to bat, but then appear on the verge of falling around his ankles once he gets into the middle. They had no detrimental effect on his batting though, as he whipped boundaries behind square leg and through the covers in the dying overs of the innings. Seeing this, The Doc tried to get in on the action, dancing down the pitch in an attempt to increase his scoring rate. It had no discernible effect though and his innings would top out at three.

There were less than three overs remaining when Pattenden gave up a catch with his score on 16. A situation tailor made, one might think, for Jacobs to pull rank and give himself a bat. But The Chair is bigger than that - humble even - and frankly he just likes to wear the gear. Consequently he let Reg Allen go to the crease instead. Allen then mis-hit his way to three as Chilmark's innings came to a close with their score at 185-6 and the rain starting to fall.

With the rain settling in the players took advantage of the exquisite food on offer as part of the legendary Chilmark tea. Sandwiches from Morag Philpott, Bev Small and Melissa Corbin, were perfectly matched with cakes from Lisbeth Diaper, Merial Eaton, Jenni Eke, Ollie Clayton and Bryan Cross. Bev also provided some delicious jam scones (official guidance regarding pronunciation to come in a future report). Second helpings were taken across the board and although Pete Corbin wasn't overly impressed with the strength of the Twinings, it was generally considered to be one of the best teas of the year.

When time arrived for Fonthill to begin their chase, the rain was still falling heavily. Hopes were not high that play would resume any time soon. This did not deter Jacobs though, who had the game ball in hand and was busy convincing anyone who would listen that it was just a passing shower. Half an hour passed, then another. By now the creak of the beer fridge door was a regular feature in the pavilion, as playing spikes, bats and pads were packed away. Still Jacobs paced the grass in the rain, eyeing up the dark skies beyond Ridge, reassuring everyone that there would be more play yet.

It was nearly six before Jacobs declared a decision would be made in five more minutes. A minute later the game was abandoned and twenty minutes after that, as the last of Fonthill's vehicles left the farm, the rain stopped and the sun came out.

**Chilmark 185-6 (C Sheppard 46; B King 45; C Jacobs DNB) didn't lose to Fonthill**

\* This turn of events has not been verified.