

Swannanoa v Kaiapoi, Jan 10, 2009

Swannanoa maintained its remarkable run of home games this season with a match against Kaiapoi.

The match, originally scheduled for the Kaiapoi Rugby Club but transferred due to the requirements of the lucrative North Canterbury senior 20/20 circuit, started in ominous fashion for Swannanoa with some lusty agricultural blows from the Kaiapoi openers. Olsen and Murdoch drew the batsmen into their shots but all too often the ball sailed through, past, over, around or simply nowhere near a Swannanoa fielder.

Relative newcomer Russell Drake learned early the peril of a dropped catch, reminded by one fielder that it was a \$50 fine (must check minutes for proof of that motion). However Drake redeemed himself soon after with another skyward flyer that he snaffled over the back of the slips region.

The introduction of Mike 'the metronome' Hamilton and Hayden Ryan applied more pressure, although Ryan's frustration must have known no bounds as one catching chance after another sailed through vacant parts of the slips. A man who seemed to go by the nickname of Slack Bladder or something similar proved a torment, but he did get his comeuppance later, read on.

After reaching 50 in around 7 overs Kaiapoi started to slip with catches to Fulton, and a moment of pure athleticism at mid-off from Lance Ryan in which he leapt approximately 5 - 7 inches into the air (two inches above head height) and snared the ball in TWO hands.

Later in the innings Drake floated some tantalizing spinners up, Gordon Fulton-like to snaffle 3 wickets, matching the efforts of Hamilton and Ryan earlier. Lance again lamented being denied the chance to bowl, but after a catch like that, how could we ask him to do anything more? And besides, we're saving him up for to complete that hat trick from three months ago.

Summary: Kaiapoi 157 all out. Bowling Mike H 3/28 from 8, Hayden 3/24 off 8, Russell Drake 3/14 off 8. And another highlight, Ant Polson returns after a 12 month layoff to deliver 1/18. Captain L Ryan records that it wasn't a bad effort for the second oldest player on the field (guess who is the oldest!)

Swannanoa planned to open the batting with Fulton T but he was called away on an urgent run to Rangiora to get the beer so Olsen and Drake did the honours, bunting it round nicely for a partnership of 49 till Olsen was taken out by a sharp caught and bowled.

Enter Murdoch, who with Drake conspired to bash around 87 runs in murderous fashion. Slack Bladder served up a smorgasbord of delight, which Drake took to like a frisky bull in the springtime, smearing 20 plus from the first over. Any sane captain would have called it quits for Slack B after that, but miraculously he was given another over, and our men Drake and Murdoch could hardly believe their luck. That second over will be long remembered for a colourful combination of rank awful wides, half trackers,

booming fours and sixes and the shame of a bowler who wanted to leave the crease after only 2 legitimate balls. As a consequence the score rollicked along merrily; with Drake scoring so quickly that his 50 was initially missed. Finally, Kaiapoi had a very small sniff of a chance when Murdoch fell with about 25 runs to get.

Enter Ant Polson for his comeback match, heaving mightily and nudging happily around the park as Drake continued to torment the Kaiapoi attack.

As you might have guessed it all ended pretty quickly, with Drake finishing 80 not out and putting himself on the selectors' hitlist for the rest of the season. If there was a quirky highlight for the day it was Roz Winter not only fielding for the full match, but at one point removing an 'undergarment' at square leg when she thought no one was looking. It looked suspiciously like a bra but Roz swore it wasn't; what a relief that was because she had earlier told us she was wearing virtually all of Woodsie's usual cricket gear.

Next week at Southbrook

Confirmed to date

Tim, Nathan, Lance, Geoff, Shane M, Jock, Mike

Drop Tim, Woodsie or Shane a line if you're keen and available

*Pavillion working bee (the pavilion paint job) is Sunday Jan 18, starts 8am: all welcome)