

23/11/2008 Swannanoa vs Oxford

Tim Fulton

The hotly contested local derby v Oxford at Pearson Park started with young captain Fulton opting to field first. By the time the fielders took their place under a menacing northerly sky Derek Scott had been appointed leader (experience, wisdom etc) and because Fulton clearly couldn't be trusted. He did after all neglect to call either heads or tails during the coin toss. (perhaps a first in all forms of cricket) Still, the day started well with a sharp catch at mid off by Terry Hockley off the second delivery. The following 12 overs saw about 22 runs, highlighted by a six, a couple of fours and an awful lot of dot balls.

The pace gradually quickened however, until Fultons T and G took catches - the latter being a screamer just inches from the turf.

The Oxford innings meandered on, punctuated by a regular fall of wickets, and highlighted by some very tight bowling from Hamilton, Ryan H and newcomer Logan Power. Meanwhile Al Waters made a welcome return and now it remains to be seen if his enthusiastic bowling and fielding will see him filling in an ACC form on Monday. The fielding was not flawless however. Fulton T proved late in the innings he makes a better outfielder than close in catcher.

So, Oxford 126 and Scott and Hamilton strode to the crease. Both took time to get a few sighters in, with Hamilton the more aggressive early on. With 29 on the board Hamilton is caught and Fulton T comes to the wicket, expressing thanks that Ryan the elder won't keep him from getting off the mark today (runout incident earlier in the season, all is forgiven, really) But alas, Fulton shapes up for first ball this time, lobs one to short mid wicket and is caught to a screamer. Packing up the gear bag again- Tirikatene does better with 13, but Ryan H also fails to trouble the men with the pens. We're in trouble at 54 for 4 - until Hockley does a very good job in support of Scott, who starts to crank up the momentum with some powerful bludgeons and tricky little flicks and nurdles around the park. The expectations are high for this man, so much so that the team fails to give him a clap at the 50 mark. (We're tough at Swannanoa) Oxford are flagging by this stage and just when it seems Scott has played a faultless innings he dollies up a catch to square leg that signalled all over Rover for the opener. He didn't count on Willie's hands though and somehow the ball made it through his mitts to let Scott survive another day.

Game over at 128 for four with Scott 70 not out and Hockley a handy 17 not out. This week we're at Woodend so drop Woodsie a line early in the piece if you're available (and if you're not). Meantime if you can buy me a run, I'd be really grateful for one.