

Wednesday nights are really different affairs to weekend games. People who normally waltz across the Dene all of a sudden become world champion sprinters with a kit bag in their wake. "Sorry I'm late" seems to be the standard phrase used by those of us who have peddled the wheels of commerce waiting for the clock to turn so we can go and play our cricket.

So to the first game, the RGS staff at home. Led by our good mate Trevor Wooliams, they turned up as a rather more together unit than I had expected. Beaconsfield 1st XI shirts were spotted and I knew we would be in for a game. With a team assembled mainly by our normal leader Arnold only hours before, we looked surprisingly strong and so, on losing the toss we entered the field.

James Ottaway was on song, as was Shaun from the top and the RGS struggled in the early stages to get our attack away. In fairness though, they certainly never panicked about the slow rate of runs and continued plodding away. With the run rate increasing and with the RGS still having wickets in hand, we turned to an unlikely source to stem the tide. Geoff Hymer, might have been the only one in our side who wasn't celebrating being a world champion at this form of the game, but like 2 South Africans the previous Sunday, he did his team proud. Bowling from the bottom end he bowled with a varied pace and his figures of 3-23 (with 2 wicket maidens) helped us restrict the School to 5 an over.

In reply another revelation was found in the shape of Ben Smiley. Together with Phil Rosier, they slowly took the game away from the School masters. At 71-0 we were cruising, but this is Hambleden and a mini collapse did start to spark some panic in the fading light. By the time I arrived at the wicket, James Ottaway was just a figure in the distance. If this was like anything then I was a poor mans Graeme Thorpe in the Karachi moonlight. Yet in the end, our bowling and an excellent opening partnership saw us home with an over to spare.