

Sometimes it is harder than other times to write about the game just gone at the weekend. Arriving at the ground I realised that it was more in hope than expectation as the mixed weather took hold. Yet a couple of pre match pints seemed to ease any nerves. The ground looked good and the team, on paper looked half decent to take on a side we have a good record against. Still, enough about football on Sunday and back to the matter in hand, Churchill Arms at home on what should have been a hot, sunny day.

But, wasn't it cold? No, actually it was freezing. No, actually Donut was moaning about the cold so it was worse than that and if the Top Gear boys had of wanted proper training before embarking on their polar challenge then they really should have come to the Dene on a day like this. True, Ralf Fiennes may only have half a finger due to frost bite, but then Des O only had half of his manhood in complete tact after one of the coldest days ever known in May claimed victim after victim. Nick Arnold was so cold that it affected his memory to the extent that he forgot to dry himself after clocking up yet another record on the Thames Water meter.

The cricket itself was slow yet invigorating in places. The Churchill openers had seen off our opening attack without really taking on the scoreboard. Nevertheless, it took some good fielding and some sloppy running for us to really start to make inroads. These factors combined with the introduction of Will Ottaway, who took a cracking catch off his own bowling, meant that all of a sudden the Arms were looking at the possibility of not posting 3 figures. Simon Murton, who replaced Will at the bottom end bowled with intelligence for someone so young and for a while it, was going to plan. Yet a man dressed for the weather in a big fur hat came out and we went into tea knowing that the 121 we needed afterwards would be tough.

With Donut looking positively orange following his dismissal and the news that Blackpool had beaten Forest, we found ourselves struggling. Phil and Shaun played steady cricket and we looked in good shape. However, the loss of our 2 and 3 along with Rooney at 4 (who had smashed his first ball to the boundary) left us in trouble. Batting at 5 and in the trouble I found a partner for a short time in Arnold. However, he was probably still thinking about upsetting their keeper by giving wides when he was bowled by their excellent opener who had switched ends. Will O came out and for a while we looked good. I managed to hit a couple of boundaries and the cold didn't appear as biting. With Will gone, it was up to a man in a floppy hat to finish the game off as Mr Mattingley came and did his bit. All of a sudden our poor start to the season was over and we'd won.

The Churchill boys are always a good crowd and we went back to the club to find them all there putting some money into the coffers. I'm looking forward to the return match on their ground in Chiswick, hopefully next year, knowing that whatever happens there I will probably take Pride.....

ST