

Lynchmere's Saturday team played their annual fixture against Bishop Otter Old Boys. This is a traditional fixture relating to a particular alumnus cadre from the eponymous Chichester further education establishment.

Bishop William Otter- known to all as W-Ott - loved cricket of course, and there is a family link with Lynchmere. His great grandson Rev Prof General Sir Lancelot Otter-Spocket played for Lynchmere in their last l'Anson Cup winning side in 1910. Lancelot's younger brother Jay-Den also played, between the wars but sadly passed over the last winter at the very ripe age of 108. As was his final wish, his remains were scattered on the pitch before the match. This was a very moving ceremony, but in future the Committee should surely restrict this honour to those who have been cremated. There's only one sort of Leg Before Wicket we welcome.

Skipper Tom Cain elected to bowl in a 35 over game, and opened as expected with our senior bowlers Elder and King. The prize wicket of the BOOBS was of Shaun "Knocker" Glover. But both Elder and King bowled tightly, significantly restricting Knocker's ability to move the scoreboard on.

Elder drew first blood, bowling Phipps for 3 after 7 runs in 3 overs. In came Adam Hedges, a Lynchmere player but also by common consent, a bit of a BOOB.

The modern short form game is highly technical, and data driven. Professional teams spend hours running a details computer program over each batter's hot and cold zones, trying to work out which bowler is best placed to restrict the run flow from that batsman at a particular point in the innings. The analysis of Match-Ups is a very significant part of franchise cricket round the world.

Skipper Cain had input Hedges' details for the fifth over and his computer came up with a rather unusual result: - Pete "Harold" Hill. H had to date taken a grand total of 8 wickets in 46 years of Lynchmere cricket. Perhaps the computer had put a lot of weight on his "hot streak" of 1983 when H took two wickets.

Nevertheless, the computer – and so Cain - got it right. Hedges (catchphrase "Dross gets wickets") swung at Hill's ballooning "even slower" ball and was done for by complete lack of pace, pitching a ball to Tom Cain's capable hands at mid-off, the captain not keeping here as the team were replete with Tylers.

Hill was then rested, and Elder continued to keep the scoreboard pressure on. Knocker managed to squeeze one boundary off most overs. But when the dangerous Barnaby Gray, having eked singles, changed up a gear he middled one which somehow stuck in bowler Elder's hands, to leave the BOOBS at 36-3.

From then on, the story continued with new bowlers Lal and Brown. After a loosener or so Lynchmere kept it tight, and Knocker stayed solid whilst partners fell. He also seemed to pull a hamstring whilst making an innocuous single, causing him to bat with a runner. Runners often cause confusion in the batting side. But in this case it was the fielding side who more than once wondered why the two men at square leg (being runner and umpire) didn't field the ball.

Elder took another sharp catch to get rid of Sadler off Lal, and then made sure of pouncing a lofted on-chip from Cunningham to ensure the jug. When Lal beat Thomas for pace, BOOBS were in trouble at 65-6.

Lynchmere's fielding was generally strong, with particular mention to James Tyler whose youthful energy and powerful arm saved many boundaries. There was one highly comical moment when after a Knocker glance, Steve King knelt down to provide the Long Barrier at fine leg, the ball

trickling towards him. But it struck some sort of obstruction on its way and leapt 6 feet over his head. It's not clear whether this was mere (Lynchmere?) bad luck or whether BOOBs had bribed an energetic mole.

Barry Richards (no not that one) gave respite to Glover taking most of the strike and made 12 before Prince Pappachan found his middle stump. Young Tom Spencer made the mistake of allowing Brown's scrambled seam to bounce and lost his off bail. And Pappachan found timber again in his second over to remove Reynolds, the BOOBs were left teetering at 84-9.

At this stage many teams would think that the job is almost done. But If age had caused many of the BOOBs to sag, number 11 Ed Spencer provided impressive support, and he and Glover made an impressively pert pair.

Again, Cain consulted the Match Up computer. Again, it came up with an unexpected answer, Mike "Chick" Charman whose 50 wickets came mostly in the 1980s and early 90s. Could this be yet another brilliant piece of innovation.

The jury may still be out on this, but only if they are collecting expenses for each day in the jury room. Knocker, with his runner and Spencer managed to knock, run and spence (whatever that is) 19 off Chic's first over. Prince kept it tight enough, but with 15 overs to bat the pair took few risks as they put on a partnership of 99. Eventually Cain brought himself on and Elder took his fourth catch to leave a target of 184.

Cain and Lal opened the batting and made a very good start. They kept the scoreboard ticking from the start and Cain in particular tucked in to Phipps' first over, whilst Lal soon found a liking for the straight boundary.

Cain seemed unthreatened but then in Barney Gray's third over he failed to clear Thomas having scored 44 with 8 fours. Three overs later Lal, in full flow, smote Phipps for what looked sure to be a maximum but Adam Hedges at long on managed to hold on to it. Lal's 38 (7 fours) had taken Lynchmere to 90-2. Then there came a wobble as Charman (without the score moving on) and Hill were both caught behind for 5 to leave us 95-4

Young James Tyler steadied the ship, facing Tom Spencer as youth had its day. He lost Pappachan for 11 and Father Matt for 5. Next over he was undone by a lovely ball from Thomas which deviated onto off stump. Tyler Jr made 24.

At 144-7, 40 runs needed from 8 overs the match was absolutely in the balance. Stuart "the Murracle" Murrell and Duncan Elder got almost all the way there, but Murrell holed out off Barney Gray with the score on 181. Gray then bowled Brown in the battle of the dullest colour, leaving Elder and King – our opening bowlers – to get the last 3 runs in the final two over.

Elder hit Thomas for 4 to win the match and complete an impressive match haul of 22 runs, 2-13 from 7 and 4 catches, surely the most significant contribution. But all told every player did their bit. Our fielding was generally pretty strong, and batters and bowlers all did their job.

The Saturday XI had now won three matches in a row. There is probably a Lynchmere tradition for a team which achieves this, however with the passing of Jay-Den Otter-Spocket there is no-one alive who could remember this happening.