

At last it was time for the gentleman of Downe to raid the loft, search the closets and rummage through boots all desperately seeking out the kit bags which are the scourge of women everywhere. You could tell the team were excited as half hour to 'kick off' and they were all there.

With the pitch looking an absolute dream following the new cutting regime (did you know skip has cut it three times) the batsmen in the team were looking rather smug whilst the bowlers quickly moved the markers back.

As is customary the 'G of D' adopted the now routine pre-season training regime of drinking beer, eating too much and avoiding all forms of exercise. With half the team resembling a 1970's version of a 'front row forward' the potential for an all run 4 were high for the oppo.

The opening fixture again saw Catford and Cyphers as the opposition, clearly not put off by last year's extraordinary events when 'magic man' Sweet and Parf bowled them out for 27. Whilst last year was a damp wicket, long outfield and freezing temperatures this year saw a complete contrast.

Skipper, still smiling from Chelsea's exploits, won the toss and Downe were once again batting. After some debate it was decided that Dave Lineker would be given the dubious honour of being Spindles first potential run out for the season.

Well the start, whilst not spectacular, was certainly progressing nicely. Dave was finding the boundary with some ease whilst his partner, Spindles, groped around like a man in the dark. All was looking rather serene with runs coming at around 5 an over with neither looking in too much trouble. The team settled in for the long haul, relaxing beers in hand, enjoying the sun. After the first 20 things had not changed, runs were coming a little quicker with Dave soon passing 50, then a hundred partnership. With Dave now nearing his tun, Spindles floundered in the 30's (yes really). It was at this point that things started to become interesting and thoughts turned to club records. Both were now trying to hit out and even Spindles found the boundary and somehow a six (think it was a lucky top edge, he'll probably say a straight drive). The oppo were not helping themselves with some 'okey kokey' fielding in the deep meaning that potential catches were missed. The batsmen were both well set and quickly approaching Skippers opening partnership record. Sensing trouble Skip refused to be relieved of his umpire duties waiting for the opportunity to trigger someone. It never came. Dave was first to reach his tun before the final run came with a leg bye. The batsmen hugged and the spectators cheered as History was literally written in front of our eyes. Dave was eventually out for 132 before Spindles finally crept over the line with 103. As a stats man he soon batted down the hatches to ensure a 'red inker'. Brief cameos were made by young Adam who scored his first boundary for the club and 'Young Trub' who bludgeoned the score up to 275 – 2.

No sooner had the achievement been acknowledged, than the team were locked in debate as to how many jugs were to be bought. The consensus was a minimum of three though some (Brady) championed 7. I think we ended up with two !

The tea was an excellent affair from Skip and Teresa and the team reluctantly took to the field. This was never going to reach the heights of the first innings. Doughnut struck first when an ambitious shot found man of the moment Dave on the boundary. Not to be outdone Spindles then pounced one in the slips. Trub then took a smart stumping chance of Sweet before Dave performed a run out (is there nothing this man can do).

The Bear then came into the attack and following some probing bowling quickly had another stumping. Dave Jnr then took a brace with the batsmen first drilling one to Dave and then a stinger to Sweet. A further run out (yes Dave again) and one bowled put the team on a hatrick. This was literally smeared at Nev, positioned a short midwicket, who did brilliantly to stop the ball and not get injured. This was a short reprieve as Nev took the final wicket with a caught and bowled.

Clearly a momentous day and one I fear we will never be allowed to forget !

It's not often that you can get an unbeaten century, take a slip catch and be out shone. Sadly for Spindles that was what happened as Dave scored 132 (more than last season's total !) 2 catches and 2 run outs !

Another magnificent start to the season and one wonders whether a record margin of victory was achieved. We will await official confirmation from our guardian of the records Bob !!