

Match report – 9th July – Nutfield CC (away)

This week's report is by Matt "Spindles" Warne

Another balmy July day and the men of Downe rocked up at Nutfield CC, a gorgeous little ground in leafy Surrey and a fixture we need to keep in the diary each year. If we do have to play the odd away game, then this is a place I'd happily come to season after season! Vistas a plenty, a delightful pub on the corner of the ground, a fabulous roof terrace to watch the game and scones for tea with oodles of clotted cream – what's not to like?!

Anyway onto the cricket and fielding first it looked as if it could be a very long day in the sun as after 12 overs the oppo were 90 odd for 2, Downe having burgled a couple of wickets through our new ball pairing of D Lineker Jnr and Steve Shippey our new recruit. Shortish boundaries and a rapid outfield meant that once the ball was past the infield it was four every time. A chase of 280 plus looked very much on the cards until that young whippersnapper Chris Trevatt was brought on to bowl and lo and behold Nutfield began to crack!

After a fabulous spell of bowling the oppo were all out for 168 in just the 21st over losing their last 5 wickets for a mere 10 runs. Chris picked up 6 for 28 including three caught and bowled. Amongst the carnage, Denzil picked up the other wicket with the 'ball of the century' and I'm delighted to say Downe held onto every catch that came their way including Captain Fantastic Marcus holding onto a rocket at short cover.

With England actually winning at Headingley, everyone skipped off to tea anticipating a relatively easy chase. However dear reader, for those of you who have played at Luxted Road over the years you will know now that Downe don't do easy!

Warney and the Bear strode out to open the batting. Five overs later Warney was happily still at one end marking his crease and dreaming of another redinker. However, a quick glance at the fancy electric scoreboard confirmed he wasn't dreaming. He was in fact in the middle of a nightmare! Downe at that point were 9 for 5! Now I've seen some collapses in my time, but this one surely had to be up there. Just the 4 ducks to report for the Bear, Dan, Marcus (a fine golden!) and Nev. Nev's forward defensive was exemplary until the ball speared through his gate and rattled his timbers. Adam 'Mr Tik Tok' Lineker felt he was absolved of any blame having tickled a 4 around the corner to get off the mark but his sweep shot mooing across the line against their opening bowler was reminiscent of Sweet in his prime!

Having been dropped down the order to number 7 (another questionable decision by the skipper), Chris hadn't even finished his half time cuppa before he hastily donned his pads and marched out to the middle. And there the

mayhem began. Nutfield thinking the game was done and dusted, threw on some 'friendly' bowlers who were then deposited to all parts by Warney and Trevatt. Then starting to worry, they brought on some better bowlers who again were smeared all over the park. Nutfield were cracking under the pressure as Warney brought up another shotgun half century and with a century partnership only a boundary away drinks were then taken.

Alas the first ball after the drinks, Warney fell to a rip snorter of a catch for a well-made 61 and before you know it, we had a second collapse and were 9 down for 127. Still 42 needed for victory. However cometh the hour, cometh the man in strode Denzil who proceeded to make the finest nought not out in Downe's history as Chris marshalling our No 11 superbly, proceeded to hit a boundary followed by a single in each of the next 7 overs to amazingly get us over the line as he finished on a masterful 91 not out.

The cheers from the Downe support up high on the terrace rang out across the ground and Chris and Denzil went all Brokeback Mountain and grabbed each other in a bear hug as the oppo chuntered about missed chances and dodgy umpiring.

What a game of cricket that was and as we all retired to the Nutfield bar to chew over the game, Chris's beaming smile suddenly waned as the other 10 men of Downe reminded him that it wasn't one jug that he owed oh no – it was three!

Next fixture is this Sunday 16th July – 2pm start at home v Broadway CC

Get your availability in asap on whatsapp and don't forget to bring pillows, cushions and duvets to the club next week as Denzil will no doubt run everyone through every ball of his match winning 0*. In fact bring ear plugs and an eye mask as well!