

Cricket Nirvana Camden Casuals Vs. Clavering, Match Drawn

Sunday summer sun soothed stresses away as eight men of Camden and two borrowed from St Giles gradually convened at Hill Green in Clavering for a casual fixture. After a little explaining of what declaration cricket is to some of the younger players the skipper, mindful of his previous failures in calling this season and the temperature in the outfield took a straw poll for the toss and won!

David Mitchell and Alex Raha opened, Raha apparently having missed the skipper waxing about declaration cricket tried a hefty drive to each of his first (and it transpired last) three balls, upon which Menhir (apologies on spelling, and to the ghost of Obelix) Vagh (of St.Giles) an “injured bowler” and Mitchell put on 90 with very little running either required or attempted. Shortly after a declaration that he was going to “accelerate” Vagh (60) gave cover a gentle catch and after watching James Freeman start confidently Mitchell (38) decided his acceleration moment had arrived and, as is the way of casuals “girdled it to mid-off” (with apologies for the implied sexism in this). Josh Taylor, on the back of 48* for the thirds could only weakly hook a ball of indeterminate height (he thought it was above his waist, everyone else on the field disagreed, and I’m far too tactful to get involved) for 1 so Ollie Purnell, following Freeman’s example was the next youngster hitting firmly back over the bowler. All too briefly in both cases and soon Duncan Gibson (28), Gavin Ayliffe (25), Dave Wyatt (nee St. Giles, 8*) and Richard Shannon (7) had all been and gone. 205 was less than we had hoped (at 105 for 2) but gave us something to defend. Mention should be made of H.Marshall for Clavering, whose 5-49 included wickets from some of the worst balls to take wickets anyone on either side could remember!

Tea was sublime.....

With Miller senior and junior and Royston star Isherwood making up the top three we expected a torrid time, but a combination of good bowling by Wyatt, on his way to 4-31, and fair, but unexpected LBW decisions (one we felt was plumb, but the other was “doing a lot”, hence it missed the bat, would it also have missed the stumps? Thankfully not our decision to make; the young man who did make the brave decision was eventually given a lift home) left Clavering reeling at 28-3. Good bowling was no guarantee of reward as our 205 now seemed a bit too much. Gill and Clavering man of the match Bessant (47 and 23-0 off 8) put on more than could apparently be recorded (at least in our book) and the skipper was left ringing the changes and fiddling in (or is that with? I’m not sure either sounds very good) the field. We were grinding them down; Bessant fell to former keeper Gibson and Taylor at Gully, Vagh took a great catch to his left at slip to give Taylor his first wicket of the weekend at about 7.20, but in the end Clavering were too canny to lose and went in 161 for 8 to illustrate the skipper’s earlier speech about the joys of declaration cricket perfectly.....

Clavering come to us on August 1st at Trinity Old Field, a game to look forward to savouring; it would be nice if I got fewer, “yeah, Clavering, great fixture, you should be able to get a side for that”s and a few more “Clavering, I’d love to”s, but that can be my only complaint about a great game, punctuated by the games ups and downs in just the right way, concluded in the finest place (the garden of the Fox and Hounds) against fantastic opposition (to whom many thanks for their hospitality). More of you should try this, it’s quite fun.....