



### DEVON OVER 50s CC vs. HAMPSHIRE OVER 50s CC - 2007

Devon made the long trip to Bashley in the New Forest for their opening game in this years Over 50's County Championship under the 'new' captaincy of Stuart Lott. Over recent years, Devon have not had the best of luck against Hampshire, so, with a few new faces in the side, it was with a little trepidation that the 2007 season got under way. Making his debut for Devon was Jim Parker of Barton.

Stuart Lott won the toss and opted to have first use of the strip in the increasingly uncomfortable heat and he was rewarded with a blistering opening partnership of 86 made in the quick time of less than 14 overs. Pete Shepherd making 47 of them from only 45 including 7 boundaries and one massive six off opening bowler Goodman. After losing Bob Eames without scoring, Rob Newing was joined in the middle by Jim Parker.

The hosts then took the pace all but completely off the ball and left armer Terry Rawlins tied one end up almost completely. His 9 overs going for only 14 and included the wicket of Eames. Newing & Parker found the going tough, and although they compiled a 3rd wicket stand of 76, it took them the best part of 19 overs. But the major plus from that was that the spells of Rawlins and most of Tiplady's were used up.

Parker struck Mike Swain over long leg for a six but was out soon after trying to repeat the trick off the returning Goodman for 26. It was to prove an interesting afternoon for Goodman. In his very next over he tempted vice-captain Rogers into a false shot and had him caught but that really was a blessing in disguise. Enter the "Canning".

When the Sandford all-rounder came to the crease, the Devon score stood at 181 for 4 with only 7 overs of the innings remaining. Mike's first ball was dispatched through long-on for four, the second a wide then came the fireworks. Canning smashed 5 massive sixes and 9 other boundaries in his 37 ball stay in making 97 not out. Indeed, with Nick Rogers running for the injured Newing, if Mike hadn't had all his strength literally sapped from him by the number of quick ones and two's, there would surely have been no doubt that a maiden hundred for the Club would have been made. One particular six literally landed on the 'top' of a nearby telegraph pole. When the end of the innings came, Mike Canning and Rob Newing (79 not out) had put together a 5th wicket partnership of 111 in 49 deliveries.

Opening bowler Goodman ending with figures of 4 overs 2 for 50. Mark Tiplady conceded a mere 12 runs from his first 6 overs but then gave away 47 in his final 3. The final 9 overs of the Devon innings had brought 128 runs to give a final total of 292 for 4 from 45 overs. The new ball was taken by Mike Canning, but even after the tea interval, he still looked physically drained of energy and was taken from the attack after only 3 overs. Mike was replaced by Barton's Mike Lievesley who immediately put a brake on the scoring. At the other end, Shobrooke's Fran Pyle made the breakthrough when he hit the stumps of Adams' with the total standing on 44 for 1. Facing a required rate of over 7, Devon then literally strangled the Hampshire batters and eventually the pressure told.

In his final 2 overs, "Livers" took the key wickets of Britton, Morton and Mitchell. Indeed, Mike was on a hat-trick but Hants skipper Wright just managed to jag his bat down and keep the ball out. Lievesley had finished with his best figures to date for the side of 3 for 33. From then on it was a case of how many the Hampshire side would settle for as there chase was clearly out of sight. Goodman redeemed himself to an extent in making 41 not out but 2 wickets for Chagford's Jon Jenkins and one for Sandford's Eames, brought the host's innings to a close at 229 for 7 handing Devon a win by the handsome margin of 63 runs.

There were several plus points for the Devon side and some encouragement for skipper Lott to take into the rest of the summer.

The batting of Shepherd, Newing and Mike Canning was a big plus. The innings of debutant Jim Parker also set the foundations for the second half of the innings allowing Canning his freedom. Although JP only made 26, he and Budleigh's Newing took the brunt of the spells from the experienced Rawlins and Tiplady. The bowling of Chagford's Jenkins and Barton's Lievesley showed that there was also scope for optimism on that front as well. There was also an excellent display in the field, notably from South Devon's Dave Amery and Mike Canning out on the boundaries.

Overall, this was a thoroughly professional performance from Devon and set them up nicely for the Bank Holiday trip to Shanklin to face the Isle of Wight.

Wed. 23rd May 2007