



## O'50's 1st XI match report v Cornwall

10th June 2016

The over 50s campaign got under way at a gloomy Exmouth on Thursday with a convincing 55 run victory against Cornwall. Skipper Graham Munday won the toss and elected to bat first on a wicket which was predicted not to improve as the game progressed.

If you are a cricket fan who enjoys seeing pace on the ball then over 50s cricket is probably not the version of the game for you. With the cruel passage of time robbing the quicker bowlers of the pace that they once routinely produced in younger days, there is a predominance of slow bowling with the occasional medium pacer by way of variety. The spectators who were present had to contend all day with a thick blanket of low cloud and mist that encircled Exmouth, which made viewing the ball at all from the boundary edge pretty challenging.

Openers Brian Cann (41) and Roger Wensley (33) gave the innings impetus from the very first over, scoring at a good run rate for the opening dozen overs.

The partnership put on 79 for the first wicket when Cann fell in the 19th over. He had made his mark in more ways than one. Delivered a wide half volley mid-way through his innings he drove the ball 'upishly' at extra cover where the incumbent Cornish fielder didn't see it in the murky light until too late and failed to take the catch in front of his face.

Fortunately a hand did take some of the pace away, but it was a nasty moment as the ball made a cracking sound as it impacted just above his left eye, leaving a seam shaped bump as evidence. Happily after application of an ice pack the fielder returned to the game a few overs later with no lasting damage.

The introduction of the even slower bowlers, at the same time as the ball lost some hardness, brought a reduction in the run rate and three further wickets fell leaving the hosts perilously positioned at 109-4, from where the innings could have easily subsided away.

At the fall of the 4th wicket Terry Farkins was joined at the crease by

debutant James Ford and an important partnership of 68 ensued. Players watching from the pavilion often challenge teammates to predict the final total for an innings. You should be allowed two guesses to allow for Farkins being at the crease or not, such is the danger to the opposition when he puts bat to ball. A couple of towering sixes here threatened to take the game away from Cornwall. Farkins' half century and Ford's unbeaten 30 pushed the final total up to 211, which seemed a challenging one at tea, especially considering that the wicket was conducive to spin and Devon had 4 spinners in their ranks.

The Cornwall reply got off to similar start to the Devon innings; both openers playing some positive shots. The important wicket of McKenna, whose 75 had been a major factor in Cornwall's victory during the corresponding fixture last year, was made with score at 53 thanks to a smart stumping from stand in keeper Steve Luffman.

It was Luffman again who was involved in the next crucial wicket catching low down after a snick off skipper Munday's bowling. A confident appeal convinced the umpire that the noise had come from the bat. Judging from the batsmen's disappointment it seems the noise came from the ball glancing a pad. It is tough for umpires to get these right. It was bad luck for the batsman.

Steve Moore came back for a second spell at this point, which immediately reaped major reward taking 4 quick wickets to decimate the Cornish middle order as scoreboard pressure took its toll. Despite three dropped catches Devon closed out victory with some degree of comfort.

Thank you to Colston and Chris for their excellent umpiring and scoring.