Anything The Football Can Do...

(The Official Newsletter of the Old Wilsonians' Cricket Club)

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Issue No: 180 (May 2020)

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Keeping in touch

We were all so excited at the prospect of the new cricket season. A successful winter, including being crowned champions of the Kent Metropolitan Indoor League Division Two, well-attended indoor Nets, out-door Nets at Hayes about to become available, Margo and Blod's Quiz easing us into the season in the traditional manner and the first games about to be played

And then…… came coronavirus and everything changed; time for our ever resourceful committee to come into its own and for alternative arrangements to be made and, as ever, they did not fail us as a 'Virtual' Quiz was organised which went on until at least five in the morning; and many thanks to all those who participated, even if you cannot remember doing so!

The last couple of months have been grim for all of us and we sincerely hope that you and your families are taking care and staying safe, which is paramount

In comparison, of course, cricket becomes irrelevant but we are all anxious to know what are the prospects of being able to play in 2020 and the simple truth is that we can make absolutely no promises other than to say that we are doing everything we can to ensure that we do get some, but this will happen ***if, and only when, it is safe to do so***

You will no doubt have read or heard that there is little likelihood of any 'first class' cricket being played until July at the earliest, and this is also the case for us

The Kent League have proposed that each side plays each other once – i.e. nine games rather than 18 – and has asked every participating club whether or not promotion and relegation should be suspended as a consequence of this truncation; our view is that it would be wrong for sides to go up, or down, during such a short season and the most important thing is to get some cricket per se played during the year, and a similar situation appertains with regard to the Sunday Development side

Our main concern at the moment relates to the Colts, whose season is due to end in July anyway, but we hope to be able to organise something to keep our youngsters interested and help develop their games

There are, of course, financial implications in all of this and we are working with the Old Wilsonians' Association to ensure that these are minimal

Our ever resourceful 2nd Xl skipper, Doug Forbes, has already informed his side that there is no cricket at the moment – "due to rain" – but it is doubtful that this argument can be sustained, particularly as we have not had much rain of late!

Work continues at the ground to prepare for the season – thanks to Ian Muir and Stephen Millward, ***but please do not go to Hayes Hill nor use the Nets***

In this surreal world that we are currently experiencing one of the story-lines in 'The Archers' relates to the start of the cricket season where the ambitious Tracey Horrobin has been taking training sessions instead of the wimpish Harrison Burns - it seems that Covid-19 is yet to make its appearance in Ambridge

However, this has now come to an end as all of the pre-recorded editions have now been exhausted and this spot on Radio 4 will now be given over to some 'Best of the Archers' episodes; we can only hope that these will include some cricket

It would be nice to have produced an upbeat newsletter at this time of the year - colts training under-way, reports of winning games, and a number of new members, but it is what it is and we will deal with it in the best way we can

But, and to re-iterate, the most important message at the moment is to ***TAKE CARE AND STAY SAFE***

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Websites

Kent Cricket League Website: **www.kcl.uk.net**
Kent Feeder League website http://krcl.play-cricket.com
Sunday Development League website http://kentsdl.play-cricket.com
Old Wilsonians: **www.oldwilsonians.play-cricket.com**
North Kent Junior League: http://nkentjumior.play-cricket.com
Old Wilsonians' Association website www.OldWilsonians.com

A game of cricket played in 1836

All-Muggleton had the first innings and the interest became intense when Mr Dumkins and Mr Podder, two of the most renowned members of that most distinguished club, walked, bat in hand, to their respective wickets. Mr Luffey, the highest ornament of Dingley Dell, was pitched to bowl against the redoubtable Dumkins, and Mr Struggles was selected to do the same kind office for the hitherto unconquered Podder. Several players were stationed to "look out" in different parts of the field, and each fixed himself into the proper attitude by placing one hand on each knee, and stooping very much as if he were "making a back" for some beginner at leap-frog. All the regular players do this sort of thing; indeed it's generally supposed that it is quite impossible to look out properly in any other position

The umpires were stationed behind the wickets; the scorers were prepared to notch the runs; a breathless silence ensued. Mr Luffey retired a few paces behind the wicket of the passive Podder and applied the ball to his right eye for several seconds. Dumkins confidently awaited its coming, with his eyes fixed on the motions of Luffey

"Play," suddenly cried the bowler. The ball flew from his hand straight and swift towards the centre stump of the wicket. The wary Dumkins was on the alert; it fell upon the tip of the bat and bounced far away over the heads of the scouts, who had just stooped low enough to let it fly over them

"Run – run – another Now, then, throw her up – up with her – stop there – another – no – yes – no – throw her up, throw her up."

Such were the shouts which followed the stroke; and, at the conclusion of which All-Muggleton had scored two. Nor was Podder behindhand in earning laurels wherewith to garnish himself and Muggleton. He blocked the doubtful balls, missed the bad ones, took the good ones, and sent them flying to all parts of the field.

The scouts were hot and tired; the bowlers were changed and bowled till their arms ached, but Dumkins and Podder remained unconquered.

Did an elderly gentleman essay to stop the progress of the ball, it rolled between his legs or slipped between his fingers.

Did a slim gentleman try to catch it, it struck him on the nose and bounced pleasantly off with redoubled violence, while the slim gentleman's eyes filled with water, and his form writhed with anguish. Was it thrown straight up to the wicket, Dumkins had reached it before the ball. In short, when Dumkins was caught out, and Podder stumped out, All-Muggleton had notched some fifty-four, while the score of the Dingley Dell was as blank as their faces. The advantage was too great to be recovered.

In vain did the eager Luffey, and the enthusiastic Struggles, do all that skill and experience could suggest, to regain the ground Dingley Dell had lost in the contest; - it was of no avail; and in an early period of the winning game Dingley Dell gave in and allowed the superior prowess of All-Muggleton

The stranger, meanwhile, had been eating, drinking, and talking, without cessation. At every good stroke he expressed his satisfaction and approval of the player in a most condescending and patronising manner, which could not fail to have been highly gratifying to the party concerned; while at every bad attempt at a catch, and every failure to stop the ball, he launched his personal displeasure at the head of the devoted individual in such denunciations as:
"Ah, ah – stupid" – "Now butter-fingers" - "Muff" - "Humbug" and so forth – ejaculations (sic) which seemed to establish him in the opinion of all around, as a most excellent and undeniable judge of the whole art and mystery of the noble game of cricket

"Capital game – well played – some strokes admirable," said the stranger as both sides crowded into the tent at the conclusion of the game

"You have played it Sir?" inquired Mr Wardle, who had been much amused by his loquacity

"Played it! Think I have – thousands of times – not here – West Indies – exciting thing – hot work – very"

"It must be rather a warm pursuit in such a climate" observed Mr Pickwick

"Warm! – red hot – scorching – glowing. Played a match once – single wicket – friend the Colonel – Sir Thomas Blazo – who should get the greatest number of runs – Won the toss – first

innings – seven o'clock, a.m – six natives to look out – went in; kept in – heat intense – natives all fainted – taken away – fresh half-dozen ordered – fainted also – Blazo bowling – supported by two natives – couldn't bowl me out – fainted too – cleared away the Colonel – wouldn't give in – faithful attendant – Quanko Samba – last man left – sun so hot, bat in blisters, ball scorched brown – five hundred and seventy runs – rather exhausted – Quanko mustered up last remaining strength – bowled me out – had a bath and went to dinner"

"And what became of what's his name, Sir?" inquired an old gentleman

"Blazo"

"No – the other gentleman"

"Quanko Samba?"

"Yes Sir"

"Poor Quanko – never recovered it – bowled on, on my account – bowled off, on his own – died Sir"

Here the stranger buried his countenance in a brown jug, but whether to hide his emotion or imbibe its contents, we cannot distinctly affirm. We only know that he paused suddenly, drew a long and deep breath and looked anxiously on as two of the principal members of the Dingley Dell club approached Mr Pickwick and said:

"We are about to partake of a plain dinner at the Blue Lion, Sir; we hope you and your friends will join us" - from 'Pickwick Papers'