

London Erratics v **Kilndown & Lamberhurst**

A beautiful rural setting is not untypical of the London Erratics' matches, but a cloudless sky throughout was certainly unseasonal for 2008. However, in the last-ever match doubling as Lord (Patrick) Mayhew's President's XI, the first defeat was suffered since the game joined the Erratics' own fixture list in 2003. Things went wrong from before the start, with the non-appearance of one of Robert Waller's painstakingly assembled eleven. Ed Coetzer could not play due to his transfer to a boarding school with Saturday activities, but he had again promised to recruit two South Africans to intimidate the village with guttural Afrikaans; but when it was discovered that Gorden Marcus had dropped out with illness, Gerhard Breytenbach was left with no-one to bark with, at least until the appearance of an opposition harridan in the pavilion towards the end of the match. This upset the balance of the team as Gorden had been advertised as a major batsman, and it left the visitors with ten in the field when Peter Andrews lost the toss – until the temporary loan of Craig Short, a Surrey under-12, who got right down to and behind the ball, before keeping for the village in the second innings.

Peter blamed the lunch for what he saw as an otherwise sub-standard fielding display, but the opening bowling of Rawle Beckles and the 68-year-old Richard Langley was economical enough, and Kilndown did not really accelerate until the middle section of their innings. Nevertheless, it reached 70 for 0, 151 for 2, and 174 for 3. Arguably too many had been given away by the time Brian Berrigan was introduced and Rawle brought back; five wickets then fell for three runs, starting with a good catch in the deep by Gerhard, who fielded very well throughout – and the village could not press on beyond 187 at tea, when 200+ had seemed a certainty.

This was always likely to be too many to surpass, especially with ten men, and as Peter pointed out, the village seemed determined to 'stick one on us'. The opening bowlers, including the captain (who had bagged one of their three ducks) stayed on for 19 overs. Jim Head and James Rivington were together for considerably longer than last year, putting on 34, but then wickets fell frequently to subside to 82 for 8. There was for sure an element of bad luck. In all, four batsmen played on, mainly to the captain, perhaps assisted by the slope; and Brian fell in the unluckiest of all ways, run out backing up when the bowler dropped a return catch onto the stumps.

Only at this point were lesser bowlers give a chance, and the Bank of England 3rd XI last-wicket pair of Peter and Richard made a fine attempt at a rescue job to match that of the financial turmoil of the previous week, achieving the highest partnership and reducing the overs to be survived in the last hour from 17 to just three. Then the captain brought himself back, and took his sixth wicket when Richard too inside-edged on. Peter was left undefeated, jointly with Jim Head and Extras as top scorers on 26. With an 11th player, a draw may well have been achieved but, even then, more would have had to be on top form to replicate the exciting victories of previous games.

Having been presented by Peter with a signed miniature bat, and by Robert with one of his signed more-than-miniature books, Patrick retired after 25 years as President with 23 matches having take place, and over 100 players agreeing to have the privilege of playing for him and sharing the pleasure in this delightful challenge fixture. His team may have ended on a down beat, but overall with a positive record; and James believes there is some chance of returning, solely as the London Erratics, next year.

RW

**KILNDOWN — batting**

1	c Andrews	b Down	55
2	lbw	b Langley	18
3	c Burchnall	b Beckles	44
4	c Breytenbach	b Down	25
5		b Berrigan	15
6		b Beckles	0
7	c Beckles	b Berrigan	0
8	not out		4
9		b Berrigan	0
10	not out		2
11			

**187 for 8 dec****LONDON ERRATICS — bowling**

Beckles	9	1	23	2
Langley	11	2	32	1
Breytenbach	5	0	29	0
Down	8	0	48	2
Head	3	0	24	0
Berrigan	7	2	13	3

Fall of wickets: 1–70, 2–98, 3–151, 4–174, 5–175, 6–177, 7–177, 8–177

**LONDON ERRATICS — batting**

			4s	6s
Head	bowled	26	4	
Rivington	bowled	8	1	
† Burchnall	bowled	1		
Eltringham	caught	6	1	
Berrigan	run out	10	2	
Beckles	bowled	10	2	
Breytenbach	bowled	0		
* Andrews	NOT OUT	26	3	
Down	caught	0		
Langley	bowled	11	2	

**124 all out**

Fall of wickets: 1(Rivington)–34, 2(Burchnall)–41, 3(Head)–53, 4(Eltringham)–64, 5(Beckles)–79, 6(Berrigan)–81, 7(Breytenbach)–82, 8(Down)–82, 9(Langley)–124