

## The Swan Reports

May 2021

There will forever be two words that come to this author's mind the morning after a good cricket match: *Drama* and *Delight*.

Well, dear reader, the ebullient accounts from last night's soirée at Bishop's Lydeard are quite dramatic and delightful indeed.

The spirit of the game was of the top order. But alas, the result was somewhat less to the liking: our glowing bevy of Swans lost by three runs, with one ball remaining.

Far be it for me to trouble you with a repetition of the official record - aka *the scorecard*.

Now don't get me wrong. One does love a good scorecard. The Pythagorean Theorem for cricket fans: perfect triple entry pages of names, numbers and abbreviations encoding all the chaos, action and drama of any game in the history of all cricket. A beautiful thing. An abbreviated story of the past. A thing of...

*Symmetry*.

The perfect balance of elegant flight and efficient digging. Of Swans vs Wombats.

First out of the blocks was Negomi. Setting the tone, she sprinted to the crease, swinging the ball to order, and dismissed the opening batsman with her third ball. Ah, the sound of ball clattering stumps. Music to the discerning cricket fan's ear.

One is, however, sad to report that Charlie Brown Shoes bowled from the other end with gusto yet no reward. A true Swan. Perhaps the truest of swans, for this author knows of no white footed Cygnus.

But, dear reader, we must give credit where credit is due. While

the Swans attack probed and teased, the fielders scampered gaily about the field as the Wombats' top order repeatedly bisected them with ease.

Peter Pasture, the agronomist, strategically positioned himself on the boundary next to a neighbouring field of barley. Multitasking being his unhelpful forte, no doubt the farmer will receive his crop analysis shortly.

Ken Keeps, typically assured behind the stumps, was fully focused on the job in hand. A diving run out his prize, while Badger, yes Badger, revelled in a solitary gallop from long on to mid-wicket to save four. He failed. The rare effort, however, was magnificent.

One must pause at this juncture to pay homage to the umpire - old Mr Over. Solid, unflappable, unfailingly impartial and frankly always right - hmm, mostly. Truly the one umpire to rule them all.

Alas, poor Over was denied demonstration of his signature move: that impeccably slow finger raise. Not one bowler had cause for an lbw appeal. Disappointing indeed.

Chasing a modest 105 to win, the Swans' opening pair strolled to the wicket. Evidently, the lengthening shadows were of little consequence to them. Who needs light when you have contact lenses? Exuding confidence, they *knew* the game was in the bag.

Quick out of the gates, Iolo Ono and Twose saw the ball large and steered the Swans to twenty-four without loss. Cruising along.

But then...

The Wombats finally, *finally* mastered the art of catching. With both hands mind, none of that fancy one handed stuff. But my, how they rejoiced.

It is always slightly disarming when a number three batsman hurries to the crease, just as the sun dips over the yardarm, wearing dark glasses. Greatness writ large in those shades. And

so, Nasher The Cool peered at the field, then took his guard.

A run off his first ball.

Great start.

But alas, the greatness stopped there, for Nasher was bowled five balls later - for one.

And so dear reader, while one applauds Pasture's cultivated cameo and Turbine's engineered top score of four and twenty, one despairs. For no other Swan innings fledged this day.

Yet have no fear, dear reader. The greatest delight of all is in the dramatic symmetry of the final defeat.

Who would have thought at the beginning that two fast bowlers, Negomi and Anderlee, would command the closing narrative of the tale of this match?

Not only is there symmetry in the economy of their bowling. But also in the efficiency of their batting too. Strike rates of 100 both. It's just a shame they were both runout too - and by the same teammate. How sad.

And finally, dearest gentle reader. This author finds swanself compelled to conclude...

That sometimes the burrowing of Wombats does indeed ground the flight of Swans.

Yours truly,

**The Swan**

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