

## SCCL Premier Division Round Up Week 5

### Allscott in statement win as they go 25 points clear!

*Devatwal wins battle of pros*

By Jamie Dowley

Callum Starling's side continued their 100% start to the season with a comprehensive defeat of previously unbeaten Wem, and they therefore open a sizeable gap to the cluster of teams behind them. Batting first, Max Ferrington replaced injured Maz Hasnain at the top of the order and made 22, a score matched by Jason Allen before both fell to Ralph Davies who took 2-40. That, however, brought Kuldeep Devatwal to the crease, the Indian maestro carried on where he has left off this season, immediately scoring quickly and receiving good support from Luke Thornton (52). When Devatwal had reached 114 he brought up his 500<sup>th</sup> run of the season in just 5 games, almost certainly the fastest ever to that landmark in the Premier Division and he went on to finish on a magnificent 152no as his side posted 270-4. With Abhishek Reddy and a stacked batting line up Wem were always still in the game of course, but a devastating opening burst from Luke Thornton ended the match as a contest. He took 3-15 including the big scalps of Harry Chandler for 1 and most significantly Reddy, who nicked off for a duck. Sam Peate again performed well in making 45 but ploughed a lone furrow bar for some late hitting from Alex Ollerenshaw who made 21 as Jason Summers took 4-31 to wrap the game up for his side. They head to Madeley tomorrow and will fancy going 6 from 6 to carry on this perfect start.

**A delighted Callum Starling: "Another flawless performance from us today, with Luke Thornton having an outstanding game probably the best he's batted and bowled for us. KD is in unreal form and Summers is flying too, if he doesn't do it with the bat he does it with the ball. The atmosphere is fantastic at the club and we keep pushing on. 5 more wins from safety!"**

**Newtown** recorded their 2<sup>nd</sup> win of the season in a strange encounter with **Ludlow** that had participants experiencing a wide range of emotions. Ludlow chose to bat first but at 103-8 off 39 turgid overs were in huge trouble before Simon Fletcher was joined by Luke Palmer for the 9<sup>th</sup> wicket. The pair put on 48 but when Palmer went for 30, it was then over to Fletcher who was ably supported by number 11, Kate Brazier. Fletcher cut loose, scoring 48 off his last 20 balls to end on 76no while Brazier stood firm and an eventual total of 221-9 off 50 would have been the stuff of nightmares for home captain Ben Price. It didn't get much better for Price personally as he was one of 4 early victims, 3 of whom fell to Brazier to reduce the Welshmen to 32-4. That required a rebuilding job and with Ludlow missing Joe Williams who always provides great control in the middle overs, both Griff Davies and Jordan Baijnath were able to keep the scoreboard ticking over. When Baijnath fell for 62, Davies (61) found support from Tom Leslie (17), John Anthony (18) and Nathan Smith (29no), as Newtown got home by 3 wickets with plenty of overs left.

**A relieved captain Ben Price "It was such an odd game, both teams really struggled against the new ball but we gave them at least 60 too many at the end of their innings. We started poorly with the bat but Jordan and Griff batted really well. They will have been disappointed not to kick on but John and Nathan did a great job in seeing us home"**

I was at **Sentinel** where a large crowd enjoying the club's Sausage and Cider festival were treated to an absorbing contest that narrowly saw the home side lose by 2 wickets to unbeaten **St Georges**. Batting first, the Engines were in trouble at 43-4 but Connor Cheshire (41) and Alex Johnson (53) batted well in the middle order and they were able to post a total of 179 that was at least competitive. For the Dragons, Ashish Ashish

took 3-23, Waheed Rasheed 3-27, while the pick of the bowlers was possibly Babar Khan who rarely bowled a bad ball in taking 1-19 off 10. At 79-2 in the visitors reply it was looking like a comfortable run chase, but then things began to happen for Sentinel and when dangerman Ashish was bowled by Jacob Binnersley the Dragons were 89-5. A semi recovery by Waqas Ahmed (29) and KJ Sullivan (26) got the score to 132-5, but when Ed Ashlin threw the ball to Alex Johnson the former Dragons allrounder turned the game once again. A simply outstanding spell of 10-3-14-2 piled on the pressure and at 158-8 the match was up for grabs. As tension built around the ground it was left to Zak Abbas and Waheed Rasheed to get their side over the line despite at least one huge scare. So, Sentinel are still winless despite Johnson's all round heroics and they head over to Wem tomorrow for another tough fixture but take great heart from their best performance of the season.

St Georges pace bowler Ali Mustafa steaming in at Albert Rd



**Whitchurch** are having an uptick in form and results and they returned from **Madeley** with their 3<sup>rd</sup> win of the season after a comfortable 6 wicket win. Batting first the hosts were indebted to contributions of 44 apiece from Anil Kumar and Mithun Jayawickrema, while Oli Davis struck 27 and there were 43 extras. Spinners did all the damage for Mike Robinsons side as Shaf Ahmed took 4-37 while both Shabbir Khan and Ollie Dyson picked up a brace each, although both were quite expensive. Muhammad Fahim was back from his 2 game sabbatical

to open with the captain and with plenty of bowling extras again (53) the pressure was slightly abated, but at 77-2 the game could have gone either way. Iftikhar Khan was then joined by Ollie Moore and the pair put on 81 and when Moore departed for 23, Khan saw his side home with an outstanding 93no with 8 overs still to be used.

**Winning captain Mike Robinson** “A good win for us and the first time we have chased 200 plus without me having to close my eyes towards the end! Extras did help us for sure and Iffy played a good hand. He’s a very talented player when he gets going and was well supported today by Shaf and Ollie Moore.

**Shrewsbury 2nds** endured a tough afternoon at **Quatt** in a match that largely played out to form. The hosts are always happy to bat first and excellent knocks from Tom Whitney (65) and Todd Henderson (77) allied to 34 from Nipun Karunanayake meant a total of 261-5 off 50 overs was achieved, although from being 208-2 with 9 overs left they perhaps will be slightly disappointed not get at least 280. That said, it was always likely to prove enough against a Shrewsbury side still searching for their first win of the season. With Dan Handley impressing with the new ball (eventually ending with 3-31), along with decent contributions from Jamie Lunn (2-15), Alex Biddle (2-16) and the consistent Scott Furber (2-21), Shrewsbury were dismissed for 145 but were not without good performances from Gabe Downes (40no), Kieran Gill (33) and 24 from Steve Barnard in his first game back for the club in 11 years. Only 3 points for the County Town side, but they know that Monday’s local derby with Shelton is a more crucial game for their long term prospects.

**Quatt captain Jamie Lunn** “It was a very professional win with lots of contributions but we were delighted that our middle order got some time in the middle as we have lacked that this year, we have to hit every game the same and just worry about our own performance and standards”

Finally, we end in West Shrewsbury where **Wellington** went gangbusters at **Shelton** in a match that lasted less than 26 overs. Opting to bat first, home skipper Jack Morris may have regretted his decision as from 20-2 the innings completely imploded, with Ollie Smith (4-14) and Matthew Morris (2-19) proving why they are two of the best young bowlers in the county. With the captain Morris the only man in double figures it was then over to yet another Morris - Hugh - to wrap up the Shelton innings with 2-2. Luke Goring struck a rapid 20no off 8 balls as the champions raced to their target inside 5 overs and take 20 points into their big Bank Holiday derby at St Georges.