

Week 2 Lords SCCL Premier Division Roundup

By Jamie Dowley

Wem stun Champions as Reddy tons up again...

While Devatwal and Summers show their class for Allscott.

I was at Orleton Park to witness the game of the day which was a fantastic one for Wem and their overseas pro Abishek Reddy, as he produced another superb display of batsmanship that dragged in spectators from other games with early finishes to see the Indian star action. This was no one man show however as both Harry Chandler, and in particular, Matt Cohen, played major roles in a run chase of 290. Earlier in the day the home total was achieved thanks chiefly to contributions from captain Dan Vaughan (56), Matt Simmonds (37), in form David Laird (52) and an inventive 63 from Morgan Ward, as Wem bowlers struggled to contain the runs on a fantastic pitch prepared by new home groundsman Tony Parton. Jim Astley and Reddy plugged away for 3 wickets each but at the halfway point Wellington were strong favourites. Chandler was crucially dropped early in his innings after which he played well for 61, while Sam Peate made a solid 29, but from 102-0 it became 138-4 when Reddy was joined by Matt Cohen. The Indian pro did nick one between keeper and slip early but thus followed a match winning partnership of 133, Cohen playing as well as he has done for many years with a swashbuckling 64, while Reddy again showed why Wem have uncovered a gem with some wonderful strokes. It all meant despite 3 wickets from Ollie Smith and 2 from Simmonds, Wem got home in the rain and gloom with over 4 overs remaining as Reddy scored the winning runs to reach another undefeated century.

Jim Astley “No doubt Abi will get the headlines (correct) but Matt Cohen’s knock was also exceptional as it took the pressure off him. The start up top with Harry and Sam was excellent too as that laid the platform, we always had one eye on DLS, trying to keep ahead of that but in the end that didn’t matter. It’s been a great start for us but we are still thinking more Europa League than Champions League!

Dan Vaughan “We aren’t too disheartened, conditions went against us, as batting became easier with the ball skidding on as a result of playing in the rain for the vast majority of the Wem innings. There is more to come with the ball in terms of consistency but our batting depth looks very good to make 300+ and 290 in our opening games, Lairdy has started well and Morgan Ward played superbly today and we are in a pretty good place overall.

Allscott Heath made the trek to Mid Wales to face long standing rivals **Newtown**, both sides having won their opening games and it was Ben Price’s side who struck early as the visitors were reduced to 12-2. That meant Maz Hasnain and Kuldeep Devatwal joined forces and while Hasnain made 25, Devatwal then stepped up a level as he demolished the home bowlers hitting 94 off 74 balls, and innings that allowed the visitors to reach 197ao with 12 overs unused. For Newtown Reino De Klerk took 3-22 and spin pair Sam Baugh and Nathan Smith shared 4 wickets. On paper it looked a game in the balance at halfway, but although Ben Price fought hard at the top of the order, when he was dismissed for 22 by Brad Thornton (2-6) to leave them 43-5, the introduction of Jason Summers meant a swift end for Newtown. The 2024 league player of the year rattled through the rest of the lineup in short order taking 5-6, as Callum Starling’s side returned home with the win.

Callum Starling “It wasn’t the greatest track and we had to dig in, superb from KD again and others batted around him. We always felt we could defend 194 and after me and Luke kept it tight up top, Luke in particular bowling well, Brad and Jason were even better and it’s the perfect start for us to be 40/40.”

Quatt and **Whitchurch** had contrasting opening day fortunes but it was the former, back on home territory who dominated from start to finish to give Jamie Lunn his first victory as Quatt captain. Visiting skipper Mike Robinson won the toss and decided to bat first, but wickets soon tumbled as his side struggled to 24-4 with Dan Handley and Todd Henderson both striking twice. Muhammad Fahim played fluently for 38 and found some support from Raheel Khattak who made 25, but other than 20no from Azaad Rafiq the innings petered out at 115ao. Handley finished with 3-45, Scott Furber 3-26 and Henderson 2-27 and the home batsmen had little trouble in chasing down their target

inside 21 overs. Tom Whitney with 40, Ryan Wheldon with 22 debutant pro Nipun Karunanayake undefeated on 23 all meant a comfortable win for the hosts.

Jamie Lunn “We are absolutely delighted with that really comprehensive team performance, especially after losing the toss everything clicked for us today”

Whitchurch Chairman Iain Marsh “It wasn’t a great performance by us by any stretch but there were still some positives to take and we won’t be getting too despondent. Another tough game next week (home to Wellington), then the fixture list starts to look a bit kinder to us although nothing comes easy in this league”



None of the 3 county town sides have started the season well, although **Shrewsbury 2nds** were perhaps unfortunate to come away from their encounter at London Rd on the wrong side of a DLS defeat by **Ludlow**. Batting first, overseas Kieran Gill batted almost throughout the innings to finish on exactly 100no, the young Kiwi who was at Cound last year reached a maiden SCCL century in the final over as his side ended on a competitive 210-7. Joe Williams put in a high quality spell for the visitors taking 4-30, while Sam Bowen chipped in with 2-30. In reply at 56-4 Ludlow were under the pump especially as debutant overseas pro Nathan Engelbrech was trapped lbw by Gill for a 3rd ball duck. That brought Deon Patel (pictured) to the wicket and his fine 77no took his side up to 168-5 needing 43 off 14 overs when the umpires decided play couldn’t continue due to rain, Ludlow just ahead on DLS at that point.

Ludlow Chairman Phil Parker “We are very happy to get a win on the board, Sam Bowen bowled well up top and Joe put in his usual excellent performance, but the real match winner was Deon Patel who we really needed to step up in the absence of Luke Miles and he duly delivered”

Shelton are another side to have lost both their opening games, and they again conceded a 300 plus first innings total this time to **St Georges** who join Wem and Allscott having a 100% record. The Dragons were inserted and with home skipper Jack Morris opening with spin at each end, Zab Safi’s explosive 23 off 10 balls got the ball rolling for the visitors. The innings ticked along until they reached 96-4 when Ashish Ashish and Kasjuan Sullivan joined forces. Sullivan played nicely for 35, but Indian Pro Ashish moved through the gears with 117 off 89 balls as his side reached 315ao in the final over. Sri Lankan Navindu Vithanage was the pick of the attack with 3-52, while Simon Jones and Sam Griffiths took a brace each. Shelton’s reply was soon behind the rate although contributions from debutant Phil Raikes (26), Viv John (49), Saleh Ahmed (30), Vithanage (38) and Dan Walker (34) meant they at least picked up 3 batting points ending on 236ao. Shah Fiaz with 3-39 and Ashish with 3-50 were the key bowling performers for St Georges.

Dragons Skipper Zak Abbas “Fantastic win on the road for us, Zabi started us off then came “The Big Show” Ashish Ashish showing his class what everyone has been waiting for, and the bowlers all performed super. We are already in positive points territory its time to kick on up the ladder”

Finally, across town at Albert Rd, **Madeley** would have been delighted to record their first win of the season at **Sentinel**. Batting first, the visitors reached a total of 261 after contributions by Joe Buttery (60), Salim Ahmed (38) and Oli Davis (25), with Harry Thomas the pick of the home attack taking 3-31. Sentinel openers Tom Griffiths and Nick

Bateup were off to a flyer in the reply, reaching 107 without loss, and with Madeley bowling extras adding up again they looked well on course for the win. However, when Griffiths (34) and Bateup (45) fell in quick succession the innings somewhat fell away, Salim (4-37) and Nadeem Ahmad (2-27) in particular impressing with the ball. That Sentinel got within 35 runs was largely down to a late 26no cameo from the ageless Shane Gwilt, but it was the visitors who returned to South Telford with the 20 points.

So 3 teams still have 100% records, while it's been a disappointing start for the Shrewsbury based sides, all losing both their matches. Next week sees Wellington travel to Whitchurch while Shelton host Newtown in a big game for both sides.