

Week 6 Lords SCCL Premier Division Roundup

By Jamie Dowley

Wellington triumph in Bank Holiday derby nailbiter.

Game of the weekend was undoubtedly the heavyweight clash between champions **Wellington** and undefeated **St Georges**, and it was the former who came out on top with a tense 2 wicket victory at Church Rd. Batting first the Dragons made a steady start and had reached 53-1, before the introduction of David Laird into the attack changed the complexion of the innings as his 4-28 helped reduce the home side to 84-6. Charitha Kumarasinghe made 34 and some trademark hitting from Zab Safi (37) meant something of a recovery was possible and the lower order chipped away including 41 for the last wicket partnership enabling a score of 182ao. As well as Laird bowling well, Harrison Vaughan also impressed with 2-27, and Hugh Morris kept it tight with 1-27 off his 10. The Wellington reply was a cagey affair and with Ashish Ashish striking 4 times with the new ball, they were in trouble at 76-5. The pressure was duly on 2025 SCCL player of the year Matt Simmonds and the all rounder had Josh McDonald for support. They put on 56 but when they both departed, Simmonds having made 67, the score was 147-7 and the game was in the balance. But despite an outstanding spell of 2-16 off 10 overs from Babar Khan, Hugh Morris (26no) was there at the end to guide his side home for a precious 20 points.

Winning captain Dan Vaughan “I felt we could and should have chased the 183 target more smoothly but credit to St Georges they kept pegging us back. We bowled and fielded well to back up the win at Shelton on Saturday. It's shaping up to be an exciting season with Allscott Heath the team to beat at this point but Quatt and Wem will both be there or thereabouts also”

Wem ran out 85 run winners at home to a **Sentinel** side still searching for their first win of the campaign, but for large parts of this contest Ed Ashlin's side were very much in the game. Batting first the hosts were in slight trouble at 104-5 with Sam Peate having made 33. That brought Martyn Davies to the crease to join Abhishek Reddy and the ex Shropshire batsman played sensibly as he supported the Indian pro in an 87 run partnership. That was broken by in form Alex Johnson who dismissed first Davies for 30 and then Reddy for 83 in the space of 3 balls, from which the lower order moved the score to 234-9. For the Engines James Shaw with 3-47, Aussie Nick Bateup with 3-32 and Johnson with 2-44 all performed commendably. At 105-1 in the 24th over of the Sentinel reply it was a 50/50 game but the innings became somewhat becalmed with Harry Astley bowling a very good spell (3-23). Once Tom Griffiths departed for 50, with the score only having moved on 30 runs in 11 overs it was over to that man Reddy who soon rattled through the middle and lower order taking 6-31 as Sentinel were all out for 149.

Wem captain Jim Astley “That was a brilliant win in the heat that looked more comfortable than it threatened at times. Harry bowled a fantastic spell as they struggled to rotate the strike in the middle overs then Abi turned the screw, but a good team performance and a good result after Saturday's defeat”

The county town derby between **Shrewsbury 2nds** and **Shelton** was a huge game for both sides, but it was the latter who came out on top in a 7 wicket win. Shrewsbury compiled a competitive total of 199-8 in their innings with Kiwi overseas Kieran Gill making 69 and Krish Chadha 34. Wickets were shared for Shelton with Simon Jones (2-39), Ross Griffiths (2-32) the principal performers. What looked potentially a nervy chase was fairly comfortable for the visitors to London Rd as after Pabel Saha had made 45, it was left to Dan Walker back on his old stomping ground to see it through with a magnificent 84no ably supported by Navindu Vithanage who composed an unbeaten 36 as they reached their target with 40 balls remaining.

Winning skipper Jack Morris “This was very much needed after Saturday and it’s a massive result for us. We kept it tight in the field and took wickets at good times. Dan’s knock was fantastic and he got great support from Pabel and Nav who finished it off with him. We now move onto Ludlow on Saturday hoping to build some real momentum.

I was at Heath Rd where **Whitchurch** had the luxury of resting pace bowler Alex Heath for the visit of **Newtown**. The hosts made a very slow start with just 1 run coming from the first 5 overs as Newtown openers Jordan Baijnath and Griff Davies kept things tight but once Mike Robinson got himself in, the classy left hander played shots all around the ground for a superb 91 before rather giving away a certain century holing out in the deep. That allowed in form Iftikhar Khan to take centre stage and his exquisite 75 allied to some late hitting from Kunal Dabas (45) and Elliot Bowen (24) meant 277-6 was reached off 50 overs. For the Welshmen, Nathan Smith was the pick of the attack with 2-46 while the aforementioned Griff Davies continued to impress as he took 3-59. Newtown were soon in trouble at 2-2 with Shabbir Khan taking both in his first over, but captain Ben Price played very well for 69 before being superbly caught and bowled by Ollie Dyson. That allowed Shafique Ahmed (3-48) and Shabbir (4-18) to wrap up proceedings as the visitors were dismissed for 159. A great weekend for Robinsons side while Newtown will also be pleased to have had one win this weekend and move onto a big game against lowly Sentinel this Saturday.

Quatt produced a near identical performance at **Ludlow** as they did on Saturday, batting first and racking up the runs. This time they made 280-6 with Tom Whitney top scoring with 82 while Todd Henderson made a run a ball 63, Ryan Wheldon 42, Luke Daly 34 and Alex Biddle 30. Luke Miles and Joe Williams each picked up a brace of wickets for the hosts. The match was over as a contest once Ludlow were reduced to 26-4 with Todd Henderson and Jamie Lunn each striking twice, so Lunn was able to rotate his bowlers with Alex Biddle taking 3-23 and Charlie Wheldon snaring 2-12 as Ludlow recovered to 177ao. This was mainly due to a breezy 52 from Josh Bowen while Sam Edwards gutsed it out for 43. A solid 40 points over the weekend for Quatt while Ludlow have a massive game versus Shelton next week as they bid to get their season back on track.

Finally ,league leaders **Allscott Heath** had things all their own way versus **Madeley** as they racked up the runs at Park Street. Kuldeep Devatwal top scored with 74, Luke Thornton carried on his good run of form with 72, while there were also contributions from Jason Summers (42), Austin Rowley (32), Brad Thornton (29) and Ben Harrington (25) as they made 331-6. Salim Ahmed 2-45, Martin Boyle 2-65 and veteran Lol Woodhall with 2-47 all plugged away with the ball. In reply the opening pair of Anil Kumar (23) and Steve Maden (25) gave good accounts of themselves but after captain Mithun was dismissed for 37, the innings quickly evaporated with Devatwal running through the lower order to take 5-23. Callum Starling and Summers picked up a brace a piece as they maintained their 25 point lead at the top of the table.

So after a hectic weekend of action it’s the calm before the storm, as Allscott Heath travel to Quatt this Saturday in a huge match up while in the bottom half Sentinel badly need a win at home to Newtown.