

## SCCL Premier Division Round Up Week 8

### White ball ends with drama, controversy and shocks!

By Jamie Dowley

The League Executive Committee led by Administrator Liam O'Neill are investigating the circumstances surrounding the abandoned game between **Allscott Heath** and **Wellington**. With the Allscott score at 81-3 off 25 overs at drinks, the umpires determined the pitch was too dangerous to continue and brought proceedings to a halt.

As a result of the abandonment at Allscott we have new leaders in the Division with **Quatt** now in first place after dodging the rain at **Newtown** to record a 104 run victory. Due to traffic issues, Quatt captain Jamie Lunn was forced to re-jig his batting order, opening with himself and Alex Biddle, and the makeshift openers put on 45 for the first wicket, Lunn making 20. Ryan Wheldon (23) and Todd Henderson (26) both battled away in the middle order but some excellent bowling from spin trio Sam Baugh (3-30), Jordan Baijnath (2-26) and Nathan Smith (3-23) meant Quatt were bowled out for 165. With conditions deteriorating, the game became fragmented with several stoppages, but it soon became clear that Quatt were heading for victory as not a single Newtown batter made double figures, with Todd Henderson (3-19) and Scott Furber (4-21) wreaking havoc. Newtown were ultimately dismissed for 61 and Jamie Lunn's side reached the summit for the first time this season.

**Quatt Chairman Howard Sanders** "Our bowling attack is on fire at the moment and we are confident of defending most scores. There is a long way to go and a lot of tough games coming up but we are definitely in a good place at present"

Out of form **Ludlow** travelled north to **Wem**, more in hope, than expectation but would have been relieved to find a Wem side missing all their regular top 3, including Abhishek Reddy who has briefly returned to India for a franchise tournament. That meant a brand new top order and all 3 succumbed to Kate Brazier (pictured) with the new ball, leaving Tyler Ibbotson and the rest of the batting line up to attempt a recovery. Ibbotson made 25 and it was only a late flurry from Tom Astley (32no) that enabled a semi competitive 124 to be posted as Joe Williams shone with 3-10. The view at halfway was that that could still be enough and at 30-4 with Alex Ollerenshaw (3-19) in



great form, it looked a long way back for Ludlow. However overseas Nathan Englebrecht was still there and he received support from lower down the order and he manoeuvred the score to 122-7 and his team to the verge of victory. Wem captain Jim Astley then had the key man caught for 56 and when he followed up 2 balls later with another one it was suddenly 122-9 and 3 runs were needed as the excitement built around the ground. Brazier survived the last ball of the over and off the 4<sup>th</sup> ball of the next, Zach White struck a boundary to take the win for Ludlow in dramatic fashion and cause a real upset.

**Ludlow Chairman and Scorer Phil Parker** " Watching from the scoreboard played havoc with my nerves but what a great result for us. Wem were missing a few key performers but equally so were we, and the team gave everything for the cause. I'm really pleased for Nathan, that was a match winning knock, such a shame he couldn't be there at the end as we did rather scrape over the line, but we will take that right now"

**Whitchurch** faced off against **St Georges** at Heath Rd in a match that always seems to throw up an exciting contest and this one was no different. Batting first, openers Mike Robinson and Raheel Khattak played a sensible hand in the face of a quality seam attack, and had reached 79-0 before both were run out in the space of 3 balls, Robinson for 44 and Khattak for 25. Iftikhar Khan with 31, Kunal Dabbas 44 and Muhammad Fahim, 26 no kept the scoreboard ticking over as the home side reached 207-7 off 50 overs. Faisal Khan on his seasonal reappearance picked up 2-36 and the Dragons would have been confident of chasing that down at the interval. New captain Mohammed Aqeeb is a proper old school opening batsman, and his 33 set the innings up with stroke makers to come, but the home bowling attack with Kash Hussain (3-42) and Alex Heath (2-46) kept chipping away and at 100-6 the hosts were clear favourites. That brought Zab Safi to the crease, the man with the reputation as one of the biggest hitters in UK club cricket and he set about the home bowlers in destructive manner. At 164-6, captain Robinson went all in on his senior bowler and Shabbir immediately snared Safi for 65, the master leg spinner ending with 3-29 as he and young spin protégé Ollie Dyson (2-26) wrapped up the innings for 174. That's 7 wins in a row in all cricket for Whitchurch, they are up to 3<sup>rd</sup> now and we all remember what happened in 2024 when they won the title with a great run in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the season

**Whitchurch captain Mike Robinson** **"We have momentum now and head into the red ball section which is usually our strength with real confidence. Everyone is buying into what we are looking to achieve, the spirit in the group is fantastic, even when we make mistakes we are supporting each other and I can't ask for more from the lads. We aren't getting carried away though and will keep working hard"**

**Shelton** made it a hat trick of wins as they emerged with victory in the Town derby versus old rivals **Sentinel**, whose difficult season continues as they now slip into the bottom 2. Batting first, Nick Bateup got the Engines off to a decent start and together with Jacob Binnersley had taken the score to 106-2 but when they fell for 62 and 26 respectively the innings completely imploded. Ryan Cumming was picked ahead of Ross Griffiths and justified the selection with 2-24 while overseas Navindu Vithanage and Saleh Ahmed caused havoc both taking 3-19 as Ed Ashlin's side were shot out for 146. In the reply Phil Raikes continued his good form since moving from Toft in the Cheshire League as he made 39 and despite 3 quick wickets falling to leave the hosts 72-3, Navindu saw the job home with 34 no as Jack Morris side won by 5 wickets.

**A delighted Shelton skipper Jack Morris** **"It's always nice to beat local rivals and winning 3 on the bounce is massive for us. We are pretty content with 4 wins and 4 losses in the white ball as there are some very strong sides in the top half but we are playing some decent cricket ourselves at the moment.**

Finally **Madeley** earned a much needed win at home to 12<sup>th</sup> placed **Shrewsbury 2nds**. Batting first the hosts were in huge trouble at 101-7 with Oli Davis having made 34, but Shahzaib with 55 and Dan Bowdler with 30 made something of a recovery enabling them to reach 218 all out off just 38 overs bowled. Kieran Gill impressed for Shrewsbury with 3-22, while Ali Khan went one better with 4-34. In reply the visitors were in trouble at 39-3, but Gill (29) and George Hughes (43) put on 64 for the 4<sup>th</sup> wicket to give them a sniff, but with Basim Ahmad and Salim Ahmed teaming up for Madeley they were soon able to put the game to bed, dismissing Shrewsbury for 159. Basim ending with 3-28 and Salim, 2-26. A 2<sup>nd</sup> win of the season for Madeley who climb out of the relegation zone, a place that Shrewsbury are now firmly entrenched in.

*So that completes the first 8 rounds of Win Lose action, there are 3 more to come at the end of the season but we now settle down for 11 weeks of Win Draw Lose games, red ball in white clothing. Or as it's otherwise known, proper cricket...*