

Whitney sparkles in ruthless Quatt display.

A career best 167no for **Quatt** opener Tom Whitney was the stand out individual performance on a fantastic days cricket in the SCCL Premier Division. Quatt travelled to **Shrewsbury 2nds** and from ball one set about dominating their opponents with Whitney and Oliver Plank (85) sticking a 204 run partnership on the board in quick order. Once Plank departed, Whitney continued to score fluently and when he had reached 167 off 124 balls, captain Jed Edwards was happy to declare on 327-2 to give his bowlers 55 overs to win the game. It was a tough day at the office for Shrewsbury who battled gamely until they were dismissed in the 44th over for 106. Captain Zane Beattie (34) and Rob Foster (33) made contributions, but the Quatt attack led by Kuldeep Diwan (3-19), eased through to victory, Diwan supported by Edwards, Scott Furber and Ryan Wheldon who all took a pair of wickets each as Quatt returned south with their 2nd maximum points haul of the season.



Oliver Plank of Shrewsbury cutting loose on his way to 85.

Despite maximum points from 2 games, Quatt are still 6 behind new leaders **Wem** who came through late to take all 24 points against **Allscott**. Sam Peate set the ball rolling at Soulton Rd with 61, and there were smaller contributions all down their impressive batting order, James Wynne-Potts (33), Chris Peel (32) and some late explosive hitting from Matt Cohen (22no) and Tom Astley (28), meant Wem could be happy with a total of 253. Like last week Jason Summers was the pick of the Allscott attack taking 5-85. Summers also contributed 32 in reply, and it was a game that while Overseas Kuldeep Devatwal was still at the crease looked to heading for a draw. But when he departed for an excellent 73 bowled by Jim Astley with 7 overs remaining, the Allscott lower order

were exposed and the ruthless Wem attack led by Muhammed Irfan (4-20) with support from Astley brothers Tom (3-36) and Jim (2-12) ensured the full 24 pts for the home side.

Having missed week 1, **Madeley** were keen to make up for lost time and travelled to **Whitchurch**, who themselves wanted to make amends for a poor first outing. With captain Maz Hasnain departing early lbw to his counterpart Martin Boyle (back bowling after missing the whole of the 2023 campaign), Whitchurch really needed others to step up, and having reached 46-1 the innings was ticking along nicely. However, the introduction of new Sri Lankan Overseas Mithun Jayawickrema and fellow debutant Basim Ahmad bowling spin in tandem, turned the game completely. Mithun in particular proved difficult to face, bowling a controlled spell of 4-14 from 12.5 overs. Basim played the junior role of 4-43 but it meant Whitchurch could only muster 125. Madeley's reply was in trouble with the Davis brothers both back in the pavilion with only 13 on the board, but the experienced Salim Ahmed dug in and found a willing partner in Andy Laycock. Their 50 partnership ended with Laycock out for 30, but that set the stage for Mithun to enter proceedings and he quickly extinguished Whitchurch's hopes smashing 40 off 22 balls including 3 enormous sixes. Ahmed was also there at the end for 42 no, as Madeley returned to Park Street with 24 points and leave a shellshocked Whitchurch bottom of the table albeit at this very early stage.

They travel to **St Georges** next week who have suffered a similar two defeat start, their second came in a 3 wicket defeat at **Frankton**. After a chastening loss to Oswestry last week, it was looking like deja vu as the visitors slumped to 37-5 but captain Sam Morgan who never shies away from a tricky situation, dug in, and found a willing partner in Faisal Khan to put on 85. After they departed for 49 and 48 respectively, Mo Khattak swiped a late 27no to reach a competitive 200 all out. Scott Hale with 4-34 and Stuart Lammie 3-46 the pick of the home attack.

Losing Ian Whitticase 3rd ball of the innings (run out for 0) would not have been on captain Tom Welti's agenda but he and Ryan Kruger (38) scored fluently to set the innings up. Once Welti departed for 58, it was over to the experience of Jordan Parry to see his side home to a fairly comfortable victory despite a flurry of late wickets. Wrexham supporting Parry, fresh from seeing his side reach the uncharted territory of League One, hit a run a ball 61, closing out a 3 wicket victory for an excellent 24 point haul at Hardwicke Park.

The remaining two games were both draws but that didn't mean any less excitement and good cricket. **Ludlow** travelled to **Shelton**, hoping to put last weeks defeat versus Quatt behind them, but were soon in trouble at 12-2 with Jason Oakes out cheaply again. Luke Miles was joined by Will Sparrow, in tandem they rebuilt the innings somewhat, although at 123-5, they were still indebted to Sam Edwards with a fine unbeaten 50 to get them to a decent score of 227. Sparrow with 38, Deon Patel (26) backed up Miles' top score 76. Ross Griffiths a bowler who never struggles to take wickets snared another 4 for the home side. In reply Shelton struggled against an opening attack of medium pacer Louis Watkins (3-45) and Miles who took 2-18, and at 41-5 the game looked over. Ben Matthews then set on a rebuild job with Will Savage, a superb partnership of 123 dragged Shelton back into the game. Savage with 42 and Sam Griffiths (23), ran Ludlow close, but it was Matthews who rightly took the ovation of the large home crowd carrying his bat for 109 as the game closed out at 200-7 for a 13-9 draw.

Sentinel got their season under way at Morda Road and it was **Oswestry** captain Alex Huxley who led from the front for the border side. A fine 120 from Huxley, supported by former Sentinel batsman Matty Richards who struck a composed 73, and Josh Darley (a player who must be in the thoughts of Shropshire selectors?) with 62 meant the home side could post 292 from their 300 balls.

3 wickets apiece for debutant Oliver Wilson and young quick Jacob Binnarsley, the pick of the Sentinel attack. In truth Sentinel were always a bit behind the rate in reply but will be pleased with

their 9 point haul, Tom Griffiths with 71 and skipper Ed Ashlin 60 were the main contributors, once again Ian Davies with 3 wickets the stand out bowler for Oswestry.

Week 3 highlights see Wem travel to Ludlow, a big Shrewsbury derby as Sentinel host Shelton, while Whitchurch face off against St Georges with both sides desperate to get their season going.

Jamie Dowley