

Quatt delight, John agony for Shelton..

By Jamie Dowley

In the most exciting day of action in the 2024 season so far, three matches produced incredible finishes, with dramatic scenes taking place at **Shelton**, where **Quatt** came away with a seventh straight win to further cement their title credentials. Batting first as usual, Olly Plank with a fine 71, supported by Tom Whitney (29), and Ryan Wheldon (31) meant the visitors had their customary good start, but after the introduction of Ross Griffiths, wickets fell regularly and it was only some late hitting for the 9th wicket yielding 35 runs, that ensured a competitive total of 200. Griffiths, enjoying another great wicket taking season ended on 5-51. The hosts needed a big contribution from one of their top order and it was the previously unheralded Viv John who held the innings together. John received some support from Saleh Ahmed and Sam Griffiths, but with wickets falling regularly, he took responsibility, and had reached 79 when last man Ross Griffiths joined him on 185-9. Hitting 3 quick boundaries John then attempted a single off the penultimate ball of the penultimate over, and was cruelly run out for 92. Quatt the winners by just 2 runs, the run out ensuring a 36 point swing, as Shelton take just 5 points. A delighted Quatt chairman Howard Sanders said “what a wonderful game of cricket, both sides fought hard but once again we found a way to win”

It was an equally incredible finish at Saulton Road as old adversaries **Wem** and **Sentinel** locked horns in a game which had all 4 results possible as the final delivery was bowled. Rico Fourie and Malcolm Serplet led the way for the Engines with 66 and 56 respectively and a quick 26 from Jonny Evans got the score to 204/7. Tom Astley again starred with the ball taking 4 wickets, albeit a little more expensive than usual, ending on 4-76. Wem, missing Harry Chandler got off to a poor start and with James Shaw shrewdly giving himself the new ball they soon fell to 11-3 and had a major rebuilding job on their plate. It was only a composed 61 from Sam Peate, with support from Irfan (25) and Matt Cohen (31) that got the hosts a foothold in the run chase. Shaw, bowling superbly as usual was equally threatening in his 2nd spell and his 5-28 left Wem teetering on 134-8. Ian Gillespie was then joined by Dan Cohen, their partnership of 38 got Wem back in with a sniff, but even when Gillespie departed, Cohen and Jim Astley (the best 10 and 11 in club cricket ?!) still pushed for the win. A disputed catch in the final over adding to the drama, the benefit of the doubt going to the batsman, with the end result after 100 overs of tough cricket that Wem fell 3 runs short. So an excellent Winning Draw for Sentinel after their best performance of the season.

Over to Church St, and could **St Georges** end their losing sequence of 6 games against local rivals **Madeley**? After a decent win over Allscott in the knockout they would have hoped so, but the signs weren't great after they could only muster 100ao, Mithun Jayawickrema impressing with 4-18 for the visitors. In reply Madeley lost wickets themselves at regular intervals but at 50-4 would have still backed themselves to chase 100. The introduction of Mo Khattak proved significant however as his 5-23 ensured a 6 run victory for the Dragons. One that was much needed in what looks a relegation battle that **could** have more than two teams relegated (all depending on what happens in BDPCL).

A short game at **Oswestry** as **Shrewsbury 2nds** recorded a much needed 5 wicket victory. The hosts were only able to bat 27.4 overs, but thanks to a stunning 77 ball 110 from Shak Marshall

were still able to put 153 on the board. Bradley Thornton picked up 5 wickets for the county town, albeit Marshall took a liking to his bowling, the 10th wicket yielding 37 all of which were scored by the overseas player. Thornton ended with 5-76 but did have the last word bowling Marshall for the final wicket. In reply a nice start by Head Coach James Wodja who struck 26 set up the innings for the middle order powerhouses of Zane Beattie (51no) and Rob Foster (49), Shrewsbury getting home in comfortable fashion with plenty of overs in hand. . Back to the drawing board for inconsistent Oswestry.

Whitchurch chairman Iain Marsh hailed his sides excellent run of 5 straight wins, citing the latest success over **Allscott Heath** as “giving us real momentum for the rest of the campaign”. Not for the first time it was champion batsman Mas Hasnain who starred with an excellent 92, receiving support from Elliott Bowen(26) and wicketkeeper Eddie Lewis ,a player who many home supporters have been clamouring for a first team place, scored 29. Both visiting spinners Jason Summers and Kuldeep Devatwal bowled their maximum allocation and shared 6 wickets as Whitchurch made 204-9 , but it was the home tweekers Shafique Ahmed and Shabbir Khan who turned the screw in the 2nd innings as despite 31 from Jason Allen and 26 from Devatwal, Allscott were shot out for 113. Shafiq taking 5-34 and Shabir a superb spell of 12-8-12-4.

Finally to the picturesque Hardwick Park, where a career first team best of 90 from Sam Roberts ensured a **Ludlow** total of 234, contributions from Sam Alford (39) and Jason Oakes (33) also proving useful. In reply **Frankton** were going nicely at 46-0, and even at 88-3 were in the game. Once again it was slow bowling (isn't it always?), that turned the game, Joe Williams and Oakes got to work and took 7-5 between them. Williams a superb 4-3 and Oakes 3-2!. Frankton quickly dismissed for 113.

Week 8 sees pre season title favourites Quatt and Wem lock horns in an eagerly anticipated clash, while Ludlow entertain Whitchurch in another top 4 match up. .