

WELLESLEY HOUSE NEWS

THE WELLESLIAN

Subject: CRICKET

DATE: 26th JUNE 2021

1st XI v Parents

A MEMORABLE VICTORY FOR THE BOYS



TOP QUALITY CRICKET...

The traditional parents and pupils 1st XI fixture has long been a highlight of the cricketing calendar at Wellesley and after days of anxious waiting that accompanies the build up to all must win games, the sun broke through to provide the perfect overhead conditions for some top quality cricket. Selection for the parents' team had not been straightforward, indeed, no one really knew who would be turning up at the toss... In the end, the final XI looked very strong (in a physical sense, not necessarily a cricketing sense...) There were farmers, teachers, OWs, brothers, fathers and uncles lining up to play against a young 1st XI that had enjoyed a wonderful season to date - outperforming any expectations as a result of great commitment, hours in the nets, brilliant teamwork and of course, with thanks to coaching from Mr Burleigh, whom has been referred to by one Old Welleslian and former England international as "quite simply the best coach I ever had".

The toss was overseen by match official (and Deputy Head), Mr Spencer and the parents opted to make first use of a beautiful looking strip prepared lovingly by our hard working groundsman, Mark. There was no sense of any looseners as Archie Brown, from the pavilion end, fizzed down a perfectly pitched off spinner that snuck through the gate of his father, much to the delight of the 1st XI. Jon was clearly doing what any kind and decent father would do - allowing his wicket to fall to his son to help build confidence in the young Welleslian (weren't you, Jon?). Things went from bad to worse when Old Welleslian - and a Herbert Day memorial prize winner - Henry Ellis fell the very next over to an absolute beauty from George Long. Hamish Morrison strode to the crease - a man with a huge number of runs under his belt for both Wellesley and Harrow - and played arguably the shot of the day with a sumptuous off drive towards the swimming pool, that would have not looked out of place at the home of cricket in St John's Wood.



The very next over he tried to put one into the Orchard garden, but leg spinner Xandy Long did him in the flight and took his off bail. 12 for 3 became 12 for 4 when Matt Solley confidently drilled his first ball down the ground, slightly upishly, and Xandy took a phenomenal catch above his head. Burleigh was quietly panicking and he desperately needed a steadying partnership. Cometh the hour, cometh the Kent farmers. David Long and Tom Qusted (OW) dovetailed beautifully with Qusted playing some agricultural shots all around the ground and David Long working the ball around the field intelligently (whilst all spectators enjoyed his sumptuous strawberries that had kindly been donated for all to tuck into throughout the afternoon). Not long after their partnership passed 50, skipper Henry Barker turned back to his off spinner and Archie snuck one through David's defences and Tom Qusted quickly followed after raising his bat for a thoroughly entertaining 53 off just 38 balls.

The Headmaster was greeted to the wicket with what on another day may have been described as sledging from the boys, who appeared very (VERY) keen to take his wicket and quickly. He survived a nervy opening, playing cautiously as his son probed in the corridor of uncertainty with his skiddy outswingers. Along with Henry Miles, who hit an enormous 6 in the direction of the art school, they took the parents beyond three figures before Stas Shatokhin had the Headmaster caught at square leg (and will serve detention for the rest of his time at Wellesley). Mr Burleigh (nobly batting at 11) clipped his only ball effortlessly in the leg side to end on 1* with the parents all out in the 22nd over for a very competitive 132. Game on. In reply, the captain of the 1st XI made the mistake of playing for spin against Mr Burleigh's wily offies and edged an (other) arm ball behind - well taken at the wicket by OW, Freddie Miles. David



Long's nagging medium pacers saw off Reuben and Hank - both clean bowled - before Javier was bowled by the hero of the first innings, Qusted whose bustling seamers were faster than they looked. Opener George Long found a steadying ally in Archie Brown and they expertly went about rebuilding the reply, with their running between the wickets and straight bat shots being particularly impressive. Despite the introduction of the accurate and skilful medium pace of Mr Brown, the parents could not break the partnership. In the end, it took an intervention from TDMB who "retired" George not out for a maturely constructed 29*. His younger brother strode to the crease with the game perilously poised and, quite simply, batted beautifully. His quick hands and excellent shot selection took the game away from the parents. When Archie was retired for a superb 44*, Hector Hulme took guard. He promptly dispatched his first ball through square leg for four before crunching his second through extra-cover all the way to the squash courts. An extraordinary shot from the wicket keeper batsman. With Stas on strike, only one was needed and he cleverly chipped the ball into a vacant gap at wide mid off to claim a memorable victory for the boys.