

WELLESLEY HOUSE NEWS

THE WELLESLIAN

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JL v Parents

“We’re going to thrash you”!



SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Saturday 26th June 2021, a date many parents had in their calendars as their opportunity to set the record straight, to end the speculation, to earn them (much needed) bragging rights, to face their closest rivals in the JL parents versus pupils softball cricket match.

It was a dry and warm summer afternoon with little humidity in the air to affect the swing of the luminous orange ball that would be tossed and belted between these two rival teams.

The children were ably led by Mr Martin and Mrs Hodges who started the fixture by giving the children a pep talk and establishing a batting order. This allowed the parents team valuable time to discuss our varying experiences of cricket and most importantly establish ‘the aim of the game!’ If you are familiar with any sporting calendar these brief moments were akin to our pre-season training. With confidence in our

ability high and trying to block out the children’s cries of “We’re going to thrash you.” Our nominated captain for the afternoon, Caroline Long, stepped forward to decide which team was destined to take to the crease with bat in hand first.

Tilly Spanton won the toss and threw down the gauntlet to the parents, challenging them to set the target for the pupils to chase down later in the afternoon. Before we had time to change our mind the match was underway. It was clear that the children were not in a merciful mood, making the first parents’ batting pair, Katie Spanton and Pippa Southorn, work hard for their runs. Katie and Pippa settled into the match expertly, keeping the scorer (Mr Martin) busy with several boundaries and more than a few quick singles. The second parents’ batting pair of Caroline Long and Phil Reed took to the square next. Some brilliant bowling by Rex Long kept the run count low.



Both Caroline (with her eye already in, thanks to many fine performances for her local club this season) and Phil (some of whose shots would have not been out of place on the Centre court at Wimbledon, such is his tennis pedigree) were able to add a good number of runs to the total without losing a wicket, quite an achievement considering the accuracy with which the children were bowling with. As the third batting pair, Louisa Hulme and Charlotte Scott the fielding team were beginning to find quite the rhythm with impressive bowling by Tilly Spanton, Henley Shaddick and Greta Grand.

Louisa and Charlotte showed no mercy hitting many boundaries and keeping the runs ticking over. Due to impressive fielding by Polly Reed, Bruno Wainman and Lottie Southorn, the batting team still had a way to go as the fourth pair Daniel and Rosa Gonçalves took to the crease. It was to be a family affair with their son Joel bowling the first over they faced. Daniel was able to pick out the slower balls hitting several sixes whilst Joel kept his parents on their toes delivering many balls on target. Rufus Hulme finished the bowling spell with some fast and accurate bowling with several very near misses. Rosa used her speed between the wickets to keep adding those all important runs to the total. The final 2 overs for the parents saw Phil and Rosa pick up the bats again and attempt to close out the innings without losing any more wickets. Some accurate bowls by Ralph Wainman

the total. The final 2 overs for the parents saw Phil and Rosa pick up the bats again and attempt to close out the innings without losing any more wickets. Some accurate bowls by Ralph Wainman made this a challenge but Phil was able to make the most of balls arriving down the leg side, hitting several fours. The parents had survived and in doing so set a respectable target of 154 for the children to chase down in just 100 balls.

The children started on 15 runs as they gained 5 runs for every wicket they took whilst fielding. With Tilly and Polly opening the batting the pupil team made a strong start with excellent communication between the girls leading to several quick singles and clever batting. For many parents this was their first experience of bowling at a set of stumps, but they all held their own with many parents even appearing to enjoy the experience. Lottie and Greta were next in to bat. Pippa bowled a mammoth 20 balls with many deliveries the perfect line and length; that said Greta and Lottie were still able to hit several clean strokes to move their team closer to victory. With the parents beginning to tire Henley and Bruno took to the crease. Caroline and Rosa lifted the spirits of the parents team with an impressive spell of bowling keeping the run count down and even earning one or two wickets in the process. We knew that it was all still very much to play for and



decided to bring out our secret weapon Mrs Wainman. Despite telling us she had never bowled before she proceeded to deliver 10 of the most consistent balls that afternoon making life difficult for the pupils fourth batting pair, Ralph and Joel.

Ralph was able to hit several boundaries over the wicket keeper, whilst Joel used his impressive hand eye coordination to launch a number of cover drives straight back over the bowler's head. Both teams could feel the pressure mounting as we entered the final overs. Rex and Rufus came in to bat with the game still hanging in the balance. Both boys hit the ball with expert timing and added valuable runs to the pupil's total. It is important at this point to note

several impressive catches made by Daniel Goncalves virtually on the boundary saving further damage to the parents lead (and credibility). And with that, the match was over, both teams had given it all they could and the game had been played in the very best of spirits with just the right level of competition and compassion. As both teams waited on the boundary to discover their fate, words of encouragement and congratulations were

exchanged. It fell to Mr Martin to announce the winning team.

To everybody's surprise (including Mr Martin and Mrs Hodges) both teams had achieved a total of 154 runs meaning it was a draw! What better way to end a fabulous afternoon of cricket, comradeship and (healthy) competition? On behalf of the parents in JL I would like to extend our thanks to Mr Martin and Mrs Hodges for hosting and umpiring the match so adroitly, and to all the members of staff at Wellesley House who made the Cricket festival possible.

Needless to say the parents are looking forward to competing again next year, but may need a little more practice before venturing into the uncharted territory of 'Hard ball' cricket!