

Match Report

Toulouse vs Eymet - Semi-final of the Siddall's Cup – Sunday 16th July 2007

What was anticipated to be a great day in the short history of the “new” Toulouse Cricket Club (a bit like new Labour... but without a spinner), a first appearance in a semi final of the Siddall's cup, was thrown into doubt just a week before the game, with a request from Eymet to rearrange. After valiant efforts from Skippy and El Presidente, no workable alternative dates could be found, with Eymet therefore sportingly agreeing to honour the fixture, the game was on.

The day was bright, but with a hand drier like wind blowing across the ground for the entire day, about four on the Ephemerides scale “Twigs and branches break off trees”, six, a “fresh breeze” on the Beaufort Scale and “F*?king Windy” on the Beefy scale (for the skipper, normal people please ignore). The game was scheduled to start at 14.00, an hour later than normal, but eventually started at 15.00, once Eymet had managed to wind up their van enough and Joel had pushed his car back from the Massif Central (a good effort all joking aside).

Skippy proved himself the best tosser in the club yet again, and put the opposition into bat, with their formidable opening pair of Horlock and Palmer starting as they had finished last weeks quarter finals, striking any wayward ball firmly into the long stuff. However, an excellent spell from our own “king of the mountains” Christoph (sadly haven't seen that hat for a while) restricted their rate, with his penultimate over including two wickets and his last a maiden (overall stats: 6 overs, 2 wickets for 18 runs, superb hand stinging, finger bending stuff). Their wily lefthander Palmer survived an early scare being dropped after an edge off the bowling of the dotty polka to the bag packing TCC keeper. Things were looking ominous as another mammoth opening pair innings began to build, cometh the hour cometh the Beefster. Nick “no toys left” Brooks was summoned by our tame marsupial to bowl into the gale. A first over which started slowly with a wide and then a four, but finished with the crucial wicket of Horlock for 26 (96 the week before), out toe-before-wicket, a great first over. Better was to come, the very next over Christof got his reward for pace and dogged line and length, bowling Palmer for 10 (130 not out the week before) and Smith for a duck, nothing low or slow about these deliveries!

This trend was to continue with the very long Eymet tail (weakened by fixture glut one suspects), failing to wag, with the rest of the team managing just 15 runs. Philippe (isn't tax wonderful) Fernal and Nick (home alone) Brooks combined to end the Eymet innings with PF taking the last two wickets in his last over. The other highlight of the innings worth mentioning was a well worked run out, with smart fielding by Skippy, proving that short arms, tiny inarticulate fingers and big feet are not draw back when in the field (Dave please note).

Tea was duly declined until later in the day (not a bad decision in hindsight, not one of our best, quiche and Choci cake withstanding. This said it's always possible that lighter items such as crisps, nuts and Fruit Cake were blown away to be deposited on Blagnac as a freak weather incident). Toulouse CC now prepared to take the field for their innings with none daring to think that a place in the final was now within reach.

Two Fags and Babe Huppe opened for the Ville Rose, with the babe quickly calling his shot and slamming the ball back down the track for four in the first over. Our intensions were clear. All too quickly so too were Eymet's, with the babe bowled in the very next over. The Two Fags wicket was the next to fall, stubbed out with the only catch of the day, after a nick to their man behind the stumps for three. Later

lamenting that he had not “made much” that day, it was suggested that he could at least make the tea, which he cheerfully achieved under difficult conditions, “Two Lumps” perhaps from now on.

The boy JT and Father Ted were the next to enter the fray, although big Ted uncharacteristically was soon heading back to the fold up chairs after being out LBW to a ball, he was to admit later after several ciders, he “didn’t know much about”, JT meanwhile had struck a four, a nine iron like chip over cover, pushed a couple of singles and upset players and umpire alike for touching his balls. Yes there is a time and a place for this sort of thing and a cricket match is not that place. Sensibilities restored, following a well received sporting jesture from the opposition, JT was soon to fall to Martin LBW for six. Ricey meanwhile maintained the pattern of scoring with a single and solitary four, which as he put it “offset” his earlier miss field on the boundary, before falling as the third and final victim of the Eymet opener.

With the fall of this fifth wicket TCC were less than halfway to their required total of 69 for the win. Nerves were starting to take hold, particularly amongst the waiting tail, with the Skipton and Brooksdale partnership now at the crease. However, these nerves were quickly dispelled as a flurry of fours a quick singles from both players quickly moved the score towards a winning total. The skipper, keen as always to pressure the fielding side decided to take every run offered, a tactic apparent to our all rounder for the day Nick (top scoring with 23 not out and taking 3 wickets) when he found himself standing at the crease with said skipper at one point. The end came swiftly thereafter with the Eymet opening bowler put to the sword in his last over with 14 runs coming from the bat to draw the scores. Two balls and a single from the next over were enough to see Toulouse through to their first FINAL!

A great day under difficult conditions, well done to all and thanks to our visitors for getting together their side for a second consecutive day and enabling the match to go ahead.

Bring on the mighty Tarn.....