
THE GENT

No.178

August 2023

Pavan Kota and Nilesh Dubey celebrate 156 unbeaten stand against Salix



Record stands in chronological order

Redheads tribute

Pavan's 100th. wicket

Battle royal looms for playing awards

Averages

Match reports

Salix (won by 9 wickets)

Fighting Stars (won by 14 runs)

Hampstead (won by 8 wickets)

Whalers (lost by 2 wickets)

St Anne's Allstars (won by 1 wicket)

Wycombe House (abandoned)

Northfields (won by 3 wickets)

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Record stands

Though the poor bowlers may disagree, record stands are the gold standard of cricket statistics. Note that three records, including both for the first wicket, were set 20 years ago, all at Victoria RG in Surbiton. Gents have a particular aversion to three-figure opening partnerships, contributing just six of the 19 posted to date and none of the top five.

Record partnerships by wicket in date order

1	121	S. Bignell (34) and N. Hubbucks (78) <i>v.</i> Enterprise	Victoria RG	2.5.93
5	152	M. Ashton (102) and M. Hughes (57*) <i>v.</i> London Saints	Victoria RG	15.8.93
1	239*	R. Bulmer (140*) and C. Maddock (87*), London Owls	Victoria RG	5.9.93
4	138	A. Jaques (107) and D. Torbe (65), East Harrow Cheetahs	Beverley Park	4.8.96
6	100	C. Dane (73) and P. Walton (53), West XI	KGF Morden	10.9.00
9	108	H. Hibbert (81) and M. Sciberras (22) <i>v.</i> Virgin Casuals	Shepherd's Bush CC	17.9.00
3	215	R. Heyman (132) and R. Jones (89), Village XI	Old Hamptonians CC	30.7.06
4	162	H. Desai (46) and R. Lall (128) <i>v.</i> London Saints	Old Haberdashers CC	14.8.11
8	109	H. Desai (37) and P. Bocha (76) <i>v.</i> London Saints	LMPF Greenford	12.8.12
10	79*	S. Patel (73*) and R. Pentakota (31*) <i>v.</i> Salix	Imperial College	9.9.12
2	186	J. Elmes (165*) and Murray (56), Northfields	Durstun House	24.5.15
6	212*	J. Small (131*) and S. Kumar (74*) <i>v.</i> St Anne's Allstars	Boston Manor PF	7.6.15
8	65	D. Gaurav (38) and A. Tippell (50*), Ashford	Ashford CC	31.7.16
10	57	R. Bendall (28) and T. Treen (27*), Crossbats	Raynes Park SG	9.9.18
7	140	R. Sudireddy (96) and V. Gulati (66*) <i>v.</i> Kempton	Old Tenisonians CC	2.8.20
7	102*	K. Mitha (77*) and Azhar (32*), Mpingwe	Normandy CC	18.7.21
3	168	P. Kota (160*) and S. Namilikonda (76) <i>v.</i> Squirrels	Old Tenisonians CC	17.7.22
5	139*	C. Taylor (76*) and S. Smith (62*), Clapham In	Old Tenisonians CC	14.8.22
9	72*	N. Farooq (45*) and K. Mehmood (36*), Fighting Stars	Wycombe House CC	28.8.22
2	156*	N. Dubey (62*) and P. Kota (86*) <i>v.</i> Salix	Barn Elms	18.6.23

Other partnerships of 150 or more in date order

3	156	N. Hubbucks (67) and M. Ashton (137*) <i>v.</i> Enterprise	Victoria RG	10.5.92
2	160	Branch (50*), Susman (50*) and Stanier (37), Bedouins	Enville CC	6.8.06
3	166	N. Husain (100*) and P. Kain (87) <i>v.</i> London Saints	Old Tenisonians CC	3.6.07
3	169	S. Giles (34) and A. Griffiths (113), Hale	Hale Common	27.9.09
3	156	N. Hubbucks (67) and M. Ashton (137*) <i>v.</i> Enterprise	Victoria RG	10.5.92
3	161	R. Lall (102) and G. Cloete (97*) <i>v.</i> West XI	Crown Taverners CC	4.9.11
3	163	U. Sanga (100*), A. Ahmed (50*) and N. Chalamalasetti (26*) <i>v.</i> Bricklayer's Arms	Raynes Park SG	27.8.17
1	155	T. Collis (150*) and Street (44), Millfields	Hilly Fields CC	6.5.18

Two great cricketers

Some cricketers have such stature that by any criterion they qualify as great. On 6 August the Redhead brothers scored 139 of the 153 runs off the bat for Northfields, or 91%. Since we first met them in 2016 they have delivered one ton and five fifties. We salute them.

22/5/16	David Redhead 112*	22/5/22	David Redhead 84*, Derrick Redhead 37
28/5/17	David Redhead 24	7/8/22	David Redhead 35
27/5/18	Derrick Redhead 91*	21/5/23	David Redhead 92
11/8/19	David Redhead 67*, Derrick Redhead 28	6/8/23	David Redhead 91, Derrick Redhead 48

Pavan Kota takes his 100th. wicket

When Mr Kota bowled Rehan of Fighting Tigers on the scorching Sunday of 25 June it was his 100th. wicket. He was the twelfth Gent to do this and we congratulate him.

O	M	Runs	Wck.	Avg.	Econ.	SR.
376	33	1,920	100	19.205	5.11	22.56

Salix v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 18 June, Barn Elms. Salix won toss. Sunny then rainy, 27C

Won by 9 wickets

Salix			Gentlemen of West London			
*Sadhra	lbw	b Kota	46	*†Sudireddy	c Balasubram'iam b Ali	0
Henig	c Puli	b Nagpal	19	Dubey	not out	62
†Lamont	c Sudireddy	b Kota	2	Kota	not out	86
Kulasingam	not out		54	Rajana, Krishna, S. Patel, Puli, J. Patel, Chatharaju, Dhatri, Nagpal and D. Reddy dnb		
Vijikaran	st Sudireddy	b Kota	0			
Ali		b Dubey	18			
Ellis	not out		4			
Sarif, Spillane, Balasubramaniam and Unadkat dnb						
Extras	w3 nb4 lb4		11	Extras	w4 nb1 b3	8
Total	5 wickets	30 overs	154	Total	1 wicket	20 overs
FoW: 44, 56, 84, 84, 141				FoW: 0		
Bowling: Chatharaju 4-0-30-0, Dubey 6-0-19-1, Nagpal 6-0-25-1, Kota 6-1-23-3, D. Reddy 1-0-11-0, S. Patel 4-0-19-0, Puli 3-0-23-0				Bowling: Ali 5-0-23-1, Sadhra 2-0-21-0, Balasubramaniam 3-0-20-0, Ellis 3-0-20-0, Unadkat 20-21-0, Henig 2-0-15-0, Kulasingam 2-0-17-0, Spillane 1-0-16-0		

Kota (10 fours and three sixes) and the back to form Dubey (11 fours) came together after one ball and proceeded to make history by adding 156 in just 20 overs, beating the previous wicket record of 144 set by Kota and Namilikonda against Clapham In in 2020. Great credit accrues to captains Sadhra and Sudireddy who wisely reduced the format to 30/30. Rain intensified seconds after Kota drove the winning six and would have caused an abandonment. Thanks also to Gautam Rajana who deputised for the injured Dayakar Reddy. Rajana was a spectator at the adjacent Telugu T20 matches and it was a pleasure to meet Rakesh Patel and Satyapal Pingili again. Indeed, Pingili performed sub fielder duties due to a Gent's late arrival.

Salix took first dig on a slow, true wicket. Henig drove Chatharaju for three successive fours in the third over as 44 came up for the first wicket in 8.4 overs. Puli took a fine low catch off Nagpal to dismiss Henig and Lamont quickly followed caught behind, the first of Kota's three. Sadhra and Kulasingam knocked up 28 in 21 balls as Salix continued at a good lick. After Sadhra fell lbw and young Vijikaran was stumped second ball in his first organised game, Ali kept Kulasingam company in another lively stand, Dubey ending the fun with a bowled.

Kulasingam hit eight fours in his 54* which was surprisingly his first fifty in this long-running series, though he has three centuries elsewhere for Salix. A total of 154-5 was the result, a fair challenge or so it seemed. Sudireddy took his bag of 2023 victims to 14, 11 caught, three stumped and Kota took his tenth wicket of the campaign at an economy rate of a mere 3.3. Spinners are loving the dry strips.

The purchase of ice creams all round by Salix's organiser Tim Collins at half-time was a splendid gesture. At 28 minutes past three with the skies closing in Sudireddy and Dubey strode out. First ball Sudireddy clipped high to square-leg, his second successive golden, 0-1. Dubey and Kota then batted superbly against seam and spin. The odd ball jagged past the bat to give Salix hope but runs came quickly.

At 15-over drinks it was 105-1 and rain was beginning to fall lethargically from the murky sky. The batsmen returned to the middle and blitzed the bowling, 51 coming off five overs to seal the win. Salix did not bowl badly and fielded gamely but there was nothing they could do. When margins are as decisive as this, some players will neither bat nor bowl. The captain is mindful of the efforts people make to play and will give everyone a chance in the weeks to come. In passing, reference must be made to the excellent if sometimes unconventional fielding of the returning Jay Patel, good work sir and great to see you back.

Only six wickets had fallen all day and in the 50 overs bowled, but in the humidity it felt rather more. The match was played in a good spirit and the facilities were fine, if anything slightly better here at Barn Elms Sports Trust than at Barn Elms Sports Centre a few hundred yards away where Putney play. After three defeats, Gents have won five and had one rained off halfway through.

Gentlemen of West London v. Fighting Stars

Sunday 25 June, Wycombe House. Gents won toss. Sunny, 31C

Won by 14 runs

Gentlemen of West London			Fighting Stars				
Dubey		b Adnaan	6	Hasan	c R. Patel	b Kota	55
Krishna	run out		18	Navaid	c Rajana	b R. Patel	55
Kota	not out		143	†Rehan		b Kota	15
*†Sudireddy		b Kashif	30	Hussain	c Nagpal	b R. Patel	94
A. Ahmed	c Navaid	b Aalam	59	Saleem	c Nagpal	b R. Patel	4
Rajana		b Julius	10	*Farooq		b Kumar	4
S. Patel	not out		16	Julius	c Sudireddy	b R. Patel	22
Nagpal, Kumar, Puli and R. Patel	dnb			Adnaan		b Dubey	25
				Kashif	not out		3
				Alem	not out		7
				†Amer	dnb		
Extras	w14 b12 lb9		35	Extras	w12 b4 lb3		19
Total	5 wickets	40 overs	317	Total	8 wickets	40 overs	303
FoW: 9, 53, 93, 231, 242				FoW: 116, 120, 149, 164, 180, 220, 289, 292			
Bowling: Hasan 5-0-27-0, Adnaan 8-1-59-1, Hussain 6-0-35-0, Kashif 8-0-53-1, Farooq 4-0-44-0, Amer 4-0-37-0, Julius 3-0-27-1, Alam 2-0-14-1				Bowling: Krishna 3-0-35-0, Nagpal 6-0-41-0, Dubey 8-0-54-1, Kota 8-0-47-2, Raj Patel 8-0-75-4, Kumar 4-0-20-1, Puli 3-0-24-0			

An outstanding game played on a perfect batting wicket in hot and humid conditions ended narrowly in the Gents' favour when they kept their heads to frustrate an epic run chase by the visitors. Earlier, Kota, well supported by A. Ahmed and Sudireddy, had scored his eighth century (23 fours and three sixes) as the Gents compiled a monumental score, if one that was so nearly not enough. Excluding extras, the day's boundary count was 91, Gents hitting 42 fours and six sixes, Fighting Stars 32 fours and 11 sixes.

There were no signs of the mayhem to come in the first third of the innings. Dubey unluckily played on and Krishna shaped well before being run out following a misunderstanding, 53-2 off 12.3. Sudireddy put his two golden ducks behind him with a fusillade of boundaries before Kashif bowled him, 93-3 off 17.4, Kota quietly poised on 31*. Ahmed was in imperious form in his 59, clearing the tennis courts with his second six. With Kota advancing to 98 in their time together the pair added 138 in 15 overs. Ahmed's dismissal let in Rajana, who twinkled briefly. With Gents 242-5 off 34 Kota had licence to play his shots and with assertive support from S. Patel did just that as 75 runs came off the final six overs. Kota's pull for six into Wood Lane will live long in the memory. The visitors persevered but could not split the pair, taking consolation at tea from a strip that offered no lateral movement and a fast outfield.

For much of their innings Fighting Stars looked like they might do it. Drinks in the first innings were at 20 overs but for some reason this was changed to 15 and 30 in the second. And after 15 overs Hasan and Navaid were doing very well thank you with 116 on the board, the required rate of 8.08 only a flicker above the 7.95 at the start of the innings, and feasible in conditions utterly in favour of the batmen. New bowler Raj Patel then struck first ball after drinks, Navaid skying to mid-on Rajana. One became two when in the next over Hasan pushed a Kota off-break to short mid-on Raj Patel.

Gents then fought well to dampen the scoring with further wickets for Kota, Raj Patel and Kumar and at 30 overs Stars were 194-5, 124 needed off 10. With good support from Julius till he top-edged to the 'keeper and Adnaan the yellow-hatted Munir Hussain took the fight to the hosts. At 35 overs it was 237-6, 81 needed off five. Overs 36 and 37 went for 14 and 16. The first five balls of over 38, bowled by Raj Patel, went for .6466 but going for another six Hussain picked out Nagpal on the long off boundary, an excellent catch. Ice-cool death bowling by Dubey and Nagpal saw 14 come off the final two overs and the win was the Gents'.

Thanks to Biryani King Puli for teas, Bender, Chatharaju and J. Patel for support and sub. fielding, and House's Ali Raza who helped Ahmed put away the ropes. Statisticians relished the day: Gents' highest score at Wycombe House and their fourth-highest ever; highest score by any opponent (previously 284-3 by 12 Angry Men in 2001); most runs in a game (previously 539 Gents v. Millfields in 2022); and the first instance of five batsmen past 50.

Gentlemen of West London v. Hampstead

Sunday 2 July, Wycombe House. Hampstead won toss. Sunny, 20C

Won by 8 wickets

Hampstead		Gentlemen of West London				
Harrison	b Nagpal	32	Gulati not out	81		
Chandy	b Nagpal	3	R. Patel	b Turner	7	
Zuberi	c Gulati	8	Puli	c Gardezi	b Kachchhaya	7
A. Afri	b Nagpal	2	Nagpal	not out	34	
Turner	b Dubey	8	Dutta, Kota, Krishna, A. Ahmed, Chatharaju, Dubey and			
S. Afri	b Nagpal	0	*†Sudireddy dnb			
Khawaja	c R. Patel	8				
Moiz	c Gulati	20				
†Gardezi	c R. Patel	23				
*Povey	c Gulati	20				
Malik	not out	0				
Extras	w8 n2 b4lb1	15	Extras	w7 b6 lb1	14	
Total	All out	29 overs	Total	2 wickets	20.2 overs	143
FoW: 14, 43, 47, 50, 50, 61, 79, 118, 119, 139			FoW: 25, 33			
Bowling: Nagpal 7-0-19-4, Chatharaju 5-0-37-1, Dubey 6-1-11-1, Dutta 6-1-25-1, Krishna 3-1-21-1, Puli 2-0-21-2			Bowling: Kachchhaya 7-0-33-1, Turner 7-0-44-1, Povey 2-0-20-0, Malik 1-0-18-0, Zuberi 2-0-7-0, Moiz 1.2-0-14-0			



Dubey photobombs batting heroes Gulati and Nagpal

Gents beat the famous and very sociable Hampstead on a cool afternoon. Choosing to bat first, the visitors struggled on a seaming pitch under cloud cover with Nagpal returning his maiden four-wicket haul. When the sun emerged at tea, conditions for batting became more favourable and a delightful, unbeaten stand of 110 between the returning Gulati (12 fours and two sixes) and Nagpal (six fours) won the game. Hampstead were weakened by Saturday injuries and could only raise nine, but stout work by Ahmed, not for the first time, got them two House players, Khawaja and Malik. Tea was provided at a Gents home match for the first time since the pandemic. And tasty it was too, though as housewives will confirm prices have gone up lately.

Hampstead were proceeding serenely at 43-1 in the eighth, Nagpal having struck early, and with Harrison scoring freely a big score was looming. Chatharaju then induced Zuberi to clip to mid-wicket Gulati, the first of his three catches. Chaos was now upon us as Nagpal and Dubey ran riot, demolishing Harrison and the middle order.

Khawaja got his head down but at 79-7 a sub-100 score was in the offing. The tail then batted well and boundaries flowed including a six from Gardezi and two from Povey but more sound catching (only one was spilled) saw Hampstead all out with six overs unbowed. The scorer was then vigorously denounced for errors in the book. Quite possibly, but the total of 139 was correct.

The captain decided on an experimental batting order comprising those who hadn't bowled at the top; the norm in the first-class game, but surprisingly difficult to achieve in Sunday cricket with teams of all-rounders, or those who claim to be. Gulati, out for four games, opened with R. Patel which worked fine till Raj missed a straight one. Puli shone briefly before edging an outswinger behind. Thus was birthed the Gulati/Nagpal stand of 110 in just 11.3 overs (69 balls). It was Gulati's third fifty of the season.

Kachchhaya, who had not batted in order to give the young S. Afri a go, and Turner bowled through and posed a number of challenges with their accuracy. But the edge would not come. The change bowling showed variety but the batsmen were now well set, though two catches were dropped. Nagpal took his opportunity and was a revelation while Gulati was pure class. An early finish gave time for some socialising with the Hampstead boys who were very welcome guests. Three players neither batted nor bowled but this will be rectified in time. Given that the Gents have only lost 31 wickets in seven games it has been a challenge for the captain to involve 11 every match.

Whalers v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 9 July, King's House. Whalers won toss. Sunny, 26C

Lost by 2 wickets

Gentlemen of West London			Whalers				
R. Patel	c Johnston	b Kamalanathan	0	Johnston	c Nagpal	b H. Patel	25
Kulasingam	c Kalagond	b Rohan	19	*S. Khan		b Gulati	4
Gulati	c S. Khan	b Kamalanathan	0	Roland	lbw	b Gulati	3
Nagpal	c Raman	b Russell	15	Kalagond		b Gulati	2
*†Sudireddy	run out (S. Khan)		19	†Judd	c Puli	b H. Patel	21
Dutta	c Roland	b Raman	11	Raman		b H. Patel	10
S. Patel	c Johnston	b A. Singh	3	A. Singh	c Puli	b R. Patel	16
Puli	not out		30	Russell	c and	b H. Patel	0
Chatharaju		b A. Singh	3	Rohan	not out		39
Dubey	run out (A. Singh)		16	Kamalanathan	not out		0
H. Patel		b Johnston	0	Ruk	dnb		
Extras	w5 nb3 b2		10	Extras	w5 nb2 b2		9
Total	All out	29.5 overs	126	Total	8 wickets	29.3 overs	129
FoW: 6, 6, 36, 48, 69, 72, 81, 85, 126, 126				FoW: 8, 16, 32, 59, 60, 77, 77, 113			
Bowling: Kalagond 3-0-20-0, Kamalanathan 4-1-9-2, Rohan 5-2-21-2, Russell 4-0-18-1, A. Singh 5-3-10-2, Raman 4-0-21-1, Johnston 2.5-0-16-1, S. Khan 2-0-9-0				Bowling: Gulati 7-0-15-3, Dubey 5-0-22-0, H. Patel 7-0-27-4, Chatharaju 2-0-16-0, Kulasingam 4-0-9-0, R. Patel 2.3-0-16-1, Nagpal 2-0-22-0			

Confident catching allied to brave batting by the injured Rohan earned Whalers a narrow but deserved maiden win in this series, thus ending a promising run of eight unbeaten games. The Gents batted poorly for the most part, being on the back foot from the second over when two wickets fell in three balls. When not giving catching practice – eleven were offered and six taken – they were running each other out. Several batsmen got a start but only Puli, who first ball teed off for the day's only six, passed 20. The bowlers came near to saving the day but once Rohan brought out his cover drive the game slipped away in a flurry of boundaries. With rain never far away it was a weekend of low scores. On the Saturday Enfield had gritted their way to 169-9 dec. against Brentham in MCCL Div. 2 before skittling them for 30 in 19 overs.

Suhaib Khan was happy to win the toss and bowl on a damp pitch. Sudireddy would have done the same. After a Kulasingam four R. Patel drove the off-spinner Kamalanathan to mid-off, to be followed by Gulati who picked out cover, a neat one-handed catch. Kulasingam applied himself for 13 overs, and Nagpal and Sudireddy began well, but none could go on. Dutta edged two fours to bring up a welcome double-figure score in only his second innings. S. Patel fell to a diving right-handed slip catch and Dubey looked confident in the day's highest stand before becoming the second run out victim of the innings. In his best innings of the campaign Puli hit three fours to set alongside his maximum before H. Patel played on first ball. The total of 126 looked light.

Rigorous analysis reveals the continuing horror of the 2023 Gents' opening stands: 3, 0, 7, 13, 3, 6, 0, 0, 9, 25 and 6. In eleven games, eleven different batsmen have had a go, contributing a total of 72 runs at an average of 6.5, statistics that show room for improvement. For two openers it was their only appearance, their subsequent absence being put down to mental trauma.

Players courageously attempted the vegan tea and play resumed at twenty to four. Two Whalers were injured and Gents were happy to supply subs. It was a well-balanced Gents attack, Gulati's seven-over spell productive as the hosts fell to 32-3. H. Patel had Johnston courtesy of a sharp catch by cover Nagpal then, assisted by long on Puli, ran through the middle order to take his personal 2023 haul to an impressive 17, five ahead of Kota. Whalers were 77-7 and no wise judge could have split the teams.

Enter the tall Rohan, hobbling from his pulled hamstring, accompanied by a runner correctly allowed by Sudireddy, who chose pace to try to finish off the game. But the faster the ball emerged from the hands of R. Patel and Nagpal the faster it was whacked to the boundary. The comedy three-way run out forecast by Whalers never came and though R. Patel induced another fine Puli catch in the deep to see off A. Singh, Rohan did the needful with poise and class. Nobody ever said Sunday cricket is predictable: a week before Whalers had scored 252 batting first against Bricklayer's Arms but lost.

St Anne's Allstars v. Gentlemen of West London

Sunday 16 July, Mill Hill Village. St Anne's Allstars won toss. Cloudy, 21C

Won by 1 wicket

St Anne's Allstars		Gentlemen of West London				
*Cresswell	c Puli	b Parvathaneni	4	Chatharaju	b Deveraj	21
Dindyal	lbw	b Dubey	20	H. Patel	b Deverathippa	25
Deveraj (1)	c R. Patel	b Parvathaneni	0	Kota	c Grobler	6
Bess	c Kota	b Gulati	5	*†Sudireddy	c Raghavendra	4
†Grobler	run out (Parvathaneni)		48	Puli	not out	57
Deverathippa	c R. Patel	b H. Patel	2	R. Patel	b Deverathippa	0
Raghavendra	st Sudireddy	b H. Patel	66	S. Patel	c Deveraj	28
Raj	c Puli	b Kota	14	Gulati	lbw	0
Arnott	not out		5	Parvathaneni	c Deverathippa	24
Deveraj (2)		b Dubey	6	Dubey	not out	1
Extras	w6 b4 lb2		12	Extras	w9 nb1 b7	17
Total	All out	34.4 overs	182	Total	8 wickets	32.3 overs

FoW: 25, 26, 32, 42, 56, 144, 162, 175, 182

Bowling: S. Patel 5-1-21-0, Dubey 6.4-2-17-2, Gulati 4-0-10-1, Parvathaneni 4-0-15-2, H. Patel 7-0-52-2, R. Patel 4-0-42-0, Kota 4-0-19-1

FoW: 28, 36, 57, 75, 75, 141, 141, 178

Bowling: Deveraj 6.3-1-37-3, Arnott 7-1-19-0, Dindyal 4-0-18-0, Deverathippa 7-1-36-3, Raghavendra 6-0-37-2, Raj 2-0-29-0

Gents shaded a gripping, tense contest, the best of the season and one that both sides could justly claim to have done enough to win. The game was played hard and the presence of a number of assertive characters in both teams spiced up the atmosphere a treat, though it fell short, just, of riotous assembly. Puli's 57* off 54 balls (ten fours) was technically excellent and H. Patel produced his best innings since 2019, anchoring the visitors' reply for 18 overs but still finding time to launch a six into the neighbouring county (the stream here is part of the Middlesex/Hertfordshire county boundary). The destructive hitting of Ragavendra (66 off 33 with nine fours and three sixes) will also live long in the memory. Both batsmen were dropped, Puli on 28 and Ragavendra on 4, but deserved their good fortune.

Gents were dominant before drinks in the first innings, holding their catches as St Anne's were reduced to 56-5 in the nineteenth over, Dubey and the returning Parvathaneni being particularly impressive. Dindyal impressed briefly before he departed, unhappy with his lbw. Ragavendra and Grobler then ran riot, adding 88 off a mere 58 balls. Sudireddy finally broke the stand with his fourth stumping of 2023 to give H. Patel his second wicket and when a smart 60-yard throw into the 'keeper from Parvathaneni ran out Grobler Gents had restored parity. The innings closed quietly.

The visitors had to bat consistently and in the main did so with five past 20, though two suffered golden ducks, R. Patel's lbw being debriefed by his team-mates the second he trudged back, spectacularly bad timing. After early fireworks from the back-to-form Chatharaju, Kota feathered to Grobler. It was at this point that the tension ratched up. Kota stood his ground for a few seconds, trying to process his dismissal, before S. Patel raised the finger. Kota was given a royal send off by Arnott ('Is that the way you play your cricket, mate?') and would later while umpiring suffer Dindyal's volubly contesting a wide, the match being delayed for five minutes till Cresswell stepped in, several Gents also getting hot under the collar. All the fun of the fair then, but as S. Patel observed a bit of edge hurts nobody.

H. Patel was very secure but fell soon after Sudireddy was well held, R. Patel falling next ball: 75-5 off 18, 108 needed at 6.35. Puli had started briskly but needed support. S. Patel provided it with 28 off 16, including a six. A stand of 66 in 50 was the splendid result which ensured that run rate would no longer be a problem. The dismissal of Gulati next ball did not change that: bat the overs and Gents would win.

Parvathaneni was sound, hitting three fours over the fast outfield. He was caught at slip with five runs needed. Enter Dubey who has been in this position before and not found wanting. He kept his head as victory was gained with fifteen balls remaining. Though sometimes tetchy, it had been a good game much enjoyed by the 19 participants and spectators and post-match relations were cordial. Analysis showed that seven Gents returned from 2022 and three St Anne's, who pitched up two short for the third successive year. Gents were also a man down here due to a rare no show but lent a fielder and allowed Deveraj to bat twice. Thanks are given to the hosts for booking a good facility.

Gentlemen of West London v. Wycombe House

Sunday 30 July, Wycombe House. Gent won toss. Showery, 20C

Abandoned

Wycombe House		Gentlemen of West London	
Waheed		b Chatharaju	2
S. Chaudhry	c Sudireddy	b Kota	19
A. Doshi	c Sudireddy	b Kota	10
Asad	lbw	b H. Patel	22
*A. Ahmed		b Chatharaju	1
A. Chaudhry	c Sudireddy	b Chatharaju	19
Metha	not out		22
†Khawaja	not out		11
Extras			-
Total	6 wickets	27.1 overs	106

FoW: 19, 31, 31, 34, 56, 70
Bowling: Kota 6-1-24-2, Dubey 4-1-8-0, Chatharaju 6-0-24-3, H. Patel 6-0-18-1, S. Patel 3-0-8-0, Dutta 2.1-0-21-0

What might have been a good game in perfect bowling conditions was abandoned due to rain. Showers drove the players from the field at 2.45pm. Tea was taken and play resumed at 3.24pm but eight minutes later it became impossible to continue in the squalls and the captains shook hands. Though the Gents dominated the early overs and bowled well, Metha and Khawaja had put up an impressive 36 off 38 balls at the cessation.

After studying the rain radar the captains wisely reduced the format to 30/30. Chatharaju produced an excellent spell of swing bowling under the low cloud cover, his three including captain of House 3s Mr Ahmed, who ensured as ever that Gents were offered a warm welcome. His Saturday boys sit proudly second in the league. Kota opened the bowling for the first time and got two. H. Patel went to 20 wickets with a heartily-appealed lbw. Sudireddy now has 19 dismissals, five shy of his own club record set in 2022. Two more catches and he will have the season's record. But we will need better weather first. We are on course for the worst season for rain losses ever.

Gents rained off matches 2014-2023

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Cancelled	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-
Abandoned	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Cancelled	-	1	2	3	-	-	1	-	2	4
Abandoned	3	2	2	1	2	-	1	-	1	1
Total	3	3	4	4	2	-	2	-	3	5

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cancelled	2	-	1	1	4	-	3	2	1	3
Abandoned	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	1	-	-
Total	2	-	1	4	4	-	4	3	1	3

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023				
Cancelled	2	1	-	5	1	3				
Abandoned	-	-	-	3	-	2				
Total	2	1	-	8	1	5				

At the time of writing (10 August), the Middlesex Premier League has lost 23% of its games to the weather. The national average is 25%. One county has miraculously lost only 9%, Northamptonshire. Does the county where Ken Toft resides have its own microclimate?

Gentlemen of West London v. Northfields

Sunday 6 August, Dundonald RG. Toss agreed. Cloudy, 19C

Won by 3 wickets

Northfields			Gentlemen of West London				
†Derrick Redhead	c Kota	b Dubey	48	Dubey	lbw	b Shaz	10
Yash		b Gulati	0	Chatharaju	c Afridi	b Shaz	9
Jaz	lbw	b Gulati	0	*†Sudireddy		b Sharif	45
*David Redhead	lbw	b Kumar	91	Gulati	c Akshit	b Abz	25
Afridi	c Kulasingam	b Kota	1	Dutta	c ?	b Abz	1
Tony	run out (Chatharaju)		3	Kota		b Yash	43
Akshit	not out		2	Puli		b Sharif	0
Kent	lbw	b Kumar	0	Kumar	not out		10
Abz	c Sudireddy	b Gulati	6	Kulasingam	not out		13
Shaz	c Dubey	b Gulati	0	J. Patel and H. Patel	dnb		
Sharif	c H. Patel	b Kumar	2				
Extras	w6 b1 b1		8	Extras	w1 nb1 b4 lb1		7
Total	All out	33.4 overs	161	Total	7 wickets	29.2 overs	163
FoW: 7, 7, 102, 109, 135, 146, 146, 156, 156, 161				FoW: 20, 30, 74, 78, 118, 118, 140			
Bowling: Gulati 6-0-18-4, Kulasingam 6-1-20-0, Chatharaju 6-0-35-0, H. Patel 4-0-26-0, Kota 5-0-26-1, Dubey 5-1-31-1, Kumar 1.4-0-4-3				Bowling: Sharif 7-1-29-2, Shaz 7-0-32-2, Kent 6-0-44-0, Abz 4-0-13-2, Jas 2-0-18-0, David Redhead 1-0-3-0, Yash 1.2-0-11-1, Afridi 1-0-8-0			

With the weather Gods on the side of cricket the Gents were victorious in a tense and exciting game against good friends Northfields, **writes Hemin Patel**. After heavy rain on Saturday the hosts were expecting the worst but thankfully the game went ahead on what looked like a slow outfield. The actual pitch was very green, Centre Court at Wimbledon would have been proud to produce something like that and it looked like it would be difficult to bat on. After an agreed toss (six of the Northfields players were extremely late, to the disgust of the Redhead brothers) Gents were to field first.

Bobby and CK opened the bowling and kept things tight and bowled good lines. Bobby then got into his groove taking two wickets in two balls. The first to fall was Yash who was clean bowled and he followed up by taking Jaz lb. Although Gents were happy this brought the Redhead brothers to the crease and we knew that taking their wickets was vital. Bobby had other ideas through and decided to drop David off a simple caught and bowled, which proved costly. Derrick and David continued to bat sensibly, putting away the bad balls. Leading wicket taker Hemin Patel could not induce the false shot and after four overs of poor bowling he was finally replaced.

Ranjith and Pavan bowled well but the batsmen started to hit the gaps and build a steady partnership, taking a few more risks. Gents superstar Nilesh was then introduced and finally took the wicket of Derrick who finished on 48 with a clean sharp catch from Pavan. Pavan, who realised that the pitch was not spinning, bowled a full toss to Afridi who nailed it straight to CK at cow corner: Gents were back in the game. Sumit then came into the attack and immediately took the wicket of the dangerous David lbw following an aggressive appeal and shout of 'Ye plumb hai' and then taking Kent lbw the very next ball. Ranjith made up for dropping a catch by smartly recovering and throwing it in to run out Tony. The rest of the line-up went quickly with Sumit taking the final wicket, a smart catch from Hemin.

The host went into bat full of confidence with Nilesh and Ranjith opening the innings, both in an aggressive mood hitting boundaries. Nilesh was dismissed lbw first and after Ranjith hit Shaz for two fours he was caught Afridi, a brilliant one-handed catch. The skipper, self-promoted to No.3 and Bobby were at the crease. Both batted well with singles and fours coming easily. After Bobby tried to run out Ratti by ball watching instead of listening to the call, he was dismissed, Ani following soon after. Pavan and Ratti settled things down and took the bowlers on, scoring freely. Ratti and Chandra were dismissed in successive balls and Pavan was bowled by slow leg-spinner Yash. Sumit and CK closed out the innings with great batting and temperament and the Gents won the game by three wickets.

This was another great game and a strong win for the Gents. The captain gave the man of the match to Bobby but after a democratic vote in the pub it was decided that Pavan and Sumit would share the trophy.

Averages

Player (debut*)	M.	Inn.	NO	Runs	Avg.	Ct./St.	O	M	Runs	Wck.	Avg.	Econ.	SR.
Ahmed A	4	2	-	82	41.00	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chatharaju	14	10	-	94	9.40	2	64	4	304	12	25.33	4.75	32.00
Dhatric *	3	2	1	19	19.00	-	11	3	32	2	16.00	2.91	33.00
Dubey	14	10	2	142	17.75	1	71.4	5	316	11	28.73	4.41	39.09
Dutta *	7	3	-	12	4.00	1	15.2	1	76	4	19.00	4.96	23.00
Gulati	9	8	3	324	64.80	6	40	4	128	11	11.64	3.20	21.82
Kota	12	9	3	498	83.00	4	52	5	226	16	14.13	4.35	19.50
Krishna	8	5	1	42	10.50	1	18.1	2	82	5	16.40	4.51	21.80
Kulasingam	3	3	1	46	23.00	1	17	2	45	1	45.00	2.65	102.00
Kumar	5	3	1	70	35.00	-	6.4	0	37	4	9.25	5.55	10.00
Nagpal	9	4	1	53	17.67	3	43.5	2	195	9	21.67	4.45	29.22
Parvatheni	2	2	-	33	16.50	-	5	0	21	2	10.50	4.20	15.00
Patel H	9	6	-	46	7.67	2	52	1	238	20	11.90	4.58	15.60
Patel J	5	2	-	1	0.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Patel R	10	6	2	30	7.50	6	41.3	2	240	8	30.00	5.78	31.13
Patel S	13	10	4	90	15.00	-	38	2	184	5	36.80	4.84	45.60
Puli	14	9	3	113	18.83	6	12.1	0	90	4	22.50	7.40	18.25
Rajana *	2	1	-	10	10.00	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reddy D *	3	-	-	-	-	1	10	0	70	1	70.00	7.00	60.00
Sudireddy	15	11	-	219	19.91	16/4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

One match only: Francis 1/1/1/2, Garige R * 1/1/-/18, 4-0-10-0, Ismail * 1/-/-/-, Joshi 1/-/-/-

2023 in numbers

Highest score for 317-5 *n.* Fighting Stars, **Highest score against** 303-8 by Fighting Stars

Lowest score for 72 *n.* Merton Hawks, **Lowest score against** 84 by John Buckner

100 partnerships for	100 partnerships against
156* Dubey (62*) and Kota (86*) <i>n.</i> Salix (2nd. wicket record) 138 Kota (143*) and A. Ahmed (59) <i>n.</i> Fighting Stars (4th. wicket) 111* Kota (126*) and S. Patel (28*) <i>n.</i> Putney (6th. wicket) 110* Gulati (81*) and Nagpal (34*) <i>n.</i> Hampstead (3rd. wicket)	116 Hasan (55) and Navaid (55) (Fighting Stars) (1st. wicket) 102 Lloyd (56) and Wishart (47) (Putney) (3rd. wicket)
50s/100s for (M = first 50 or 100)	50s/100s against
Kota 143* <i>n.</i> Fighting Stars Kota 126* <i>n.</i> Putney Gulati 91 <i>n.</i> Redbourn Kota 86* <i>n.</i> Salix Gulati 81* <i>n.</i> Hampstead Dubey 62* <i>n.</i> Salix Puli 57* <i>n.</i> St Anne's Allstars Gulati 55 <i>n.</i> Northfields	94 Hussain (Fighting Stars) 92 Derrick Redhead (Northfields) 91 David Redhead (Northfields) 70 D. Roe (Redbourn) 66 Ragavendra (St Anne's Allstars) 56 Lloyd (Putney) 55 Hasan (Fighting Stars) 55 Navaid (Fighting Stars) 54 Kulasingam (Salix)
4-wicket returns for (M = first 4 wickets return, D = debut)	4-wicket returns against
5-25 H. Patel <i>n.</i> Merton Hawks 4-18 Gulati <i>n.</i> Northfields 4-19 Nagpal <i>n.</i> Hampstead 4-27 H. Patel <i>n.</i> Whalers 4-31 Kota <i>n.</i> Putney 4-34 H. Patel <i>n.</i> London Itinerants 4-75 Raj Patel <i>n.</i> Fighting Stars	4-14 Lawrence (Crossbats) 4-25 Fisher (London Itinerants)

Sixes (23): 7 Kota, 5 Gulati, 3 Sudireddy, 2 A. Ahmed, Garige 1 Chatharaju, H. Patel, S. Patel, Puli

Run outs of opponents (7): 3 Puli 1 Chatharaju, Dubey, Kota, Parvatheni

All to play for

There are eight games left, six at home and two in Kent. So far in 2023 we've had a record stand, S. Patel has passed 7,000 runs, Kota has passed 100 wickets and Sudireddy has joined the 100 Club. H. Patel needs seven wickets for his 400, Sudireddy needs one catch to eclipse Namilikonda's club record of 16 set in 2019, and five dismissals to beat his own record of 24 set in 2022. He has gone up three places to second in the all-time catches list behind S. Patel, who looks destined never to take another one unless the captain moves him in from his isolated boundary patrol duties, or he snaffles a c&b. Without prejudicing the jury, the playing awards look, in this hard-fought, low-scoring season, to be open.

Your committee will meet before the end of the season to discuss the 2024 season and present its findings at the AGM, the principal matters as usual being whom we play and where we play. Are members happy with the Wycombe House/LB Merton split? Are there any teams you'd rather not play, or like added or reinstated?