

## **Almondbury Wes B v Nortonthorpe A (19/07/08)**

Nortonthorpe CC 1<sup>st</sup> XI travelled to Almondbury Wesleyans last Saturday in Section B of the Arrow Central Cricket League. North Star Tyres kindly sponsored the match ball for Nortonthorpe.

Having lost the toss, Nortonthorpe were asked to bat on an inevitably damp wicket following the continuing inclement weather we have been having. After being bowled out for around 100 in the past 2 weeks, the batsmen were looking to make a solid start and keep wickets in hand, which they succeeded in doing despite the lively wicket, as George Parkes (8) was the only wicket to fall as 41 runs were scored in the first 20 overs.

Scoring was a bit slower than desired, not helped by some wayward bowling, much of which was unplayable as a plethora of wides were not given. When Steve Swap fell for just 4 after adding 31 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> wicket with Simon Parton, new batsman Ash Cockhill clearly had plans to get the scoreboard moving a bit quicker. He scored 39, including two 6's and five 4's in a 3<sup>rd</sup> wicket partnership of 65 in just 12 overs, and at 106-3 off 33 a good platform had been laid for the middle and lower order to push the score up towards 180, but when Simon Parton went for 47 in the next over two new batsmen were at the crease.

The new batsmen, Pete Spark & Simon Haigh, added just 15 in the next 5 overs, but then unleashed some boundary shots including a monster 6 from Haigh off Burns, to rattle up 35 in the next 3 before both were dismissed off the bowling of A Crawshaw for 20 and 28 respectively. Paul England and Chris Sansom embarked upon some crazy running right at the death to boost the innings score to 178-7 at the close, with Z.Stanger and Crawshaw each taking 2 wickets for Wesleyans.

In reply, Almondbury were never really at the races as Paul Wilkinson's swing bowling, aided by the wind, was virtually unplayable as he took 2 for 3 in his first 5 overs with two superb inswinging deliveries that had the middle stump out of the ground each time. Opening bowling partner Ray Cosgrove also bagged 2 wickets early on and at 9 for 4 off 8 overs it seemed like it was just a matter of time before Nortonthorpe picked up the 6 points and could enjoy the after match sausage sandwiches.

However, it took another 22 overs before victory was achieved, as Z.Stanger's belligerent 54, including three 6's and seven 4's delayed the inevitable, aided by the stickability of M.Burns who hung in there with him for 9 overs to score 5. With Stanger gone that was it really and Almondbury were dismissed pretty soon after for just 86, with Parton (3-12) and Wilkinson (3-35) collecting most of the wickets. The win keeps Nortonthorpe hot on the heels of leaders Denby Grange who also collected maximum points on the day.