

Phoenix 2nd XI at Mullingar 03/07/11

After a blank June the 2nd XI resumed action with a league fixture at Mullingar. Chris Cavanagh found a slot for Aaron Joseph, called up Eoin Cleere for his 2nd XI debut and settled on Raj Gopal behind the stumps. Phoenix arrived at the ground at 11.20 and repaired to the local Centra to take on some fuel. Back at the ground Phoenix won the toss and chose to bat first. The order was Luke Savage, M D Masud Ahmed, David Ford, Asim Nazir, Vish Vaidyanathan, Stephen Neill, Amit Battan, Chris Cavanagh, Eoin Cleere, Raj Gopal, Aaron Joseph.

Savage and Masud Ahmed got the innings off to a useful start. Irfan Haider and M Sharma were the opening pair although O'Donnell replaced Haider after just 3 overs. Masud's fluent hitting impressed the home scorer who wondered if he would make a century. The stand had reached 58 when this possibility was ruled out after Field took a catch off O'Neill's bowling. Ford was keen to get on with it and had overtaken Savage by the time the Hampshire man became O'Neill's second victim with Field again taking the catch. Ford's eagerness proved his downfall when Nazir refused to attempt a quick single and the Dubliner was unable to get back to where he started from. The fall of Nazir for 23 and Neill for 0 – both to O'Neill - brought Vaidyanathan and Battan together at 124 for 5. Ejaz conceded 39 runs in 4 overs while Jaffer ended with a better economy rate but the batsmen took the score to 213 with the biggest stand of the innings. Vaidyanathan fell on 56 and some quick hitting with the skipper followed for Battan before he was out on 55. Cavanagh made a brisk 15 and with Gopal and Joseph failing to get off the mark it was Cleere who was undefeated on 5 as the innings closed three balls early on 260.

Condell and Ryan began the chase positively against Cavanagh and Joseph and the 50 partnership came up after 8.4 overs. Masud made the first inroad for Phoenix when he had Condell caught by Gopal but Haider and Ryan continued to attack against Masud, briefly against Nazir and then Vaidyanathan and the hosts had reached 121 for 1 when Vaidyanathan had Ryan caught by Battan for 74. Within a short space of time Vaidyanathan had picked up both Haiders and Neill bowled Ejaz to leave Mullingar on 141 for 5 but still only in the 23rd over. Lindsay and O'Neill now began a slow and steady stand which saw the 150 mark reached after 26 overs and the 200 mark and O'Neill's 50 in the 40th over. The hosts needed 55 runs from the last 10 overs with 5 wickets in hand. Cavanagh made the crucial breakthrough for Phoenix in his final over when O'Neill was given out lbw. The big Scot found the batsman's reaction to the decision unsporting although the dismissal probably ended Mullingar's hopes of victory. Lindsay hit out and was caught by Ford off Masud, Neill caught and bowled both Sharma and O'Donnell and Masud clean bowled Field to secure victory for Phoenix by 26 runs.

Phoenix batting: A good team effort with 50s for Vaidyanathan and Battan

Phoenix bowling: Vaidyanathan 3-38, Masud 3-41, Neill 3-44, Cavanagh 1-43