

My Dear Friends,

Back into the season with gusto. The Skip won the toss and elected to bat on an overcast but dry day. Odie and Possum put on a very solid 88 run opening stand. Possum was back to his resolute and explosive self, plundering sixes and fours to great effect. His leg side hitting was first rate. Odie was solid in defence and played some lovely hooks in his 19. We all thought the ball that dismissed him was headed for a six but it fell a foot short. Possum was out to a great catch of a hard hit off drive. Yes he hit the ball in the air against the wind and yes the old Skip counselled against such shots but it was a great knock and no doubt the Australian Cricket devil's number of 87 contributed to his demise. SOK came in and looked set to make a big one until he was out LBW for 21 with 2 sixes and a four. Gauch came in at second drop and was on from the first ball. His 60 combined many boundaries with deft placement and he and the Possum even ran several twos. POK outscored his older brother by two runs and looked set for a big one before he too was out chasing quick runs. The Surgeon was also in fine touch and would've made more but for his sacrificing his wicket for the team. Normie and Juka took us to our total of 266 which included a failure by Deano to take an easy second run to keep the strike and following it with a reverse sweep for 4. Possum and Gauch certainly took the batting honours.

Ascot Vale never looked like making the runs. Particularly after KG took the first two wickets with his first two balls including a juggled caught and bowled which thankfully didn't result in a trip to the Royal Melbourne. He bowled 5 wily overs and finished with 3 for 24. Tong was very solid taking 1 for 18 off 5 and POK was fast and accurate to get 1 for 16 off 6 overs. The Old Skip chimed in for 2 for 14 off 7 overs and Richard Cooney in his MFS debut took to final wicket to have them all out for 89. The fielding was very solid with particular mention of Odie and Surgeon Sam who were exceptional and saved many runs. Odie took a catch and Sam effected a run out with SOK's help. The old Skip also swooped on a well struck leg glance and got it back to Sean for another run out. SOK filled in for the absent keeper from Prague and did a great job of full body keeping. He took two catches and was very safe. He too suffered from buzzing in the ears but had recovered by the time he and POK dropped in for Church at Queenscliff last night. When I left the pub on Saturday SOK was making a play to be the Keeper permanently but last night his aching body told him to return to the field.

We play Burnside this Saturday and will need to win to keep top spot.

Cheers
Brett