

four of the best



1. Marshalswick Baptist Free Church v Waltham Chase Methodist Church

Match played at Ashridge Management College on Saturday 19th August 2000.

Another impressive all-round display by every member of the Marshalswick side saw the Hampshire church cricket champions humbled in this semi-final of the National Christian Cricket Cup.

In the end, it was Colin Martin's diving catch off his own bowling to dismiss the Waltham Chase captain – and Hampshire second XI player – Phil Baldock that was the turning point in the match. Up to that point, honours had been roughly even – despite the Hampshire team being two players short and, so, having 'borrowed' Jo Gill from Marshalswick. Jo's vigorous and effective fielding saved a great many runs and brought a wry smile or two to the Marshalswick side.

Having won the toss, Baldock asked Marshalswick to bat on a damp pitch that was rapidly drying in the hot sun. Adrian Gardner and Branston Jones made a measured start, scoring at four runs an over before Gardner edged a ball from his pads onto his stumps. Andy Harris joined Jones and – after half a dozen 'dot' balls – announced his presence at the crease with a boundary. A risky single saw Jones run out – well short of his ground – by a fast, direct throw from Bill Gates, whereupon Harris, able aided by David Boxer, took command. His innings comprised ten 'fours' and a 'six' and lasted long enough to see three batsmen depart at the other end. Colin Martin, with help from Tom Barnard and,

in the last over, Arthur Bishop, saw Marshalswick to only two runs short of 150 from their allotted 25 overs.

After the delights of a sumptuous 'Ashridge tea', Harris opened the bowling for the forest end. At the start of his second over, he got the ball through Matthews' defence to send the middle stump cartwheeling out of the ground. Baldock joined Gates at the wicket and immediately opened his account. Facing only five balls, he amassed seven runs while playing himself in. The sixth delivery – from Martin – Baldock drove straight, hard and low. Martin, diving to his left, held a catch that must have 'stung' and Baldock was on his way.

Not to be outdone, Harris has Chase caught by Boxer at silly mid off in the next over and Waltham Chase were 22 for 3 in only the fifth over. Things got worse in the 11th over, when Boxer took two wickets in two balls. First, Harris returned the compliment, taking a catch at silly mid off, and then Bullard – hooking to square leg – was surprised to see Bob Little move with some agility from mid-wicket to take a well judged, running catch.

Mike Tizzard forgot to ground his bat when, in going for a quick run in Boxer's next over, he failed to beat Bob Little's throw to Boxer at the stumps at the forest end. When Boxer disposed of Morgan three balls later, Waltham Chase had scored 44 runs from 13 overs and lost seven of their nine wickets. The situation looked hopeless.

Gates decided to take the fight to the bowlers and, taking a risk, clubbed accurate deliveries from Dennis Barnard for two fours. But he was unable to keep the strike for the next over. Bob Little called up leg spinner Aneurin Little to bowl from the forest end. Conventional leg breaks brought him a wicket with both his first and fourth balls – and Marshalswick advanced to the first Final of the National Christian Cricket Cup competition.

Scorecard

Marshalswick

A Gardner (+) b Tizzard	... 7
B Jones run out (Gates)	... 17
A Harris c Baldock b Tizzard	... 70
D Boxer b Baldock	... 20
RB Little (*) lbw b Baldock	... 0
D Barnard c Baldock b Gates	... 4
C Martin not out	... 14
TW Barnard c Bullard b Chase	... 5
A Bishop not out	... 2
Extras b3, lb4, w1, nb1	... 9
Total (for 7 wkts, off 25 overs)	...148

Did not bat: ARH Little, J Gill.

Fall of wkts: 1-20; 2-34; 3-70; 4-70; 5-92; 6-137; 7-146.

Bowling: Tizzard 5-1-22-2; Morgan 1-0-6-0; Chase 5-0-22-1; Gates 5-0-41-1; Baldock 5-0-31-2; S Freemantle 4-0-1-9-0.

Waltham Chase

Rev W Gates not out	...38
C Matthews b Harris	... 4
P Baldock (*) c&b Martin	... 7
M Chase c Boxer b Harris	... 0
S Freemantle c Harris b Boxer	... 2
N Bullard (+) c RB Little b Boxer	... 0
M Tizzard run out (RBLittle/Boxer)	... 0
A Morgan b Boxer	... 0
N Freemantle (Ms) c Boxer b ARH Little	... 0
J Gill (Ms) c Martin b ARH Little	... 0
Extras w1	... 1
Total (off 14.4 overs)	...52

Fall of wkts: 1-10; 2-21; 3-22; 4-39; 5-39; 6-43; 7-44; 8-52; 9-52.

Bowling: Harris 3-0-11-2; Martin 4-0-16-1; Boxer 4-2-10-3; D Barnard 3-0-15-0; ARH Little 0.4-0-0-2.

Toss won by: Waltham Chase

Scorer: The Rev Robin Davies

Result: Marshalswick won by 96 runs.

Source: Marshalswick Baptist Free Church Cricket Yearbook 2001



Former Kent & England wicketkeeper Alan Knott (standing, fifth from left) with the Rev Andrew Wingfield Digby (standing, fourth from left) pictured with members of the Marshalswick Baptist Free Church cricket team when they visited the church in November 1996.

2. Marshalswick Baptist Free Church v Berkhamsted Baptist Church

Match played at Sandringham School, Marshalswick, on Saturday 19th July 1997.

Another exceptionally hot and sunny afternoon was the setting for Marshalswick's second match within a week where fortunes fluctuated continually. Marshalswick held their collective nerve to come from behind and win by a flatteringly large margin of 28 runs when, not having taken a wicket in the first 15 overs of the Berkhamsted innings, all ten Berkhamsted wickets then fell for ten runs in just 49 balls.

Up to the point where Bob Little squeezed a fast off-cutter between Sanders' bat and pad – and repeated the delivery two balls later to send back the other opening batsman, Norman, Berkhamsted looked to be well in control of the match at 70 for no wicket. They had plenty of wickets in hand and had almost ten overs in which to score the 39 runs required for victory.

But, having made the initial breakthrough, Little found an extra yard of pace to dismiss J Lambert and Berkhamsted's captain, Anderson. Brian Midwinter chipped in with two wickets in his only over and, with David Boxer keeping up the pressure from the Sandringham School end after Little's spell ended, it was left to Rhys Little to wrap up the victory with his first – and last – ball of the match. Earlier, the one ball that Rhys had received as a batsman was significant too. It was the ball that provided Beddall with his

hat trick and crowned the best bowling performance ever by any bowler against Marshalswick.

Having been asked to bat first, Marshalswick began their innings warily against hostile bowling from Beddall and Berkhamsted's minister, James Neve. Neve's third – and last – over of the match proved unfortunate for both batsman (Harden) and bowler. The second delivery – a beamer – hit Harden on the head, drawing blood, and raced away for four leg byes. The next delivery, bowled after a break for on-field first aid, hit both Harden and the stumps but did not dislodge a bail. This was followed by another beamer – another no ball – which hit Harden's off stump. Despite feeling dazed, Harden continued his valuable innings, providing – with David Boxer and, later, Mark Davies – the backbone of the Marshalswick innings.

Despite tight bowling from Marshalswick which prevented the batsmen from getting in front of the asking rate of 4.3 runs an over, Sanders and Norman rarely looked troubled and had built their side into a strong position until they were both out in the 16th over. Without regular bowlers Barnard and Baughan, Bob Little had to use his bowling resources wisely – which, in general, he did.

Scorecard

Marshalswick

B Midwinter b Beddall	... 0
M Harden (+) c&b C Rowthorne	... 38
D Boxer c&b Sanders	... 23
A Bishop c C Rowthorne b Sanders	... 2
M Davies c Neve b Beddall	... 18
M Jewels c Neve b Beddall	... 6
C Martin b Beddall	... 0
RB Little (*) c Sanders b Anderson	... 5
A Tucker c&b Beddall	... 0
RAB Little b Beddall	... 0
ARH Little not out	... 0
Extras b3, lb4, w7, nb2	... 16
Total (off 24.1 overs)	...108

Fall of wkts: 1-5; 2-16; 3-33; 4-39; 5-43; 6-189; 7-209

Bowling: Neve 3-2-7-0; Beddall 5-1-14-6; P Rowthorne 3-0-17-0; Sanders 4-0-17-2; Norman 3-0-13-0; C Rowthorne 4-0-23-1; Anderson 2.1-0-10-1.

Berkhamsted

M Sanders b RB Little	...29
R Norman b RB Little	...31
C Rowthorne (+) st Harden b Midwinter	... 4

J Lambert lbw b RB Little	... 1
G Anderson (*) c Davies b RB Little	... 2
J Neve (+) c Harden b Boxer	... 1
J Beddall b Midwinter	... 0
P Rowthorne b Boxer	... 1
J Carter c Martin b RAB Little	... 0
I Lambert c&b Boxer	... 0
R Neve (Ms) not out	... 0
Extras b7, w4	...11
Total (off 23.1 overs)	...80

Fall of wkts: 1-70; 2-71; 3-76; 4-78; 5-79; 6-79; 7-80; 8-80; 9-80; 10-80.

Bowling: Boxer 4-3-7-3; Martin 5-2-11-0; Davies 5-0-14-0; Bishop 3-0-28-0; RB Little 5-1-11-4; Midwinter 1-0-2-2; RAB Little 0.1-0-0-1.

Toss won by: Berkhamsted

Scorer: The Rev E Bryn Little

Result: Marshalswick won by 28 runs.

Source: Marshalswick Baptist Free Church Cricket Yearbook 1998



Bob Little (second from left, front row) captains Marshalswick Baptist Free Church's XI for the first time - against Homewood Road United Reformed Church XI, in St Albans, in 1993.

3. Walsworth Road, Hitchin, Baptist Church v Marshalswick Baptist Free Church

Match played at Kingshott School, Hitchin, on Saturday 20th May 1995.

Walsworth Road captain Ian Hankin asked Marshalswick to bat first in overcast conditions. His team were soon rewarded when Marshalswick's top five batsmen had been dismissed for just 43 runs in ten overs.

Fortunately, Dennis Barnard – aided by David Boxer – stopped this England-like collapse and restored some respectability to the score. While both batsmen gave chances Barnard, in particular, was extremely fortunate to be able to play a long, courageous and hard-hitting innings.

One spectacular mix-up saw both Barnard and Boxer arrive at the same end, after some confusion over a run, but Boxer was quick enough to recover and make good his ground at the far end after a spectacular dive for the crease.

While Barnard peppered the boundary with nine fours and nine sixes in scoring the first ever century recorded by a Marshalswick batsman, Boxer stroked the ball effortlessly into the gaps in the field in amassing a graceful and self-assured 37.

In the last few overs of the Marshalswick innings, Colin Martin and Bob Little kept the score moving past the 200 mark.

Marshalswick bowled steadily and fielded well and, apart from notable innings from Cannon (28) and Ian Hankin (27), Hitchin's batsmen were unable to settle down and build an innings of Barnard proportions.

Scorecard

Marshalswick

M Masterman run out	... 7
K Samathanam c Williams b Kennedy	... 5
J Gill b Cole	... 10
J Baughan b K Hankin	... 16
A Gardner (+) b K Hankin	... 1
D Barnard retired	...105
D Boxer c&b Cole	... 37
C Martin b I Hankin	... 8
RB Little (*) not out	... 10
ARH Little not out	... 1
Extras b5, w6	... 11
Total (for 7 wkts, 30 overs)	...211

Did not bat: RAB Little

Fall of wkts: 1-5; 2-16; 3-33; 4-39; 5-43; 6-189; 7-209

Bowling: I Hankin 6-0-40-1; Cole 6-0-46-2; Kennedy 6-1-34-1; K Hankin 6-0-39-2; Atkinson 2-0-19-0; Cannon 4-0-28-0.

Walsworth Road, Hitchin

R Cannon b Samathanam	...28
S Cole b Barnard	... 0
A Moir (+) b Boxer	... 1
M Steel b Samathanam	... 0
P Kennedy c Barnard b Boxer	... 7
K Hankin lbw b Boxer	... 0
I Hankin (*) c Barnard b Masterman	...27
T Atkinson run out	... 0
D Williams c Boxer b Masterman	... 8
A Banthorpe not out	... 5
T Phillips c Baughan b RB Little	... 4
Extras b1, w7	... 8
Total (off 21 overs)	...88

Fall of wkts: 1-6; 2-31; 3-31; 4-31; 5-51; 6-39; 7-39; 8-61; 9-76; 10-88.

Bowling: Martin 3-0-14-0; Barnard 2-2-0-1; Boxer 3-1-10-2; Samathanam 3-1-15-2; Baughan 3-0-15-1; Gill 3-2-6-0; RB Little 4-1-20-1; Masterman 2-0-7-2.

Toss won by: Hitchin

Scorer: The Rev E Bryn Little

Result: Marshalswick won by 123 runs.

Source: Marshalswick Baptist Free Church Cricket Yearbook 1996



Bob Little (second from left, front row) in the RTITB XI that played the Institute of Road Transport Engineers XI at Marlow, Bucks, in 1987. Also in the RTITB XI (far right, front row) was JDF (David) Larter, the former Northamptonshire and England fast bowler.

4. Road Transport Industry Training Board v Institute of Road Transport Engineers

Match played at Marlow Cricket Club, Bucks, in 1987.

Bob Little and Keith Robinson bowled the RTITB into a strong position against the IRTE, leaving RTITB Board member Peter Mitchell with Collis Hinkson to steer the RTITB to victory by seven wickets.

Seeing a psychological advantage in unleashing former Northamptonshire and England opening bowler David Larter at the opposition early on, RTITB captain Chris Van Dyk elected to field on winning the toss. Twenty years after playing his last first class match, Larter showed that he had lost none of his rhythm and accuracy. After a couple of overs to loosen up, he added a couple of paces to his run and proceeded to bowl quite a few 'serious deliveries'.

Saunders, who had begun his innings confidently, later confessed that he had *seen* Larter's arm come over, *heard* the sound of the ball as it hit the pitch and been only just in time to get the bat down on a ball that rose with real venom. In that spell, Larter accounted for opener Ivison, with a savage in-swinging yorker, and Saunders with a ball

which swung late to take the edge of the bat and fly to second slip where Little held the catch.

Larter's wickets were timely because the IRTE, steadied by Patrick, were scoring quickly and had reached 56 after only ten overs. In an effort to stem the flow of runs, Van Dyk turned to his spinners. Robinson and Little responded by bowling 28 overs between them for just 100 runs, which effectively put the brake on the IRTE innings.

With the IRTE batsmen determined to play from the crease, the two RTITB spinners were able to bowl a full length and let the damp pitch do the rest. And, rather like the events on a similar rain-affected pitch at Old Trafford in 1956, there was soon a steady stream of batsmen making their way back to the pavilion. Roberts, the IRTE captain, led some spirited resistance, leaving the IRTE on 161 for 9 off 40 overs – a respectable but not unattainable score.

Mitchell and Hinkson took the score to 78 by the half-way mark in the RTITB innings. From then on, they made sure of an average of four runs an over until Mitchell was bowled for 65. Julian Ardouin made short work scoring the winning runs to leave the RTITB the winners with 17 balls in hand.

Scorecard

IRTE

M Ivison b Larter	... 14
A Patrick c Rhodes b Little	... 33
A Saunders c Little b Larter	... 11
R Cogan c Ardouin b Little	... 12
J Ogley c Robinson b Little	... 8
C Bassingdale c Robinson b Little	... 0
M Lief (+) b Little	... 19
P Camp c Hinkson b Little	... 17
A Roberts (*) b Van Dyk	... 23
G Cole not out	... 2
P Edmonds not out	... 0
Extras b11, w10, nb1	... 22
Total (for 9 wkts, 40 overs)	...161

Fall of wkts: 1-40; 2-63; 3-81; 4-90; 5-92; 6-114; 7-132; 8-146; 9-159.

Bowling: Larter 6-0-21-2; Gregory 4-0-35-0; Little 14-1-51-6; Robinson 14-4-49-0; Van Dyk 2-2-0-1.

RTITB

P Mitchell b Cogan	... 65
K Robinson c Lief b Saunders	... 9
C Hinkson not out	... 52
K Reed c&b Saunders	... 0
J Ardouin (+) not out	... 8
Extras b14, lb6, w9	... 29
Total (for 3 wkts, off 37.1 overs)	...163

Did not bat: C Van Dyk (*), N Houldsworth, J Rhodes, D Gregory, JDF Larter, RB Little.

Fall of wkts: 1-14; 2-148; 3-151.

Bowling: Cogan 12-2-31-1; Saunders 9.1-2-37-2; Camp 3-0-19-0; Ivison 7-0-27-0; Roberts 3-0-16-0; Bassingdale 3-0-13-0.

Toss won by: RTITB

Result: RTITB won by seven wickets.

Source: Transport Training newspaper, August 1987