

Blackheath CC U12 Cricket Tour to Devon May 2017



An excited bunch of boys and parents arrived at our lovely holiday cottages on Friday evening full of energy and enthusiasm. For those who had not visited the cottages before, exploring was first on the agenda, followed by a delicious evening meal, kindly and skilfully prepared by Leslie and Julie. The boys received their very cool tour hoodies – brilliantly organised Caroline – and went off with Chris and the coaches to prepare for the matches ahead with a team talk. The boys discussed their vision for the group and the values and behaviours required. Squad rules were agreed and the Tour hoodies given out. One or two beverages later, most tourists made it to bed – some perhaps via most of a bottle of rum.

Saturday dawned with promise of sunshine and a day of competitive, high quality cricket. Breakfast was a triumph of eggs and bacon, toast, juice and fruit fantastically produced by the breakfast team. The Squad meeting that morning focussed on what constituted excellent performance in terms of batting, bowling and fielding. The boys also had a lot of fun doing a team building exercise. Sated and with the odd hang over slightly eased, we set off for Wellington School (not the one in Berkshire, but Jeffrey Archer's Alma Mater, Taunton). We found the grounds and met our opposition, who were alarmingly tall and included girls! Some of the boys were both interested and distracted by the latter discovery. Spectators settled in their sunny spots and the cricket whisperer prepared for his first outing of the tour. Blackheath came off second best in these matches, citing sledging as one of the main reasons for their under-performance (some may think it was the girls, who were extremely talented cricketers). Highlights of our visit to Wellington School included a lovely lunch and, after a

friendly chat with a charming gentleman who turned out to be the Headmaster, a personal invite to look round the chapel for Mrs Eves.

The Blackheath teams were mixed up again for the afternoon games; some stayed at Wellington whilst others travelled back to Witheridge cricket ground to play against a tasty District Side. It was the first time some of the Blackheath boys had played in a longer format match and was a valuable opportunity to learn the subtleties of this type of game. The spectators noticed that the bar was open and felt obliged to relieve the barman's boredom. The cricket whisperer was in action once again, but then disappeared off to the pub with his groupies under the pretext of collecting the match teas. Some time later, their finely timed return was welcomed enthusiastically – the cream scones were a treat. Sadly, Blackheath failed to win this match but their team mates at Wellington School enjoyed a sweet victory.

On return to the cottages we enjoyed a hearty fish and chip supper and a fabulous and enormous chocolate cake made by Leslie. Once again the evening was convivial; the boys, as if they had not had enough fresh air and exercise, played football and rugby until it went dark and parents opened a couple of bottles of wine to share around...

In the morning the boys had a team talk on mental strength and focus and spent some time discussing the learning cycle. The team building exercise was concluded with a lot of excitement! Once again breakfast was enormously satisfying and we packed up and set off for Taunton. We arrived at Queen's College to play a Sunday morning tournament. It was limited overs, action packed and in a glorious setting. All three teams won one match in the round robin and one Blackheath side was picked to play against our host team in the final. As at Wellington School the day before, we enjoyed excellent hospitality and a warm welcome. Some fabulous cricket was on display and the boys showed both enthusiasm and team spirit. After the obligatory team tour photographs as the paparazzi gathered around, we set off for the return journey to Surrey.



I would like to record our sincere thanks to the organisers in Devon (Alex, Leslie and Julie) and to our Blackheath Tour Rep Caroline who, despite doing all the arranging, couldn't make the actual weekend. We missed you Caroline. We are enormously fortunate to have a bunch of committed and brilliant coaches who give up their time and expertise for our boys. Our grateful thanks go to Chris our Head Coach who is wonderfully supported by Pete and Kevin.

Match Reports Blackheath Cricket Club U12 Tour 2017

Blackheath Lions v Wellington School 6th May 2017 Morning Match

On a decidedly breezy, chilly morning the mighty Lions opened the bowling with a ferocity to match the team name. Ed delivered some pacy balls in his opening spell but the Wellington batsmen showed some class and style. Harry began his attack from the scoreboard end and posed one or two questions of the Wellington openers. In his second over Ed took our crucial first wicket, caught in the covers by Ben. With confidence increasing, Harry exerted more pressure with a welcome maiden. Theo contributed a tight over, followed with accurate and pacy deliveries from Ollie DG, culminating in a very satisfying caught and bowled. The mighty Lions strengthened their position still further with Theo's lbw.

An inspirational change of bowling brought on Will at the School end (despite doubting Pete's anxiety), resulting in his second ball clipping one of the bails. Another change of bowling brought in Curtis with some wily, flighted off spin. After a couple of catching chances, DG bagged one. After 12

overs Wellington were 56 for 5. Curtis took another wicket lbw and Wellington were 6 down. Cathrew's pace and deadly accuracy brought immediate reward, his second ball clattering into the stumps. Seb struck again in his second over with an unplayable delivery.

Ben attacked the tail enders who looked uncertain at the crease. In the seventeenth over he was rewarded for his persistence when he clean bowled their number 9. Archie delivered some accurate balls, asking questions of the tail enders before, sadly, being forced to leave the field after a nasty fall. Harry completed the bowling with a tight final over. Wellington finished on 92 for 9.

Cathrew and Stiles opened the batting for the Lions. Cathrew was bowled in the fourth over after having made a steady start against some tricky bowling. RS looked promising but caught an edge, giving an easy catch to Wellington. The bowling was tight and Wellington were very vocal in the field. With the required run rate climbing DG was bowled going for a slog over mid on. After 8 overs the Lions had scored 15. Ben the destroyer was just getting into his stride when he was bowled by what Pete RS (aka The Cricket Whisperer) described as, 'probably the ball of the day.' Our batsmen were facing an increasingly difficult challenge as the required run rate soared and the ferocity of the bowling showed no signs of relenting.

Ed batted nicely against a fierce attack but eventually succumbed to their finest pace bowler. Curtis entered the fray looking determined. He connected nicely with a pacy delivery but was caught in the deep after trying to attack. Completely ignoring his father's advice which was to wait for the ball, Harry misjudged the pace of the pitch and was out soon after taking strike. Archie battled valiantly, returning to the field despite his injury. He was very unlucky to be run out. Our penultimate batsman Theo played some confident shots. He scored probably at the quickest rate of all our batsmen, building a decent total. Will entered the innings with the Lions in an impossible situation but played with bravery, intelligence and guile to put more runs on the total. After batting through the whole innings, Ollie chipped up a catch with only two balls left in the innings.

Overall, a decent performance but there are lessons to be learned – not least about ignoring sledging and pressure from the field. Finding the gaps with the bats is tough against such accurate and consistent bowling and, all too often, some of our best shots went straight to the fielder.

Helen Curtis

Blackheath Tigers vs. Wellington School May 6th 2017 Morning Match

Opening the batting to begin the Devon tour 2017 is Jonathan H to face the ball with Jett D. First ball defensively played followed by a wide. Second run is a bye, third run was a no ball, when is the first run coming off the bat?? Seventh ball of the first over Wellington took their first wicket Jonathan H bowled by a well-pitched ball. Jonathan H to face the first ball of the second over now 1 for 1. Second bowler female and presenting the second over with terrific pace and accuracy.

Thankfully we now have the first run off the bat with a cover drive from Jonathan H. Jet to face. Jet safely put the first ball back to the bowler and confidently the same with the second ball. Urnfield like conditions here and freezing, all credit to Simon B who volunteered to do the scoring (which started off looking like a join the dots puzzle as he remembered how to drive the scoring sheet!).

We're properly off the mark with a four from Jonathan 6 for 1, an otherwise steady over. Now in the fourth over with another wide from Wellington and Blackheath stuttering somewhat to find the line.

Wellington notching up quite a few wides. Nicely played by Jett, and faced the rest of the over with ease amid multiple wides. The first pair finish 10 for 1.

Second pair in Sergei facing with Will F. Sergei off the mark with a confident first shot. Will batting himself in nicely to another wide. End of the fifth over 10 for 2. New bowler, first ball rather a lob, unusual bowling style giving Will some surprise. A good run that could so well have been caught and would you believe it the next ball Sergei was caught, we're now 8 for 3. An edge to fine leg and the pair make a run. Will plays a good defensive cover drive, and again another good defensive drive. Now 10 for 3. Unidentified flying object that was a wild bowl, now 11 for 3. New bowler, another wide. Sergei a big swing to another wide. A nice square leg shot by Sergei. Second pair finish 17 for 3.

Third pair Alexander W and Charlie BR, Alex batting himself in to a new ginger haired bowler, Wellington's first maiden over. Charlie scores a cracking leg side 4. Scorer comment's 'we needed that', another excellent shot leg side drive with two off that ball followed by another good leg side shot. We are 25 for 3, and making some good progress. Back to opening bowler, fast and straight. Alex scores his first run. Another fast ball and Charlie catches an edge and runs the single. Charlie makes another good shot and takes the single. Now 29 for 3, a good square leg shot by Alex with an over throw and ran the two. The pair finish 31 for 3.

Next pair Cuan and Alex B go on, they ran a bye and Cuan ran himself out. Next ball pulls a muscle and retires. James BM goes on. And we've moved on to 36 for 4. A new tall bowler. James takes the single. Alex facing and take a bye single well run. Wellington delivering wide after wide, we need the runs. 9 off the over 51 for 4. A nice cover drive for 4 from James. That's the over 56 for 4 .

Next pair Luc and James BM, Luc facing. Luc plays a good defensive shot. Full toss Luc takes a good leg side two, should have been a four but it's a long boundary. Another good leg side shot from Luc. A good 8 off that over 64 for 4. Good leg side shot for 4 from James. Blackheath starting to find their form more so now 69 for 4. Scorer points out fielder had his foot into touch, we needed all the runs we can get and there's another 4 from James. 74 for 4. Just the one run off the next over. A wide and two byes, three of the ball! Good leg side shot from Luc for 4. 82 for 4. And another leg side 4 from Luc. That's over and the end of our innings 88 for 4.

Blackheath in the field and the Jonathan H opens the bowling, wide first ball. Now finding pace and length. Will F opens the bowling at the other end. Second over James BM takes a great catch. -2 for 1 and then a good cover drive for 4 from Wellington.

Will sends a straight one down the line is knocked for 4. And then another 4. 11 for 1. Opening third over from Jonathan and he takes a wicket bowled on the stumps. Will bowling steadily with no runs. Alex bowling 5th over, well-pitched and straight.

Great third ball good length and takes a wicket, bowled. 11 for 3. Sergei bowling left arm over, good opening ball, and good over with just one off the over. 12 for 3. Alex bowling and some great fielding from Sergei, lunging left foot catches the ball and saves a four. Sergei bowling, second ball Luc takes a good catch. Wellington take a 4. Sergei finishes the over 21 for 4.

Charlie BR bowling, good opening ball. A 4 taken off him by some slightly iffy boundary fielding. Charlie pulls himself to take a great wicket with a ball straight down the line! 23 for 5. Alexander bowling. They take a 4. Alex's high balls and they swing and Sergei takes an excellent boundary catch! And over 25 for 6.

Charlie bowling and keeping it tight and Wellington award a wicket to an LBW appeal. Result. Crickey and then there's another straight ball and Charlie takes another wicket. 18 for 8. Alexander bowling. Bowls a high one deceived by the flight and is knocked towards the boundary collected by Luc and powered in to Jet who whipped the bails off and it's a run out! 18 for 9.

Luc bowling good opening ball and holding Wellington to singles. And over 20 for 9. 7 overs left and they need 10 an over. Cuan bowling. An opening wide beamer. Followed by another two much better fourth ball. They score a 4 and with an edge take another two. Well fielded by Sergei and 10 off the over. 30 for 9. Luc bowling and they take 7 off the over 37 for 9.

Alex bowling and they take a 4. And over 44 for 4 of 16 overs. Last pair in Jonathan bowling and they take a 4 and another off the third ball. Good fielding from Alex. 9 off the over 53 for 9. James BM bowling and good fielding from Luc and holding the singles. 70 for 9. Jonathan bowling. 15 of the over, 85 for 9. Last over and they have two 4s. 93 for 9. Wellington win.

Blackheath Lions vs. East Devon District Team at Witheridge May 6th 2017 Afternoon Match

Charlie RS and Ollie S. open the batting for Blackheath. Good shot from Ollie, fine leg cut for two and followed by a cover drive for two more, a progressive start at Witheridge and accompanying me is the scorer Simon B who is now on the beers!

Opening second over and they have bowled Charlie out and in goes Seb C. to face 5 balls, we are 8 for 1. Second wicket down as Ollie is run out. Ed E goes in. We need to bat ourselves in. some wind up here at Witheridge, the wind turbines are racing away. Seb facing the over and playing himself in, very nice defensive shot, Witheridge bowling a good length and not leaving much, just one of the over and 10 for 2 off 10 overs.

Seb facing the over again, fine leg cut and takes two. Two off the over. Ed picks up a single and he's off the mark. Two off the over. An uneventful over well bowled and we were defending our position with two off the over. We are 16 for 2. New bowler and Ed knocks a good cover drive for two and a square cover drive for 4. And 9 off the over and we are 25 for 2. New spin bowler, Ed plays a square leg shot for two and the same shot for a single. Witheridge fielding throwing in accurately hitting stumps for a second time.

Seb hooks one looks like a catch but over the heads of Witheridge safely for a single. 32 for 2 off 10 overs. Seb swings and it goes up and is caught offside for 4. And in goes Ollie DG and plays a nice opening defensive shot. Ollie runs a single and it's very close as the Witheridge fielding lands the throw in right on the bails again and Ollie narrowly escapes a run out.

Ollie put one up andit's dropped and takes the single. I hear echoes from the boundary the boy is living dangerously. Nice square leg cut by Ed for two. Ed is bowled by a straight line ball and in goes James C. Loud appeal for wicket keeper catch, denied.

We are 41 for 4 off 13 overs. James facing the over to a fast paced ball, and just three off the over. Nice shot straight back at the bowler by Ollie for one. 45 for 4 off 15. Ollie plays a nice defensive shot and looking good at the crease and takes two with a fine leg cut.

James is off the mark with a good cover drive over for two. Oh hello there's a loud noise coming from the long grass behind me... its Alex S what's she up to??? We break for orange. James facing

and Witheridge have changed their keeper. Straight forward over and again, we are 56 for 4 off 20. Ollie delivers a good cover drive for 4 in a slow outfield, and that shot had some punch.

Jolian Howell

Lesley C continues with some delightful match reporting

Dangerous dithering in the 22nd over, DG played some nice shots unfortunately short of the boundary and magnificent pull shot though slow outfield left him short of all the runs he deserved. James hit a full toss over the bowlers head and has found his form and tickled the next shot down to third man. DG after two drops a third time was caught out.

Bushell basher the destroyer took off from the mark with a nice nurdle (?). Curtis bowled in the 24th over. Basher Ben hit two magnificent consecutive boundaries with his new bat! No point in messing around!

Currie hot as a vindaloo took charge of the situation with a great touch resulting in a boundary. Ben clipped off his legs to the boundary and then did it again!

The sun made a rare appearance to cheer up the spectators.

In the 28th over a pacey new bowler entered the fray but was no match for BB who feathered another away to the boundary.

Currie hits one to cow korma and pilaus on the runs. BB hits another boundary and slashed away another 4 like thing. 101 off 31. 4 overs left. Basher Ben finally caught out after 31 runs, magnificent innings. Alex B faced two balls but didn't judge the pace of the pitch and was bowled. James BM partnered Currie until the end of the innings 113 for 7.

Some tight bowling in the first overs by DG. Eve opened with a maiden over, at the end of 2 overs the opposition had only 2 runs.

In the 6th over Currie delivered some fiery balls to stem the runs.

Curtis got a wicket with a quicker flatter delivery and completed a wicket maiden. Curtis bagged a second wicket, fine fielding in the deep, RS controlled and persistent, probing away at the batsman's off stump. Curtis bagged a third wicket caught by bucket hands Cathrew.

RS tied them up in knots and the kept the opposition at bay supported by strong fielding.

A good round of applause to Simon B for scoring every match on the tour!!