

# Ashton Prove too Strong for the Thirds

Sunday, 11 June 2017

Last Sunday, Middleton's 3rd XI travelled to the Reynor Lane ground on Sunday to take on Ashton's 3rd XI. It was a very much under strength 3rd XI, mainly due to the U19's playing in a Natwest T20 competition, one player representing Lancashire's Disabled XI and a bout of illness striking a couple of players. With so many players unavailable it was a chance for 3 U15 players to make their senior debuts and gain some experience at a higher level.

## Middleton

won the toss and elected to bowl. The new ball opening pair were two of the more experienced players in Matt Lee and Matt Collins, both turning their arms over for the first time this season. They got Middleton off to a good start, restricting Ashton to 56-4, the first wicket coming via a run-out and the next three all falling to Collins including the hard hitting Aminullah Said who was caught by Zain UI Ahedin for a quickfire 29.

## After

6 overs each from the opening bowlers Zain UI Ahedin replaced Lee and Jack Quinn replaced Collins. UI Ahedin bowled a good length but struggled to find a consistent line finishing with figures of 1 for 33 from his 8 overs. Quinn completed his 8 overs with 2 wkts for 45 runs, a good effort from another bowler turning his arm over for the first time this season. Middleton's other two bowlers used were 15yr olds Ahmad Alam and Muhammad Kaleem Malik, Alam bowling 6 overs for 20 and Malik 2 overs for 9. 29 runs between them off 8 overs is another good effort from two young lads new to senior cricket.

## With

the innings finely balanced at the 30 over mark Ashton were 122-7 and Middleton were looking to keep the score under 150 but unfortunately this was where the rigours of the longer format started to tell with numerous chances going begging, Ashton finally finishing their innings on 201-9 with Collins and Lee picking up the final 2 wickets between them with Collins finishing with figures of 4 for 42 and Lee 1 for 48 from their 8 overs.

## Middleton

began their chase with the opening pair of Darren Brown and Matt Lee. With the score on 8 Brown was bowled by Elliot Blewitt for 1. This brought Collins to the crease to join Lee with the pair taking the score on to 50 before Collins was out for a run-a-ball 26, soon to be joined back in the dressing room by Lee, caught on the boundary for 20 leaving Middleton 51-3. A mini-collapse soon saw that scoreline move to 71-6 before skipper Mark Tierney was joined at the crease by Malik that the rot was stopped with Malik playing a sensible straight bat innings before being caught behind for 19.

## The

score had now pushed on to 108-7, and with overs fast running out the only reachable target for Middleton was the 75% score of 151 to gain a losing bonus point. Ashton however had other ideas, looking to turn the screws and take a full 5-0 victory, bring back opener Blewitt who cleaned up the tail leaving Tierney, who finished on 32 not out, stranded in the middle with no more partners only 4 runs short of

that target and only a matter of balls short of denying Ashton their bonus point for bowling Middleton out. Blewitt finished with figures of 4 for 43 from 8 overs.

#### Overall

a good game played in a good spirit, well umpired by David Lees and Richard Unwin and scored by Beth Gleave and Gary Porter.

#### On

a positive note 18 players aged 18 or under represented Middleton CC in 2 separate games played at the same time on Sunday which is a credit to the Junior set-up. Well done to the U19's in winning their T20 against Edgeworth CC.