

“GOOD TEAM EFFORT”

Outlane v Stones, April 2009 - Reaction

By David Brenchley

After his side made a winning start to the 2009 season, Graham Hughes was rightfully pleased with their effort. Stephen Helliwell and Dan Crosland gave them the perfect start with an opening partnership of 112.



Following a controversial decision that led to Crosland's demise, Hughes said: "I was at the non-striker's end and it looked a bit high but you take the rough with the smooth. Their keeper was given out off Anwar which Dan reckoned wouldn't have hit another set so it's swings and roundabouts."

Despite the hosts' collapse after their openers had been dismissed, Hughes was confident they would prevail: "We were looking at 250 to 300 at one stage the way we were going, so we sort of threw it away a little bit but having said that, I would have been happy with 200 at the start of the game."

He explained that "it was always a total we were going to defend and I thought we bowled very well and stuck to it."

Having been 112-0, they were quickly pegged back to 161-3 and finally 200 all out after spinner Ben Watkins came on to bowl. Although Hughes felt that it was not a spinner's pitch, Watkins took 7-58 but the home captain explained: "I think sometimes that the batsman's eyes light up when they see a spinner and they think they are going to smack him out of the ground. A few went out of the ground but a few didn't and the ones that didn't were caught."

The captain was also full of praise for his side's bowling and fielding efforts, despite the ball's condition rapidly deteriorating.

"The ball was a bit dodgy; after about 10-12 overs it was falling apart but the umpires kept us on with that one," said the Lancastrian, identifying the turning point in the game: "Anwar stuck at it, got the crucial fourth wicket, the guy was batting well and they fell apart."

Anwar ended the game with figures of 5-52 and Al Leeson (2-28), Duncan Brundell (2-44) and Simon Ainley (1-26) all helped their side to victory. This tight bowling was complimented by some great fielding, as wicketkeeper Crosland took three catches and Gavin Roberts took four.

It was Stephen Hepptinstall who was the crucial wicket, as he and Kevin O'Roarke put on 68 for the fourth wicket and almost turned the game in Stones' favour.

Hughes praised his side's teamwork, saying: "We all played well, some good catches from Gavin, a good team effort and a good start to the season."