

MATCH NO	PLAYED BETWEEN	C CLUB	VENUE	DAY & DATE	SCORING RATE
1	WORCESTER PARK	AND THE STAGE	GREEN LAKE	WEDS 6/6/16	
TOSS WON BY	THE STAGE	INNINGS OF	WORCESTER PARK	TYPE OF MATCH	TIME (DURATION)
BATSMAN	OVERS	RUNS	WICKETS	HOW OUT	BOWLER
1 S. BRADSHAW	210	276	4	CAUGHT BY BARRIS	TAYLOR
2 I. BURROWS	210	241	2	L.B.W.	TAYLOR
3 R. HILL	242	123	1	NOT OUT	
4 J. FALLER - FREITSCH	247	206	1	CAUGHT BY MASON	BARCLAY
5 W. MASINGHE	227	241	2	CAUGHT BY TROUGHTON	
6 R. MASON	242	28	0	NOT OUT	
7 S. SUTCH					
8 I. POWERS					
9 E. HAMEED					
10 B. AIREY					
11 D. STEMP					
FALL OF WICKETS	1	2	3	4	5
SCORE	157	162	276	280	
SCORING RATE	2-50	1-98	4-60	5-2	
S.O. BATTING SCORE	1-96	3-3	3-51	3-53	
HITCHHIKES	157	5	114	4	
THEORETICAL	25-0	26-2	29-5	41-0	
WICKETS	4				
WICKETS IN 42-0 OVERS IN 154 MINUTES					

BOWLER	OVERS	RUNS	WICKETS	MAINS	EXTRAS	NETS	WICKETS
1 SARGEANT S	3	6	0	37	0		
2 HIGGINSBOTHAM M	9	0	4	0			
3 WIDESON P	4	1	6	0	40	0	
4 WHYTE T	1	7	0	55	2		
5 TAYLOR M	4	0	3	2	1		
6 BARCLAY S	2	0	1	5	1		
7 TROUGHTON W	2	0	1	5	1		

MAN OF MATCH	SCORE	WICKETS
G. PETERS	205	2
D. STEMP	202	2
S. SARGEANT	242	2
G. CLAYTON	210	2

RESULT	POINTS FOR	POINTS AGAINST
Worcester Park	12	11

Match Report

Jim Barclay has written a number of reports for the Stage CC, and a number of people have been moved to suggest that these match reports are a distortion and bowdlerisation of the truth. Many have said that Jim Barclay's Match reports are simply a biased and inaccurate account of the proceedings. They have gone further by suggesting that all Jim Barclay wants to do, when he writes these match reports, is wallow in some kind of narcissistic literary pond, rather than describe the events that took place in the match. Others have suggested that Jim Barclay is the nearest thing the Stage CC has to Neville Cardus : the doyenne of Cricket reporters. (Ed's note: please supply the names of these "others". Most people think your match reports are complete Bollocks. Now just get on with it.)

This game resembled nothing more than a Mondrian Canvas of rectangles in vibrant colours. The primary reds, and yellows of the South West Trains arriving at regular intervals at the adjacent station, a cobalt blue sky and the closely cropped emerald outfield all worked in perfect harmony to create a perfect synthesis of aesthetic magnificence. (Ed's note: perhaps we could move on to actually describing the events of the match?)

What with the game being played so close to a railway station, it was not long before most of the fielding side (Stage CC) found themselves thinking more about the fortunes of the locomotives on the Island of Sodor in the Rev Awdry's Classic "Thomas the Tank Engine" books.

Worcester Park's opening bats, Bradshaw and Burrows, were not entirely dissimilar to the two express engines Gordon the Green Engine and James the Red Engine as they eased out of the shed and pretty quickly arrived at express speed against the bowling of Sam Sargent and Max Higginbotham. It became apparent that the "track" was every bit as flat as that found on Sodor and both opening bats clattered through the minor stations to the first drinks without mishap. Worcester Park looked as if they were to arrive at their declaration terminus without hindrance. (Ed's note; this match report is not Bradshaw's Railway Guide: more cricket, less trains!)

The Stage were not helped by the fact that they started the game with 8 players on the pitch. Any keen student of the game will tell you that this can be a severe handicap. It is always best to take the field with 11 players, in my opinion. The delays were partly caused by the fact that the area surrounding the ground (some 40 square miles) is a car park for commuters. Parking spaces were eventually found in Portsmouth and the wayward three duly took their places in the field some 40 minutes late. Gordon and James continued to chuff their way merrily round the countryside. Off spinners Taylor and Barclay were introduced into the attack but only partially managed to stop the train when 3 locomotives were sent back to the shed by this wily pair: Higginbotham caught an excellent catch at deep mid off off Barclay and Taylor finally had Bradshaw caught behind on 98. Bradshaw presumably retired to the pavilion to complete his mammoth work on the train time tables of England and Wales. (Ed's note: this is my final warning!)

Worcester Park declared on the monolithic total of 287 for 4 and tea was taken.

However, it is a hallmark of the Stage's cricket in recent years that no target is unattainable. Troughton and Sanjay set off with all the resolution of Hilary and Tensing, chipping away at the cliff face with frequent singles broken up with some excellent boundaries. These two plundered the Worcester park bowling with gusto, brio and aplomb and the the Stage were on target at 219 for 0! With only the Western Cwm to be conquered both Sanjay (113) and Troughton (100) contrived to fall off the rock face into the abyss at this point. The back up batsmen strove to finish the job but found themselves, not for the first time, constrained by the canny Worcester Park spinners. Notably, the veteran Stemp decided to appear on the pitch (having spent two thirds of the game in the scorebox, while a substitute fielded for him). Stemp is best described as a 'lob' bowler: each ball he bowls is delivered with all the ponderous deliberation of a grenade throwing infantryman trying to gain a few yards at the Battle of Ypres. Any batsman looking to score quick runs against this form of bowling is faced with two agonising options:

he can charge down the pitch and hope to hit the ball to all points of the compass on the full toss or wait safely in his crease for the ball to finally arrive at its destination. When it does arrive it is like an old lady getting to the top of a hill, having dragged a wheelie full of shopping behind her. The batsman is obliged to apply great power to the slow moving ball if he wishes to score any runs. Stemp has taken a great number of wickets in the course of his career.

After much huffing and puffing the Stage finally achieved the not inconsiderable total of 265 for 8, but were, nevertheless, 23 runs short of the target when the final twentieth over was bowled. Jeff Davis was not injured. The red and yellow commuter trains continued to pull in and out of the station and both teams repaired to the pavilion and basked in the long evening shadows sipping Boxer Blonde Beer before setting off on the walk back to the car park in Portsmouth.