

## NO BIG STAGE NERVES FOR GARGOYLES



[Alstonefield's victorious XI at Clifton](#)

Playing at the highest level cricket club in the area, one week before their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations and in front of their splendid new pavilion, could all have proven too much for the Gargoyles against Clifton CC. In fact, as with every other twist and turn of a remarkable season, the whole scene proved an inspiration for a team who simply believe they can win. To do so by 77 runs against a healthy blend of league experience and the promise of well coached youth, was one of the dominant performances of 2017. To be better on the day with both bat and with ball was what impressed here.

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Will Siddons set the tone as he has done all season, with a cautious start against the accuracy and swing of Blake and Angris, before moving through his gears. His 40 off 50 balls was exactly the platform required to allow Chris Wilkins, coming in at number four, to plunder the youthful first change bowlers. Batting for the first time in two years, the power and timing of his straight drives demoralised the Clifton attack and simply took the game away. Together with Archie Bird, making an impressive 43 on debut, Wilkins scored 50 in 22 balls in a century stand. While the players enjoyed a marvellous tea in the new pavilion, including a blackberry and plum crumble served with ice cream, the mumble on the balcony was that 199 for 6 may have been one of the highest 35 over totals in the club's history, but just how good a total was it on a superb batting pitch?



Drinks break outside Clifton's new pavilion

The answer was evident early on. Siddons and Bray taking early wickets, courtesy of Harry Jones's mastery of the gloves. Jones went on to take four catches to claim another club record, while Jon Lane strengthened his catching reputation yet again and Steve King proved that third time really is lucky when it comes to holding on to the ball. Archie Bird impressed again, this time with the ball. Line, away swing and genuine bite off the pitch proved too much for two Clifton batsmen. Ian McKay did his job in restricting runs to two per over and taking a couple of wickets, such that Clifton found themselves outplayed at 67 for 8. To their great credit Clifton dug in and refused to surrender. Captain Blake showed his class with an unbeaten 39 and he found dogged support from last man Archer as the remaining overs ran their course and the score reached 122.



**Glorious setting for an outstanding Alstonefield victory**

**Clifton's impressive ground and facilities were matched by their hospitality and the spirit in which they play the game. On this day, there was just too much Gargoyles firepower with both bat and ball.**

**ALSTONEFIELD CC 199 FOR 6 BEAT CLIFTON CC 122 FOR 9  
BY 77 RUNS**