

MINOR COUNTIES KNOCKOUT TROPHY

BERKSHIRE REGAIN MARLBOROUGH CUP

Berkshire had the perfect season opener with a nine-run win in Devizes against Wiltshire:

Losing the toss and asked to bat, Berkshire scored 239-9 off their 50 overs. An opening stand of 111 between Mitchell Stokes, eventually out for a fine 97, and Reading's David Barnes (40) laid an excellent foundation.

The opening attack of Johnson (2-37), Lambert (2-38) kept things tight but it was the introduction of off-spinner Carl Crowe that put Berkshire back in the frame. His fine figures of 4-26 off 10 overs assisted by some excellent ground fielding turned the game, together with miserly "death" bowling by the returning seam attack of Johnson and Lambert.

"It was a real pleasure to regain the trophy which we last won in 2005," said Manager, David Morris. "Even more important was the manner in which we won."

There is a real air of optimism in the camp and the wisdom and knowledge of the "old pros" can only rub off on the younger element bringing a good balance of youth and experience.