Phoenix v North County 30/04/11

The trip to Inch where a very different Phoenix side had failed narrowly in 2009 would probably give an indication of the standard Phoenix would have to reach to cut some ice in 2011. Ted Williamson made the long journey north although Siphe Mzayidume was probably not in the mood to attach significance to a distance of 180 miles. The Phoenix team was: Captain Dickeson, Coach Bray, David Langford-Smith (the illustrious hyphen), Conor Kelly, Ryan Gallagher, Thomas Anders, Ted Williamson, Osama Khan, M D Masud Ahmed, Sadaf Raza, Siphe Mzayidume. The home team won the toss and chose to bat first.

Mzayidume's first delivery was a wide but he went on to bowl 31 dot balls and take 1 wicket in 8 overs conceding one further wide, five boundaries, two twos and nine singles. At Inch this was a satisfactory debut. The illustrious hyphen managed to bowl two maiden overs in his first spell of four. Phoenix seemed to move into a promising position in the power play overs 11 to 15 with Khan removing both the opener, Tomas Sheil and the perhaps injudiciously placed number three, Dara Armstrong. At the other end Conor Kelly conceded only five runs from his first four overs. However, the arrival of John Mooney to the crease soon saw a shift of momentum towards the home team and Raza and Gallagher were the bowlers whose figures suffered. The home team got to 168 for 2 after 32 overs but Anders held his nerve under a skier from Mooney to give Mzayidume his wicket and Phoenix managed to hold their own for the rest of the innings. Raza took 3 wickets (2 stumped by Coach Bray), Lawrence was run out, the illustrious hyphen took 2 and Gallagher picked up 1 as the home team finished on 241 all out.

An early exit for Gallagher saw Anders come in at number three. Having faced one ball the young man must have watched in some surprise as the seasoned left handers Williamson and Coach Bray fell to consecutive deliveries from Mooney at the other end reducing Phoenix to 4 for 3. Conor Kelly negotiated the hat trick ball and proceeded to take most of the strike in a stand that brought Phoenix onto a firmer footing. The combination of Kelly's strokeplay and Anders composed support may have soothed the nerves of Phoenix supporters as the visitors climbed to 85 for 3. However, the loss of Kelly, Dickeson and Anders in quick succession to the bowling of Lawrence meant that a difficult task became almost impossible with just 4 wickets remaining. There were a few big shots from the illustrious hyphen, Masud Ahmed, Khan and Raza with Mzayidume ending undefeated on 8 but a final losing margin of 81 runs meant that Phoenix collected only one of the 25 points available.

Men of the Match:	John Mooney 81 runs R Lawrence 5 wickets
Phoenix top scorer	Conor Kelly 44 runs