



# SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



## Sussex Sharks v. Australia Tourist Match The 1<sup>st</sup> Central County Ground, Hove. Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

Sussex put up a brave fight against the new-look Aussies - but couldn't prevent the tourists claiming the spoils to kick off their visit to England with victory on a wonderful day of cricket at Hove.

But the Sharks lost too many wickets at key times - including two fairly needless run-outs - to give up their hopes of handing the tourists a losing start to their visit.

It was Australia's first game on a tour that will see them play five ODIs and one T20 against England in a series starting next Wednesday.

Sussex had sold every one of their 6,000 seats for the game, while it was also a chance for Jason Gillespie's team to put behind them the disappointment of failing to qualify for the knockout stages of the Royal London One-Day Cup.

All eyes were on the Australians, who have not been seen too much in public since the ball-tampering scandal that rocked the cricket world. The saga has robbed the team of captain Steve Smith and vice-captain David Warner - both banned for a year - and opener Cameron Bancroft, suspended for nine months.

It's also seen Darren Lehmann depart as coach to be replaced by Justin Langer, and apart from this being his first match at the helm, it was also a first chance for English cricket fans to see how the Australians were evolving ahead of next year's World Cup and home Ashes series.

There was little sign of any of the home crowd giving the Aussies a hard time over their tampering techniques, and when one specator asked 12th man Nathan Lyon, as he walked around the boundary, if he had any sandpaper in his pocket he replied 'Nah mate, just the Ashes'.

Wicketkeeper Tim Paine has been appointed captain with Smith sidelined but his first act of the day was to lose the toss, Ben Brown winning it and electing to bowl first.

In the sides' first limited-overs tussle for 29 years, Aaron Finch and D'Arcy Short made a confident start under Hove's cloudy skies, each finding the boundary within the first couple of overs - Finch twice from each of Chris Jordan's first two deliveries.

The closest Sussex came to an early wicket was a run-out attempt in the fourth over that saw Finch scurrying back after Short turned down a quick single - a direct hit would have seen him on his way.

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Finch looked in excellent touch, five fours coming off his bat as the tourists racked up 42 from the first six overs. It was Short who took Australia past 50 with a lofted pull off David Wiese's first over from the Cromwell Road End.

Finch went after Archer in the IPL star's fifth over from the Sea End although one certain four was prevented by a superb bit of fielding in the covers by Jordan.

At the end of the 10-over powerplay, Brown turned to spin in the form of Danny Briggs and he immediately got the breakthrough, trapping Short lbw for 21 with his third ball and completing a wicket maiden to boot.

Briggs' introduction changed the whole feel of the innings for a while - having scored 74 in those first 10 overs, Australia were restricted to just seven more in the next five as the former Hampshire man and Wiese made it difficult for them to score. Briggs and Wiese bowled ten overs between them in their opening spells that saw just 36 runs added.

Eventually Finch, now vice-captain for his country, passed 50 and then Stoinis hit Briggs for six as the visitors started to get the scoreboard moving again.

Abi Sakande found a bit of life in the pitch in his second over, surprising Stoinis with one that would have seen a dismissal had there been a close-in catcher.

Gradually the shackles were lifted as Stoinis and Finch began to up the tempo of the innings again and by the time the halfway point had arrived, a couple of maximums and some sensible singles and twos had moved things on to 142-1.

Stoinis took slightly longer than Finch to get to his half-century ... but only three balls longer, and as the tourists went into the final 20 overs with nine wickets intact, things were looking rather ominous for Gillespie's men.

But soon, the tide turned in spectacular fashion as Sussex took four wickets for 13 runs. First in the flurry of wickets was that of Finch, caught behind by Brown off Archer for 78, then Glenn Maxwell was caught by Laurie Evans off Luke Wells, whose introduction to the attack was also to prove pivotal for the hosts.

Travis Head was lbw to Briggs and then Paine was well caught by Wells off his own bowling and suddenly it was 180 for five. Stoinis and Ashton Agar calmed the Shark frenzy for a spell before the latter was run out for 21 by Archer's direct hit shortly after Stoinis reached an excellent hundred.

Sussex prevented major late-innings runs from flowing as they kept on taking wickets. Michael Nesar was caught by Brown off Jordan for two, then Stonis holed out to Evans off Archer, his 110 having come off 112 balls with nine fours and four sixes.

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It was left to Jhye Richardson and Andrew Tye to salvage what runs they could from the final couple of overs and they were reasonably effective, though Richardson became Archer's third victim when he skied one to Wells. Tye hit one huge six backward of square leg off the final over, bowled by Jordan, as Australia ended on 277-9.

When Sussex replied, Salt had a let-off in the second over when Short dropped a decent chance at short leg off Jhye Richardson. But Australia soon had a breakthrough - ironically from Sussex's first scoring shot.

Wells cleared the fielder at mid-on but although he came back for a second run, Salt didn't and Wells had to go.

It took the Sharks a little while to find their feet against the pacy Aussie attack but the boundaries started to come as Salt in particular and Harry Finch started to find the rope.

Salt took 12 off one Neser over - then hit Agar's second ball for six after Paine introduced spin early, to the delight of the crowd. Then Finch led a charge that saw 13 come off Kane Richardson's first over, bringing up the 50 partnership along the way.

Salt continued the powerplay assault with back-to-back sixes off Agar, leaving the tourists wondering how much they would rue their two missed chances to remove him early.

The bowlers - particularly Tye - sent a couple of bouncers whistling around the ears of the Sussex batsmen, but Salt and Finch were being sensible in what to leave and what to chase.

Tye was making the batters work for every run and, as in the Aussie innings, the end of the powerplay had lessened the excitement levels considerably.

Salt was undone by a Kane Richardson yorker having rattled up 62 off 49 balls.

The Aussies were in the habit of taking wickets just when they needed them and Finch fell into the same category for them when he was caught and bowled by Agar for 45.

Michael Burgess lasted only ten balls, bowled by Stoinis for six, but Evans and Brown kept the scorers reasonably busy and Sussex entered the last 20 overs needing 122 with six wickets in hand - do-able in anyone's money.

Tye dropped Brown on the boundary - the fourth chance of the innings that had gone to ground - and it was a fair bet that the tourists would be brought in for extra catching practice before the England series.

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Brown (17) was trapped lbw by Agar attempting to sweep, with 98 still required but with some big hitters still to come.

Evans brought up a 58-ball half-century with a six but immediately lost Wiese for three as he chased a wide ball by Nesar and was pounced by Paine. Soon after, Agar had Evans stumped and you felt Jordan and Archer, now thrown together at the crease, represented Sussex's last hope.

Disaster struck, though, with their second run-out - Jordan having to scurry back when he went more than halfway down the pitch for a single but Archer didn't move.

Archer chopped on to give Tye his first wicket and Jhye Richardson bowled Sakande to leave Sussex 57 short.

Australia move on to Lord's to play Middlesex at the weekend but anyone from the England camp watching must feel they have every chance of getting the better of this much-changed line-up.

Sussex: Wells, Salt, Finch, Brown\*+, Evans, Burgess, Wiese, Jordan, Archer, Sakande, Briggs.

Australia: Finch, Short, Stoinis, Maxwell, Head, Paine\*+, Agar, Nesar, J. Richardson, Tye, K. Richardson.

Sussex are straight back in action on Friday (3pm) when they play the visiting Aboriginal XI in a T20 game (3pm). Admission is free - no ticket required.

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