



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Gloucestershire vs. Sussex Sharks Vitality Blast, South Group

The Brightside Ground, Bristol. Thursday 16th August 2018.

Sussex Sharks boosted their hopes of a quarter-final place with a four-wicket Vitality Blast South Group win over Gloucestershire at Bristol.

The home side posted a disappointing 159 for nine after winning the toss, skipper Michael Klinger top-scoring with 59. Spinner Rashid Khan claimed three for 24, while there were two wickets each for seamers Jofra Archer and Chris Jordan.

In reply, Sussex were given a great start by opener Phil Salt, who contributed 60 to a stand of 85 in nine overs with Harry Finch (33) and, despite two wickets with successive balls from both debutant spinner Jacob Lintott and Benny Howell, never looked in serious trouble.

They reached their target with an over to spare, David Wiese making 39, and can clinch a top four finish by beating Middlesex at Hove tomorrow when Gloucestershire's bid for a home quarter-final sees them face Hampshire at Southampton.

Gloucestershire's tame innings featured only two sixes, one struck by Kieran Noema-Barnett in the 14th over and the other by Klinger in the 18th.

Even the prolific Aussie found it hard to break loose, taking 45 balls to reach his half-century, despite an opening stand of 41 in 4.3 overs with Miles Hammond, who hit 6 fours before being stumped for 29 off a Khan leg-side wide.

Ian Cockbain and Benny Howell fell cheaply and, although Noema-Barnett (25) helped Klinger add 56 for the fourth wicket, when he was bowled swinging at a delivery from Khan it was 128 for four with only 3.2 overs remaining.

Klinger's 50-ball innings ended when he was caught at wide long-on off Jordan and when three wickets fell in the final over, all at the hands of Jofra Archer, Gloucestershire - having posted the lowest score by a side batting first at Bristol in 20-over matches this season - looked short of a par score.

That appeared even more certain when Sussex openers Salt and Harry Finch plundered 60 off the six powerplay overs, Salt hitting 6 fours and a six in moving to 41.

There was no let-up as Salt moved to fifty off 27 balls and celebrated with his second six, sweetly struck over deep-square off Howell.

He fell in the same over, caught at wide long-on, but by then Sussex had 85 on the board and were well on course for victory.

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It was then that Gloucestershire introduced 25-year-old left-arm spinner Lintott, who struck with the fifth and sixth balls of his debut when Laurie Evans fell to a catch by Klinger at extra cover for a single and Delray Rawlins was bowled.

Taunton-born Lintott, whose only previous county appearance came for Hampshire in a T20 game against Somerset last season, conceded only eight from his first two overs and finished with two for two for 26.

Howell (three for 37) removed Wiese and Finch with consecutive deliveries in the 16th over, but only after Wiese had hit him for four and six to cement the Sussex position. The South African - replacing Tom Bruce at number five in the order - finished with 38 from 23 balls.

Only 15 were needed off the last three overs and although Gareth Roderick produced a stunning diving catch down the leg side to dismiss Archer, Sussex got home comfortably with an over to spare.

Wiese had this to say at the conclusion of the match: "It's a massive result for us. We knew it was last chance saloon against a very good Gloucestershire side and we had to get the win.

"T20 cricket is all about momentum and now we have the chance to build some at the end of the group stage. We had to win our last three games and now we have one left.

"I was disappointed to be left out of the last match, but we have a very strong squad and good players are sometimes going to miss out.

"One or two of my performances before this were disappointing, so I am delighted to be back on the field and contributing to the team."

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