



# SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



## Northamptonshire vs. Sussex CCC Specsavers County Championship - Division Two The County Ground, Northampton Monday 24<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2018

### Day One

Ben Sanderson took four wickets and slugged a merry 36 from No.11 to give Northamptonshire a slight advantage after a first day's play where 20 wickets fell at Wantage Road.

After contesting the toss and choosing to bat first, Sanderson's 4 for 32 helped the hosts bowl Sussex out for 118 and then from 111 for 9, his entertaining batting then pushed Northants to 171 all out and gave them a very useful advantage.

The ball swung and there was some inevitable help from a September wicket, but both sides bowled well and both sides, after good starts, failed to show any determination to occupy the crease.

Sanderson's first act of the day was to hurry Sussex out as they slid away from 58 for 1 after the ball was changed. He struck twice in two balls just before lunch - nipping one back to beat Laurie Evans' drive to remove his off stump for a smartly-compiled 34 before Delray Rawlings edged his first ball to Ricardo Vasconelos at slip. Chris Jordan survived the hat-trick ball. After lunch, Sanderson received an easy return catch from a Ben Brown leading edge before trapping Ollie Robinson lbw.

He gained plenty of support from Brett Hutton, whose 3 for 41 saw him pass 150 first-class wickets, and Ben Cotton - who produced the most eye-catching of the wicket with a delivery that jagged back markedly off the seam to take out Luke Wells' off stump.

With only 118 to bowl at, Sussex gained a perfect start when Ricardo Vasconelos edged to second slip for a fifth-ball duck but at 63 for 1, the home side looked set to take control of the game but again the ball was changed and again wickets started to fall.

Ben Curran, who went smartly to 36, flicked at Abidine Sakande - playing his first match of the season - and was taken by a retreating extra-cover before Charlie Thurston, 29 in his second first-class match, lost his off stump to one that moved away.

There followed a succession of very poor shots as Alex Wakely, Luke Procter, Adam Rossington and Rob Keogh all flirted outside their off stumps and were all caught via edges by either Brown the wicketkeeper or Harry Finch at second slip.

But just as Northants were about to be rolled over, Sanderson cracked six boundaries and a straight six off Sakande - fitting on such a barmy day. He and Cotton, who made an unbeaten 24

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with three fours of his own, added 60 for the tenth wicket to give Northants a useful advantage of 53.

Sent in again for five overs before the close, Sussex made 4 for 0 and trail by 49 runs.

## Day Two

Ollie Robinson added three more wickets to his remarkable season's haul on day two of Sussex's Specsavers County Championship match against Northamptonshire at Wantage Road, but Ben Curran's unbeaten 83 steered the home side to a six-wicket victory late in the evening session.

Set 170 to win after Ben Cotton's maiden five-wicket haul helped bowl Sussex out for 222 in their second-innings, Northants slipped from 53 for 1 to 82 for 4 but Curran's solid half-century - his second in his five first-class matches since making his debut in August - and 51 not out from Adam Rossington saw their side home.

Harry Finch and Luke Wells rescued Sussex from 5 for 2, trailing by 48, to raise a century stand for the third wicket as two batsmen finally got to grips with conditions after 20 wickets fell on day one.

But after taking the score to 114-2, Finch and Wells were dismissed within three overs of each other after lunch - Finch for 63 caught behind off Ben Sanderson and Wells caught at first slip for 50 to become Cotton's first victim.

Ben Brown was then strangled down the leg side before a superb inswinger from Cotton saw Delray Rawlings record a pair. Michael Burgess chipped a catch to point and when Cotton ran a full-straight delivery into Danny Briggs' stumps, he completed his haul.

There was a brief Sussex fightback as Chris Jordan and Ollie Robinson added 41 for the eighth wicket but Robinson edged a Nathan Buck lifter behind and Jordan was ran out for 47 with only No. 11 Abidine Sakande for company.

It left Northants with a modest target but a challenge after a season of consistently failing in crucial moments of matches. Nerves were settled as Curran and Ricardo Vasconcelos - who clipped Jordan over square for a boundary to avoid a pair - added 53 for the opening wicket.

But Vasconcelos followed a Robinson delivery angled across him and edged to slip for 19 and it sparked a wobble as Charlie Thurston was caught at the wicket for 4 from a beauty from Robinson that went away from the right-hander, Alex Wakely edged to second slip and Luke Procter pinned lbw for 1.

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Procter's wicket was Robinson's 74th of the season - the most wickets in a season by a Sussex seamer since James Kirtley took 75 in the 2001 Division Two title triumph.

It was too much to ask, though, for Robinson to deliver victory as Rossington joined Curran to ease any tension and their sprightly unbroken stand of 90 brought a positive end to Northants' season of struggle.

Reflecting on the match, Sussex head coach Jason Gillespie said: ""We didn't drive the game forward and we had the opportunity to after winning the toss on a good surface that just assisted the bowlers for the first 90 minutes of day one.

"To get bowled out for 118 you're not driving the game forward and even though we bowled them out cheaply they still had a lead and we saw the wicket had got better to bat on.

"Second-innings we showed signs but we weren't able to drive home the advantage we created and it's been like that for the last month or so."

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