



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Sussex CCC vs Hampshire
2 Day Friendly
The 1st Central County Ground, Hove
Monday 25th – Tuesday 26th March 2019

Day One

The encouraging pre-season signs for the Sussex men continued on day one of their friendly against Hampshire, as cricket returned to The 1st Central County Ground for the first time this year.

Having bowled the visitors out for 167 – a feat that required taking eleven wickets such is the way of pre-season friendlies – Sussex then reached the close trailing by 17 runs having lost just three wickets.

Traffic on the A27 delayed Hampshire's arrival and with it the start of play. Proceedings began at 11.30am with the visitors batting first on what – thanks to the hard work of the groundstaff - a remarkably decent wicket given that the clocks have yet to go forward.

As agreed ahead of the match, they would have 55 of the day's scheduled 90 overs available to them.

George Garton made the initial breakthrough, having Joe Weatherley caught by Phil Salt in the slips for five with the score on 17 in the sixth over.

Six overs later, and first-change bowler Tom Haines sparked a mini collapse when he knocked Aneurin Donald's leg-stump out of the ground with the score on 32. Garton's dismissal of Liam Dawson for nought and Haines'

Opener James Vince remained unbeaten at the other end and his 85-run collaboration with Tom Alsop was the only significant stand of the innings.

Hampshire's recovery was halted when Luke Wells pushed through a quicker delivery and beat Alsop's attempted cut shot. The Hampshire 'keeper departed for 37 having become the fourth batsmen in succession to be bowled, leaving his side 123 for six.

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That brought lunch, during which Vince retired out for 70. Gareth Berg and Weatherley – batting again – resumed the innings. The former England Under-19 captain didn't fare any better second time round, being bowled by Wells for four in the fourth over of the afternoon.

Next man in, Northeast, was unable to improve much on his second attempt either. He was caught behind for three to give Abi Sakande his first wicket and leave Hampshire struggling at 135 for eight.

Keith Barker was the next man to fall, caught by Sakande for five to give Garton a third before trialist Jordan Shaw snared Berg via a sharp Harry Finch slip catch for 25 to make it 167 for ten.

No more runs had been added when Danny Briggs finished off Hampshire's extended innings via another catch in the slips: James Fuller taken by Phil Salt for six.

Phil Salt was his fluent best during a contribution of 74 to Sussex's reply, which had reached 150 for three when stumps were drawn.

Haines (7) and Wells (4) both fell to Barker with the score on 17 and 41 respectively, before Salt and a composed-looking Finch (37*) added 77 for the fourth wicket.

Salt looked in fine touch with a winter in the T20 leagues behind him. His timing was spot on despite the challenges presented by a March, however well-prepared, and he was able to pick gaps in the field with apparent ease.

His 85-ball innings eventually came to an end when Fuller bowled him with the score on 118. That brought Luke Wright (20*) to the crease who himself looked in good touch as he and Finch put on 32 in the remaining 7.4 overs of the day.

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Day Two

Harry Finch's century was the highlight of another useful day of pre-season preparation for Sussex as they made Hampshire work hard to leave The 1st Central County Ground with a draw at the end of the final day of this pre-season encounter.

Finch was in sprightly mood when Sussex resumed their innings on 150 for three earlier in the day. He needed just two and a half overs of the day's play to score the 13 runs he needed to reach his half-century as the hosts quickly overtook Hampshire's first innings total.

Meanwhile, Luke Wright was watchful and well-organised at the other end, basing his approach on a solid defence. He was unfortunate to get a delivery that kept a little low from Keith Barker that knocked back his off stump having added ten to his overnight score of 20.

With Laurie Evans joining him in the middle, Finch continued to look in complete control as he middled drives and pull shots alike. He looked particularly authoritative against the left-arm spin of Liam Dawson, against whom he scored 35 of his runs, including two sweetly struck sixes straight down the ground.

His century came up in the 24th over of the day from 146 balls, including ten fours to go with those two sixes, at which point he retired to give his teammates an opportunity to bat.

Sussex lost Evans (18) and Ben Brown (5) soon after, before Luke Wells and Tom Haines – both batting for the second time in the innings – saw the team through to lunch, with the score on 260 for seven.

Wells (6) was caught behind off James Fuller for six in the fourth over after lunch with Haines (13) following six overs later as his attempt to reverse sweep Dawson saw a top edge balloon to Sam Northeast in the gully.

George Garton and the returning Ben Brown then added the third fifty partnership of the innings. While the captain was his usual busy self on his way to an unbeaten 37, Garton demonstrated some fine strokeplay. His hook for six off a Fidel Edwards

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bouncer was particularly impressive.

When Garton gloved Edwards behind, however, on 27, Sussex were all out for 340, a lead of 173.

Abi Sakande made an immediate breakthrough in Hampshire's second innings with his third ball; a muscular, lifting delivery just outside off-stump that was diverted via Joe Weatherley's outside edge to George Garton at third slip.

Tom Haines was next to strike as Sam Northeast popped one up to Jordan Shaw at mid-wicket to leave Hampshire 33 for two and Sussex sniffing a rare win in one of these pre-season affairs, however inconsequential in the long-term.

A swashbuckling Rilee Rossouw put paid to that as he went on the offensive in a manner that, if he were being honest, he probably won't be looking to replicate come the first Championship fixture of the season.

His first fifty came off 47 balls and when he lost Liam Dawson to trialist Jordan Shaw, the South African had made 78 of Hampshire's total of 101.

Rossouw upped his pace even further as he raced to a century from just 69 balls, before retiring on 104 with the scoreboard reading 133 for five. Aneurin Donald (2) had been stumped off Will Beer two overs previously.

Beer took two more wickets – Gareth Berg caught at long off by Tom Haines and James Fuller trapped in front by a well-executed googly – before time was called at the end of the day's 90 overs with Hampshire finishing on 181 for seven.

Sussex's bowlers come out of the fixture with 17 wickets amongst them, while nearly all the batsmen spent invaluable time in the middle as preparations for the new season continue to progress nicely.

Further match practice will be available when Kent – twice vanquished in one-day cricket during the pre-season tour to South Africa – visit Hove for another two-day friendly starting on Thursday.

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