



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Durham vs Sussex CCC
Specsavers County Championship
The 1st Central County Ground, Hove
Thursday 11th – Sunday 14th April 2019

Day One

Ollie Robinson and Chris Jordan led a highly controlled Sussex bowling performance as Durham were restricted to 210 for eight on day one of the team's Specsavers County Championship encounter at Emirates Riverside.

Robinson and Jordan both took three wickets while Mir Hamza, Chris Jordan and David Wiese picked up a victim each as Durham's scoring rate barely got above two runs per over.

All eyes were on Cameron Bancroft on his bow for the north-east outfit. He made a patient 33, but he and his team-mates in the top order struggled to put runs on the board amid tight bowling from the outset.

Liam Trevaskis led a fightback in the evening session, scoring his maiden first-class fifty. However, a late surge from Jordan ensured that Sussex were in command after the first day at Emirates Riverside.

Durham were inserted after an uncontested toss. Cameron Steel rather than Bancroft opened alongside Alex Lees, and he got off the mark with his first delivery of the innings. However, Steel made only three runs before Robinson removed his off stump.

Bancroft arrived at the crease to join Lees to a smattering of applause from home fans, although scoring proved to be tough for both batsmen. Lee battled for an hour at the crease before he was bowled by Mir Hamza for 12, leaving the home side exposed at 17 for 2. Hamza was Sussex's most economical bowler, conceding just 21 runs from his 16 overs.

Gareth Harte and Bancroft were able hold out until lunch, edging Durham over the 50-run mark, before Robinson returned from the Finchale End after the break and

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broke the stand at 46, bowling Harte for 18. The Sussex seamer was in rhythm and notched his third wicket of the day when he trapped Jack Burnham lbw for a duck. Bancroft's resistance was proving vital for the home side to keep the visitors at bay, despite the slow progress in the middle.

However, the Durham skipper was removed by David Wiese after facing 159 deliveries, edging to Jordan at first slip. At 97 for 5, the home side were facing a challenge to post a competitive total in their first innings. Trevaksis and Ned Eckersley, on debut, kept Sussex at bay amid precise bowling from Robinson, Hamza and Jordan.

The duo put on the first fifty partnership of the innings from 114 deliveries, defying the visitors' attempt to take control. Trevaskis displayed a fluency that his team-mates had failed to discover at the crease. The left-hander finding the boundary to pass his previous highest first-class score of 27.

Eckersley's impressive knock was ended on 40 when he played a loose drive from a Jordan delivery, knicking behind to Ben Brown, which ended a fine stand of 93 with Trevaskis. The 19-year-old played and missed on several occasions before he finally reached his maiden first-class fifty, piercing the offside field to find the boundary.

Jordan then made a late burst for Sussex striking twice in two balls with searing inswing yorkers. Trevaskis was removed for 54 and James Weighell for a golden duck, putting the visitors in the ascendancy heading into day two.

Day Two

Sussex's Luke Wells scored an unbeaten 98 to defy Durham on day two of the Specsavers County Championship Division Two clash at Emirates Riverside.

The home side appeared to have taken control of the contest after James Weighell and Chris Rushworth combined to reduce Sussex to 71-7. However, Wells led a rearguard action with the tail, adding 131 for the final three wickets to frustrate Durham, although he fell agonisingly short of a deserved century.

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Ollie Robinson struck early in Durham's second innings, but Alex Lees and Cameron Bancroft were unbeaten at the close, leaving the north-east outfit 53 runs ahead going into day three.

Durham began the day on 210-8, but were quickly dismissed after adding only 14 to their overnight total. David Wiese and Robinson removed Ben Raine and Rushworth respectively.

In response, Rushworth made inroads into the Sussex batting order in his first over as Phil Salt was caught behind for two. Wells was fortunate not to be run out by Raine, who missed the stumps with a throw from 10 yards. Raine did atone for his miss, striking to dismiss Tom Haines for 22.

Weighell took control before lunch, finding a rhythm from the Finchale End. He notched the crucial scalp of Stiaan van Zyl, who edged to Bancroft at second slip. Laurie Evans and Ben Brown soon followed, leaving the visitors reeling at 62-5 at lunch.

Matters did not improve after the interval for Sussex. Rushworth replaced Weighell, and enjoyed the same success as his team-mate. He bowled Michael Burgess for nine before removing David Wiese's off-stump.

Amid the chaos at the other end, Wells maintained his vigil, building a vital partnership with Chris Jordan to stem the tide. The 28-year-old made his fifty from 122 deliveries, scoring seven boundaries.

The partnership was broken on 48 when Jordan drilled a Gareth Harte delivery at Raine. Wells stayed home, forcing his partner to turn back halfway down the track. The throw from Raine was good enough for Ned Eckersley to run out Jordan for 25.

Wells kept the visitors' resistance alive, forming another stand with Robinson to thwart the Durham attack. The left-hander began to pierce the field to find the boundary with regularity, whittling down the deficit. Robinson made a solid 14 before he was bowled by Matt Salisbury, leaving Wells with the last man Mir Hamza.

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Hamza held his own to allow Wells to open his arms to bring Sussex within 29 runs of the home side's total at the tea break. Wells look poised to notch his fifth century against Durham, but Hamza's defences gave way to Rushworth after 57 minutes at the crease, leaving his team-mate two runs shy of three figures.

Durham began their second innings with a lead of 22, only to be immediately pegged back when Robinson trapped Steel lbw for a duck. Lees and Bancroft were able to drop anchor in the remaining overs before the close as the hosts ended the day 31-1, 53 runs ahead of Sussex.

Day Three

Sussex are in prime position to claim their first Specsavers County Championship Division Two win of the season, requiring another 68 runs to beat Durham at Emirates Riverside on the final day.

David Wiese put his team in contention by producing a fine spell of bowling to claim five wickets, dismissing the home side for 189 in their second innings. Gareth Harte scored 74 vital runs for the north-east outfit to set a decent chase of 212 for the visitors.

Stiaan van Zyl dropped anchor after Durham made early inroads. The South African scored an unbeaten half-century to put his team within sight of victory at the close, leaving the home side in need of a dramatic turnaround on day four.

Durham began day three poorly as Alex Lees fell from his first delivery of the morning, edging behind to Ben Brown off Wiese. It would be theme of the opening session as the visitors were able to take command.

Mir Hamza made further inroads for the visitors, claiming the vital wicket of Cameron Bancroft. The Aussie played a loose drive and was caught behind for 22, while Jack Burnham was pinned lbw for five. At 70-4, Durham were in need of a partnership to stem the tide. Ned Eckersley joined Harte at the crease and the duo were able to put together a stand of 35.

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Eckersley notched back-to-back boundaries off the medium pace of Tom Haines, but then slapped the next ball straight to Laurie Evans at midwicket. His dismissal sparked a collapse as the hosts lost three wickets for one run. Liam Trevaskis and Ben Raine were removed by Wiese in the space of three deliveries, leaving Durham in trouble at 106-7, with a lead of only 128.

Durham followed the example of Sussex's lower order from day two, with a spell of defiance of their own. James Weighell combined with Harte to add 44 for the eighth wicket. Wiese was the key man for the visitors again to break their stand before accounting for the scalp of Matt Salisbury, claiming his fifth wicket of the innings.

Harte continued his impressive knock, reaching his second fifty of the campaign from 113 deliveries, and his two boundaries highlighted his patience on a slow pitch. He added 37 runs for the final wicket with Rushworth to take Durham's lead over the 200-run mark before Jordan ended the innings, although Harte finished unbeaten on 74.

Sussex lost early wickets in their chase of 212. Phil Salt and Haines were both out cheaply falling to Rushworth and Raine respectively. Wells and van Zyl formed a partnership to see off the threat of the new ball. Both batsmen applied themselves well at the crease, taking few risks with their shot selection. The pair put on fifty to whittle down the deficit below the 150-run mark.

Wells was continuing to be a thorn in the side of the hosts, but Salisbury struck to break the partnership for 83. Van Zyl continued his knock, adding an unbeaten 45 with Evans (20*) and reaching his fifty from 89 balls to put the pressure on Durham. He ended the day unbeaten to leave his team on 144-3 at the close, needing only 68 runs to secure the win.

Day Four

Sussex are up and running in the Specsavers County Championship after Stiaan van Zyl scored an unbeaten century to guide the side to their first victory of the season, defeating Durham by six wickets at Emirates Riverside

Beginning the final day on 144-3, the visitors still had a challenge to score the 68 runs

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that would carry them over the line on a gloomy morning. Van Zyl continued his brilliant knock, defying the hosts with a resilient performance before upping the ante.

Laurie Evans did offer a chance in the morning session when he drilled a Chris Rushworth delivery straight to Jack Burnham at cover, but Evans made the most of his second life, reaching fifty from 104 deliveries, his first first-class half-century for Sussex.

Van Zyl then reached three figures for the 26th time in his first-class career with a nudge down to fine leg. Salisbury removed Evans leg before for 51 with the scores level, but Ben Brown knocked off the winning runs from his first ball to guide Sussex over the line, capping a fine performance on the road from his side.

Speaking at the conclusion of the match, van Zyl said: "To get a hundred in the last innings on the last day, I'm very proud of it. It's a great win for us. I was out injured for a lot of last season and now to come back to get the win is very sweet. The Leicestershire game was disappointing. We let ourselves down there. That's why this win means a lot to us just to get that first win of the season. It's crucial for any team. "Luke Wells saved up from 70-7 to get us back to only 22 behind - that was an unbelievable innings. It was a cold four days, but we knew that. To go through it and get a win was good for us and team morale. We knew if we got a partnership going this morning to get the runs to win below fifty we would see the body language in the field go down, then we could capitalise. The wicket was okay when the ball was softer. You just had to hang in there and get the runs."

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