



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Kent Spitfires vs Sussex Sharks Royal London One-Day Cup Beckenham, Kent Sunday 21st April 2019

Phil Salt's maiden List A hundred powered unbeaten Sussex to a seven-wicket victory and inflicted a third straight Royal London One-Day Cup defeat on Kent in Beckenham.

Spitfires, last summer's beaten RLODC finalists, underachieved with the bat on a decent pitch at the New County Ground and were blown away by the Sussex batting as Salt's unbeaten 137 eased Sharks to victory with 10 overs to spare.

Salt's effort was the highest score for a Sussex player in one-day cricket in almost a decade.

With five players incapacitated [Claydon, Haggett, Stewart, Thomas and Kuhn], three more absent [Denly, Billings, Bell-Drummond] and three walking wounded out in the middle [Renshaw, Stevens and Klaassen], Spitfires were roundly out-played in all departments.

In pursuit of 299 for victory, Sharks' openers Luke Wright and Salt made a good head of steam in adding 44, including 22 in the only three overs of the game sent down by opening bowler Fred Klaassen.

Darren Stevens struck with his first delivery of the 10th over that Wright lofted to mid-off, bringing in Laurie Evans to get off the mark with two rasping cover drives to the ropes. Stevens later went off with a side strain.

Salt straight drove Alex Blake for six to raise the Sussex hundred after 16 overs but Evans went for 46 after holing out to mid-off against Matt Milnes.

Fellow academy graduate, Harry Finch joined forces with Salt to batter the game from Kent's grasp. Finch marched to a 46-ball 50 with seven fours while Salt posted his maiden List A century with seven fours and five sixes as the duo added 171 in 20 overs. That comfortably surpassed Sussex's previous best third-wicket effort in one-

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day cricket against their eastern neighbours: Paul Parker and Colin Wells' 134-run stand at Canterbury in 1984.

Salt posted a 90-ball hundred before Finch fell for an eye-catching 89 from 68 balls with his side only seven runs short of the win line.

Batting first after acting skipper Adam Rouse won the toss, Kent openers Crawley and Sean Dickson added 60 before leg-spinner Will Beer struck with his second ball, snaring Crawley leg before on the back foot.

Number three Matt Renshaw showed Beer scant regard with a back-foot drive for four and a six that sailed over long-on to hit a spectator flush on the head. As Renshaw changed his bat, so the unfortunate boundary-line supporter was taken to hospital for treatment to his gashed scalp.

In Beer's next over Dickson was caught behind cutting, but Renshaw and Ollie Robinson regrouped by taking 17 off a Chris Jordan over as Renshaw cantered through to a 48-ball 50, his first in Kent colours, with five fours and two sixes.

Kent's third-wicket partners raised the home 200 by the 32nd over but Sharks' left-arm seamer George Garton was rewarded for pegging back the run rate when Robinson turned a length ball to mid-wicket to depart four shy of his maiden List A 50 and end a partnership worth 121 – Kent's competition best for the third wicket against Sussex.

Blake's innings in his 100th List A game lasted seven balls on his home town-ground before the impressive Garton plucked out middle stump with a yorker, then Garton had Adam Rouse caught at mid-wicket off a mistimed pull to finish with three for 42.

With four to his name, Stevens perished after a mid-pitch mix-up saw him run out by Briggs's direct underarm hit from cover yet Renshaw, despite struggling with back spasms and losing his timing, made it through to his maiden Spitfires hundred from 105 balls with seven fours and four sixes before departing lbw for 109 when aiming a reverse sweep against Briggs.

Milnes was caught in the deep for a lusty 19 and Harry Podmore stumped for a useful

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32 as Kent succumbed with two balls of the final over remaining.

Speaking after his magnificent innings, Salt said: ""When 'Finchy' came in he played superbly by taking all the pressure off me and I'm really pleased we went on to get the third-wicket partnership against Kent and it was great to do that with such a good mate.

"I was dropped on 23 and whenever you get a chance like that you think to yourself 'come on, take advantage', and I'm delighted to have done that.

"When we came here today we knew it would be a pretty good surface but our bowlers did really well to restrict them to around 300.

"When Garts came on to bowl for us I felt the game was starting to drift a little bit, but he bowled four really tight overs, got two for 20-odd and that swung the whole momentum of the game our way. From that point on we knew we'd not be having to chase such a big total that we first thought."

With two wins from two, the Sharks will go into their next match against Somerset at The 1st Central County Ground on Wednesday full of confidence. Tickets are available to buy [here](#).

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