



# SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



**Sussex CCC vs Leicestershire  
Specsavers County Championship  
The 1<sup>st</sup> Central County Ground, Hove  
Friday 5<sup>th</sup> – Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

## Day One

David Wiese hit a counterattacking half-century, before overseas debutant Mir Hamza excited with a spell of skillful swing bowling that brought him three wickets as bowlers dominated on the opening day of Sussex's Specsavers County Championship match against Leicestershire at The 1st Central County Ground.

Leicestershire seamer Tom Taylor took career-best figures of 6 for 47 as bowlers dominated on the opening day of their Specsavers County Championship match against Sussex at Hove.

Taylor took three wickets in six balls to help reduce Sussex to 38 for 5 after an uncontested toss, before David Wiese counter-attacked with 51 to which took Sussex to 173.

Hamza then picked up three wickets as Leicestershire slumped to 59 for 5 before Lewis Hill (40 not out) and Harry Dearden (26 not out) fought back to take their side for 131 for 5 when bad light ended play 11 overs early.

Chris Wright - making his debut for Leicestershire after joining from Warwickshire over the winter - gave the visitors the perfect start when he had Phil Salt caught behind off his fourth delivery before Taylor took centre stage.

He went around the wicket to the left-hander Luke Wells who edged to third slip for a duck before grabbing three wickets in six balls, dismissing Tom Haines off a leading edge, Harry Finch caught behind and Sussex skipper Ben Brown, who was bowled off an inside edge.

South Africans David Wiese and Stiaan van Zyl counter-attacked in a stand of 64 before van Zyl was bowled via a bottom edge by Wright for 28.

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Wiese's innings was full of crunching cover drives, a shot that accounted for a number of the ten boundaries in his 66-ball innings.

He was bowled by Taylor for 51 four overs into the afternoon session, however, and the 24-year-old Derbyshire academy product had the second six-wicket haul of his first-class career when Ollie Robinson lost his middle stump for 23.

Danny Briggs was the last man out when he was caught and bowled by Gavin Griffiths for what could prove a very useful 20.

The last five wickets had added 137 runs and the value of those lower-order contributions became evident when Leicestershire's top order found the going just as tough.

Hamza arrived from Pakistan with an outstanding first-class record of 282 wickets at an average of 19 and he was soon showing his skills, moving the ball late off the seam and through the air.

He took his first wicket when Ateeq Javid (7) offered a leading edge which the bowler dived to his right to intercept in his follow-through. Hamza then struck twice either side of tea as Mark Cosgrove (11) was lbw and skipper Paul Horton (26) caught behind.

At the other end last season's leading wicket-taker Ollie Robinson was soon back among the wickets. He had Hasan Azad (6) and Colin Ackermann (0) caught in the slip cordon as Leicestershire wobbled.

But after a watchful start Dearden and Hill flourished, putting on an unbeaten 72 for the sixth wicket in 19 overs. The first hour tomorrow will go along way to deciding who emerges victorious in this match

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## Day Two

A typically vigorous innings from Sussex opener Phil Salt helped dispel his side's unhappy memories of their disappointing first innings display on day two of their Specsavers County Championship match against Leicestershire at The 1st Central County Ground.

Salt hit 11 fours and a hooked six off Will Davis as he and opening partner Tom Haines made light work of a first innings deficit of 79. Salt struck a dynamic 80 from 67 deliveries as he made up for his four-ball duck on the opening day.

In the first over he hit Chris Wright for three fours, straight, to third man and to backward-point. He scored 41 off 27 balls as he and Haines raised the 50. And the opening pair took just 16 overs to wipe off the arrears.

Salt's tempo slowed, allowing Haines to catch up a little, but he still managed to reach his half-century off 41 deliveries.

In a bid to stem the tide Leicestershire brought on off-spinner Colin Ackerman to bowl the last over before tea, and with his fifth ball he had Haines lbw for 39.

Salt was second out with the score on 136 in the 29th over. It was a tame end to a vivid innings as he tapped a return catch to give Ackermann his second wicket.

But then the Leicestershire bowlers came up against another Sussex batsman with a point to prove. Luke Wells had also made a duck in his first innings, but he showed determination as he dug in with South African and fellow left-hander Stiaan van Zyl. The unbroken third wicket partnership is so far worth 75, with both batsmen undefeated on 41 and Sussex's 211 for two putting them 132 ahead going into day three.

Leicestershire had started the cold and blustery second day on 131 for five, 42 runs behind, and looked unlikely to reach their 252 when, in the fifth over of the morning, Harry Dearden, half-forward, was lbw to a ball from Ollie Robinson which kept a little low.

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But a seventh wicket stand of 52 in 17 overs between Lewis Hill and Tom Taylor took them past the Sussex total. When Hill leg-glanced David Wiese for a single in the 14th over of the day Leicestershire went past the Sussex total. Hill took a battling hour to add the 10 runs he needed to reach his half-century.

Sussex fought back with three wickets in seven overs. Spinner Danny Briggs bowled Hill, sweeping, for 67, Haines had Taylor lbw for 33, before Gavin Griffiths was caught behind off Chris Jordan for one.

But then a last wicket stand of 31 between Wright and Will Davis frustrated the Sussex bowlers and delayed lunch by 30 minutes.

Robinson - who finished with 4 for 46 - finally ended Leicestershire's innings six balls after the break when Wright was caught hooking by van Zyl on the midwicket boundary.

## Day Three

Leicestershire made a good start to their pursuit of the target of 230 that Sussex had set them on day three of the sides' Specsavers County Championship match at The 1st Central County Ground.

Leicestershire skipper Paul Horton made an unbeaten 53 to take his side to 99 for 1 when rain arrived at tea and play was abandoned for the day at 5.35pm with Leicestershire still needing 131.

Debutant Hasan Azad has so far helped Horton put on 72 for the second wicket after David Wiese had pinned Ateeq Javid lbw with an in-swing for 11.

Horton reached his half-century off 79 balls with seven fours but he needed a check by the Leicestershire physio after ducking into Chris Jordan's bouncer which struck him on the helmet.

Their fight back had been set up earlier in the day by off-spinner Colin Ackermann, who finished with career-best figures of 5 for 69, and seamer Tom Taylor, who claimed four more victims to add to his six in the first innings for a match haul of 10 for

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122, also a career-best.

Sussex had resumed on 211 for 2 – a lead of 132 – and in good batting conditions must have been confident of setting the visitors a target of more than 300.

Instead, a spirited bowling performance and some tight decisions that went against the home side meant they lost their last eight wickets for 97 runs, three of them for 11 balls at a cost of two runs during the morning session.

Taylor made a breakthrough in the first over when Stiaan van Zyl (41) feathered an out-swing to Lewis Hill, one of four catches for the Foxes' wicketkeeper.

Luke Wells and Harry Finch added 23 with few alarms before their middle order was wrecked by Taylor and Ackermann. Wells lost his middle stump on 48 attempting to drive a full, swinging delivery from Taylor. In his next over Taylor had David Wiese (0) leg-before to a ball which kept a touch low while Sussex captain Ben Brown was given out lbw to Ackermann also for a duck.

Sussex rebuilt through Finch and Chris Jordan, who added 49 for the seventh wicket, but when it appeared that they were wresting back the initiative Ackermann completed his five-for with two wickets in three balls thanks to athletic catches at short leg by Hasan Azad. Jordan (18) was adjudged to have top-edged a sweep and Ollie Robinson followed when he attempted to drive down the ground.

The innings ended shortly after lunch. Danny Briggs (16) was caught behind off Taylor's outs-winger and Finch, with only last man Mir Hamza for company, drove at Chris Wright and Hill did the rest behind the stumps.

Speaking at the close, Wells said: "We fought back well on the second day and were in a position to take the game away from Leicestershire, but they kept pegging us back at crucial times. 230 is a gettable score but there is enough rough there for our spinners and it's still doing a bit for the seamers. If we bowl well straight away tomorrow we could defend that score.

"I played against Tom Taylor when he was at Derbyshire and he's much improved. He bowled at a reasonable pace, hit good areas consistently and swung it around. It

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should give our seamers encouragement that if we do that tomorrow we can get our rewards.”

## Day Four

Leicestershire made a winning start to their Specsavers County Championship campaign with a seven-wicket victory over Sussex at The 1st Central County Ground, Hove.

Half-centuries from captain Paul Horton and Championship debutant Hasan Azad set things up before Australian Mark Cosgrove saw his side over the line with an unbeaten 53 as Leicestershire sealed their win 50 minutes after lunch.

It was Leicestershire’s first Championship success at Hove for 24 years and the calm way in which they approached a potentially tricky target of 230, on a pitch that did not deteriorate as much as Sussex had hoped, will give Horton and coach Paul Nixon them plenty of encouragement for the summer ahead.

They had resumed in a good position on 99 for 1 and Horton and Azad took few risks against some accurate bowling from Sussex’s seam attack, as they extended their second-wicket stand to 88 from 31 overs.

Horton looked especially secure and it was a surprise when he drove hard at a ball from Ollie Robinson - who was particularly impressive - which nipped off the seam and thick-edged to second slip. Phil Salt parried it and Chris Jordan completed the catch at first slip. Horton batted for nearly three hours for his 61, facing 112 balls and hitting seven fours.

Azad proved even more difficult to dislodge and a square drive off Mir Hamza took him to his maiden Championship 50 with his seventh boundary just before lunch. Only 77 runs were scored in 30 overs during the morning session, but Leicestershire were in no hurry.

Two balls after the resumption Robinson surprised Azad with extra bounce and had the left-hander caught off the shoulder of the bat at second slip. He had faced 173 balls and hit six fours, adding 61 with Cosgrove.

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Leicestershire still needed 54 at that stage and Sussex had a glimmer of hope, but Cosgrove and the equally experienced Colin Ackermann quietly chipped away at the target.

Cosgrove opened his shoulders to drive Chris Jordan through extra cover to reach his half-century but it was Ackermann who cut Jordan past backward point for the winning runs 50 minutes after lunch. Ackermann was unbeaten on 20 while Cosgrove's 53 not out came off 86 balls with eight fours.

Reflecting on the match, Sussex head coach, Jason Gillespie said: "It's disappointing. We hung in but when you find yourself 38 for 5 on the first morning and under the pump it's very hard to come back from that. Then on the third morning we lost 4 for 21. If we'd got a few more runs we could have made it really challenging but fair play to Leicester, they played well.

"There were two occasions when we lost wickets in clumps and our batters need to identify those periods and adapt when the opposition are bowling really well. It is something for us to learn from – that is the challenge, to continually reflect on team and our individual performances."

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