



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Sussex Sharks vs Somerset Royal London One-Day Cup The 1st Central County Ground, Hove Wednesday 24th April 2019

Somerset made it three wins out of three in the Royal London One-Day Cup after beating previously undefeated Sussex Sharks by 68 runs under Duckworth-Lewis at The 1st Central County Ground on Wednesday.

After being put in, Somerset made 283 for 8 and Sussex were 62 for 4 from 13.3 overs when rain arrived at 4pm. Six minutes before a planned 5.45pm re-start, which would have left Sussex needing an unlikely 169 from 81 balls, the rain returned and play was abandoned by umpires Tim Robinson and Chris Watts.

Somerset's win was set up by solid contributions from Azhar Ali (68), James Hildreth (82) and Lewis Gregory (50) and their score always looked competitive on a slow pitch with the additional hazard of occasional low bounce.

With Luke Wright absent because of sickness, Sussex needed one of their top four to make a significant contribution but Phil Salt, whose unbeaten 137 guided them to victory over Kent on Sunday, was lbw to Craig Overton for seven in the second over. Wright's replacement Stiaan van Zyl was dropped at slip by James Hildreth on four but added just two more runs before Overton dived to his left to take a stunning catch at mid-wicket in the seventh over off Josh Davey.

Laurie Evans and Harry Finch rebuilt but Finch (10) was bowled by Gregory in the 12th over and four balls later Evans (25) mis-judged a hook off Tim Groenewald and Overton took another good catch on the mid-wicket boundary. Shortly afterwards rain arrived and Sussex's hopes were scuppered.

Skipper Ben Brown had inserted Somerset on the same pitch Sussex had beaten Surrey on Friday and their bowlers enjoyed some early success. David Wiese bowled Tom Banton (7) with a ball that nipped back and in the next over Peter Trego was well held in the covers by Finch off Mir Hamza.

But from 30 for 2 Somerset rebuilt effectively through Azhar Ali and Hildreth, who added 101 in 20 overs for the third wicket. Ali was dropped at long off by van Zyl off Danny Briggs on 61 and added seven more runs when he was tempted down the pitch by the left-arm spinner and easily stumped by Brown, having hit six fours.

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Hildreth played with his customary fluency as he lodged back-to-back fifties in the competition and it was a surprise when he fell for 82 off 91 balls in the 41st over, splicing a pull to cover when Chris Jordan surprised him with some extra bounce. Hildreth hit a six and four fours.

Late impetus was provided by Gregory who struck three sixes and two fours in plundering 50 off 28 balls before he was bowled by Jordan in the 48th over. In his final match before linking up with England's one-day squad, Jordan took 2 for 42 while Hamza finished with 3 for 54 after picking up skipper Tom Abell (44) and Craig Overton in his penultimate over. With a disciplined attack to help defend it, Somerset's total always looked competitive.

Reflecting on his side's first defeat in the competition, Sharks head coach Jason Gillespie said: "We've got no complaints - we were well beaten by a good Somerset side.

"We started well with the ball and bowled well in patches but they scored 97 off the last ten overs and we missed a couple of opportunities in the field and that allowed them to get away a bit. They also bowled well at us up top so we have to take our lessons and move forward to Middlesex at Lord's on Saturday. It's disappointing but we've parked it and move on."

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