



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Essex Eagles vs Sussex Sharks
Royal London One-Day Cup
The Cloudfm County Ground, Chelmsford
Tuesday 30th April 2019

Will Beer brilliantly shattered his best score for Sussex Sharks to hand his side a nervy one wicket win over Essex Eagles in Royal London One-Day Cup at Chelmsford.

Leg-spinner Beer arrived at the crease on 94 for six before he produced a superb 75 in a three-figure stand with Laurie Evans. The pair's 121-run partnership was Sussex's highest for the seventh wicket in one-day cricket, beating Ian Gould and Garth le Roux's 33-year-old record.

Recalled to the side after missing out on Sussex's win at Lord's on Saturday, Beer's previous best was an unbeaten 45 against Durham in 2014 as he helped the Sharks on their way to an incredible win.

The gutsy victory was secured when No.10 and No.11s Danny Briggs and Mir Hamza scored the required seven off the last over with a ball to spare to send Sussex to their fourth victory in five outings. On his 28th birthday, Briggs finished unbeaten on 37 from 26 balls, also a career-best in the format.

Earlier, Essex had won the toss and elected to bat on the same pitch on which they beat Hampshire on two days previous.

Sir Alastair Cook and Varun Chopra, who returned from a quad injury, put on Essex's best opening stand in the competition so far as they reached 73 without loss.

Chopra was given a life on 15 when he was dropped at first slip by Phil Salt but failed to score a third successive format century when he was lbw to a booming George Garton in-swing.

Cook then chopped Abi Sakande onto his stumps four balls later before Tom Westley and Dan Lawrence set Essex about their total. Both were forced to be patient in their quest to find runs, firstly against a moving ball and then on a slow pitch.

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Other than a well struck six straight down the ground, Lawrence appeared particularly risk averse as he reached his fourth fifty of the One Day Cup from 69 balls, shortly after Westley passed the milestone off 54 deliveries.

Essex's second mini-blip saw Westley caught by Beer on the heave to third man off David Wiese having put on 104 with Lawrence, and then Ravi Bopara edged the same bowler behind 13 balls later. Lawrence fell between 50 and 60 for a fourth time in an enigmatic season when he was caught behind off Mir Hamza on 54.

Ryan ten Doeschate (35), Robbie White (a career-best 21) and Matt Coles (16) all chipped in to take the hosts to 283 for seven – as David Wiese ended as the pick of the Sharks bowlers with figures of three for 54.

In reply, Jamie Porter struck in his third over as he used the new ball to his advantage when he jagged a delivery into Phil Salt's middle stump.

Former England all-rounder Luke Wright passed 5,000 List A runs when he reached 25 but only scored another five runs before chipping to Chopra at short extra cover and Garton - promoted to number three - was castled by Ravi Bopara for a promising 38, also a career-best.

Coles, fresh on the back of taking four wickets on his first appearance of the season vs Hampshire, then entered to dismantle the Sussex middle-order. Harry Finch mistimed to Chopra in the covers before the former Kent man took the wickets of Wiese and Ben Brown in consecutive balls.

Both Wiese and Brown were tempted to tuck at the ball outside the off stump to edge to Middlesex loanee Robbie White – leaving Sussex 94 for six having lost four wickets in 15 balls.

Laurie Evans and Beer resuscitate the innings with their record stand 126 balls. That was ended, however, when Evans, having reached a fifth List A half century in 55-balls, steered to Coles at short fine leg off ten Doeschate.

Beer, who had passed fifty for the first time in one-day cricket from 79-balls, continued his destruction with two maximums, but played one shot too many as he picked out

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Coles at cow corner.

Abidine Sakande was run out by Porter but Hamza and Briggs held their nerves with a 24-run stand for the final wicket to secure an epic victory that consolidates Sussex's third place in the south group.

Reacting at the end of a stunning game of cricket, the day's top-scorer. Beer said: "I don't know how to explain that. We have sung The Great Escape up in the dressing room. It is a great win. We know as a team we know we haven't played at our best in the full 100 overs today but we have dug out a performance in the end and got ourselves a win.

"You probably have to say the partnership with Laurie won us the game but also Danny at the end. When Laurie and I came together we needed almost 200 and we said we need to knuckle down and occupy the crease for a bit and get a partnership and after batting for five or six overs we said if we can get it to 90 to win from 10 overs to go we would have a chance. Luckily the last partnership got us over the line and we got ourselves out of jail.

"Batting is something I have been working on for the last few years now and see myself as an all-rounder. It was nice to go out there and have the opportunity to go out there and bat but hopefully the top order can stop me from batting. It is good that guys like myself, Wiese and Danny can contribute with the bat and we can bat down to No.11 – which is positive for the rest of the tournament."

"It is difficult to say whether 283 was below par. We turned up and looked at the small ground that anything around 300 would be in play. But the wicket seamed a bit and was a bit two-paced and variable with the new ball. We showed that if you bowled well on the wicket you could take wickets."

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