



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Sussex CCC vs Durham CCC Specsavers County Championship – Division Two The 1st Central County Ground, Hove Monday 24th – Thursday 27th June 2019

Day One

Chris Jordan had Durham on the rocks at 90 for 5 on the first day of the Specsavers County Championship match at The 1st Central County Ground before a Cameron Bancroft century put the visitors back on course, steering them to 259 without further loss at the close.

After electing to bat first, Durham's opening partnership lasted just seven deliveries before Alex Lees sliced his attempted cover drive off Jordan to Harry Finch at backward-point. There were just 7.2 overs in the morning because of persistent light rain.

When play resumed after lunch Sussex took control. Aaron Thomason took his maiden first-class wicket when he had Gareth Harte, driving, caught by Stiaan van Zyl at extra-cover. That made it 64-2 in the 22nd over.

Then Jordan shook Durham with a spell of three wickets in eight balls without conceding a run. First, he caught Jack Burnham by surprise with one that bounced and seamed sharply away, for Ben Brown to take a regulation catch behind the wicket.

There were two more for the England man in his next over. First he swung one away from Graham Clark, who pushed forward and was caught by Laurie Evans at second slip. Then, three balls later, Liam Trevaskis was also defeated by late away swing and was lbw without scoring.

But then Bancroft and Ned Eckersley put on an unbroken stand of 169. It was a record sixth wicket stand for Durham against Sussex, beating the 129 shared between Sherwin Campbell and Chris Scott at Hove in 1996.

They had some good fortune. Eckersley had made only four when he was dropped in the slips. Sussex still looked good at tea, though, when Durham were 117-5. But after

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the interval Bancroft, who had reached his half-century by pulling the unlucky David Wiese for four, was dropped behind off the same bowler on 59.

Bancroft went on to reach his century – beating his previous best score for the county of 70 – off 179 balls. There were ten fours and a straight six off spinner Luke Wells. At the close Bancroft was 120 not out and Eckersley was unbeaten with 70, including eight fours.

Commenting on his performance, Jordan - who finished the day with figures of 4 for 41 from his 21 overs - said: "I'm pretty happy to get wickets and contribute to the team.

"I would like us to be in a better position, given the chances that we created. We missed a couple of chances. But at the end of the day I would say it's honours even and we need to make some inroads with the new ball in the morning.

"We weren't too displeased to lose the toss and bowl first. The ball often does something here early on. Now it all depends how we come back in the morning. Cameron showed why he is an international player. He went through the gears. He's a quality player. We will want to get him out early in the morning."

Day Two

A century partnership between David Wiese and Delray Rawlins - who also recorded career-best first-class bowling figures earlier in the day - led a thrilling Sussex counter-attack on day two of their Specsavers County Championship match against Durham at The 1st Century County Championship.

Durham, the bottom side in the second division of the Specsavers County Championship, had outplayed promotion Sussex until tea. Resuming on 259 for five at the start of the day, Durham went on to make 384 and then reduced Sussex to 90 for five before David Wiese and Delray Rawlins cheered up local supporters with some spirited strokeplay in the long shadows.

Sussex took the new ball at the start of play, intent on making up for some missed opportunities on the opening day. But the bowling was wayward – of the first 31 runs in the morning only 13 came off the bat.

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Durham captain Cameron Bancroft and Ned Eckersley went on and on and when Bancroft went down the pitch and drove Luke Wells for four shortly before lunch it took the partnership to 281. That set a new sixth wicket record for the club, beating the 278 shared between Michael Richardson and Stuart Poynter at Derby last year.

Then Sussex battled back, taking the last five Durham wickets for 12 runs in 32 deliveries. Two balls after the partnership record was broken, Wells took a sharp return catch to dismiss Eckersley, whose 118 came from 237 balls, with 14 fours. It was his first championship century for two years.

In the following over, Bancroft was out. Attempting to sweep, he was lbw to Rawlins for 158, from 305 balls, with 13 fours and a six. Rawlins and Will Beer wrapped up the innings. Slow left-armed Rawlins finished with three for 19.

The Sussex top order, without the injured Phil Salt and with others out of form, has been misfiring and here they were soon two for three after 25 balls.

Wells hung out his bat and nicked Chris Rushworth to first slip, Beer was lbw to a yorker from Brydon Carse and Harry Finch was also lbw, failing to get forward to a pitched up delivery from Rushworth for a duck.

Laurie Evans looked in prime form before he was caught down the leg-side off James Weighell for 20. And just before tea key batsman Stiaan van Zyl was bowled off stump by Gareth Harte for 34.

Ben Brown was caught at mid-on off the second ball after tea for 26 and when Chris Jordan was caught at slip for six Sussex were 110-7.

But then the fun started for Sussex. Experienced all-rounder Wiese and the clearly gifted left-handed strokemaker Rawlins counter-attacked with brio. Rawlins reached his third first-class fifty with a huge six over long-on, his second, to go with six fours. They put on 109, an eighth wicket record between these two sides, before Wiese fell for 56. Sussex closed on 231-9, 153 behind.

At the close, Rawlins said: "My opportunity to play came about through an injury. I don't like to see injuries but it was nice to get the opportunity, to cash in and get some runs and wickets.

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“David Wiese has been there all year, with bat and ball, and he made it easier for me to play. We managed to put ourselves in a better position than we were when I came to the crease.

“We were struggling a bit. But when Durham batted they were in trouble before a couple of guys put together a partnership. We decided to be positive and if there was something there we liked, we hit it. And it came off for the two of us.

“With the bowling, it’s been coming out quite nicely in the past few weeks. And the wicket assisted me a little bit. I’m still working on my red ball game. We need to come back in the morning and bat normally.

“I found out Sunday morning that I was playing, when Dizzy [Gillespie] phoned me. It was a bit of a shock to me. Playing wasn’t on my radar. But it’s nice to get the opportunity.”

Day Three

Durham are in a strong position to claim their second Specsavers County Championship win of the season after Alex Lees’ century and Chris Rushworth’s three wickets underlined their dominance against Sussex on day three at The 1st Central County Ground.

After Lees made 143 and Gareth Harte 77, Durham declared their second innings on 284 for 3 and set Sussex 437 to win in a minimum of 126 overs.

It would be the second-highest successful fourth innings chase in Sussex’s history, but the odds on them achieving it lengthened when veteran Rushworth nipped out Luke Wells and Harry Finch for ducks with the new ball.

But from 4 for 2, Will Beer (36) and Stiaan van Zyl took Sussex to 59 before Rushworth returned to claim a third wicket when he had Beer leg before in the penultimate over of the day. Sussex closed on 59 for 3 with van Zyl 17 not out and Durham will fancy their chances of winning at Hove for the first time since 2011.

Earlier, Lees lodged his second century in three innings as he and Harte added 220 for the second wicket after Brydon Carse had removed Delray Rawlins for 56 with the second ball of the day to end Sussex’s first innings on 232.

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Despite a lead of 152 Durham did not enforce the follow-on and after skipper Cameron Bancroft (5) fell during Ollie Robinson’s new-ball spell Lees and Harte set about strengthening Durham’s position on an increasingly benign surface.

Sussex employed seven bowlers including three spinners but with their main threat Robinson struggling to overcome a virus they made little headway as the stand grew. Lees reached the 14th hundred of his career with his 11th boundary, scored off Rawlins, and became only the third Durham batsman after Wayne Larkins and Michael Di Venuto to score a second-innings hundred after making a duck in the first.

The partnership was broken by Luke Wells when Harte (77) was caught on the drive at short cover by Rawlins, but Lees pressed on and had faced 212 balls and hit 14 fours and two sixes when he was caught behind after tea cutting Beer’s googly. It is the first time for six years that three Durham batsmen have scored hundreds in the same match.

The declaration came shortly afterwards and Sussex, who lost their first three wickets for two runs in the first innings, were soon in deep trouble again.

Rushworth claimed Wells with the fifth ball although the bowler had turned and was heading back to his mark when umpire Ben Debenham upheld an appeal from the fielders behind the wicket for a catch at third slip.

But there was no doubt when Rushworth struck again in his third over as he held Finch’s mis-timed drive in his follow through to claim his 450th first-class wicket for Durham.

Sussex head coach, Jason Gillespie spoke at the end of the day's play: "It's been a tough day for us but I'm ever the optimist and we're still in there fighting and we have to look to be positive tomorrow.

"We need a lot of runs (378) and I'm a realist and know it's going to be a tough challenge. We need the players to step up, take on the challenge and get the job done for the team."

Day Four

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Ben Raine bowled Durham to their second County Championship win of the season with a career-best haul of 6 for 27 as Sussex were beaten by 196 runs at The 1st Central County Ground.

The hosts were dismissed 30 minutes after tea on the final day for 240 with only night-watchman Ollie Robinson (55), Stiaan van Zyl (48), Chris Jordan (44) and the unbeaten Delray Rawlins offering the necessary resistance as Durham claimed their second victory of the season.

Durham's victory was set up during a devastating spell of four wickets in 16 balls by Raine, who joined the county last winter from Leicestershire and who finished with 6 for 27 from 22.3 overs with 13 maidens.

The 27-year-old fast bowler took six wickets at the same venue for Leicestershire last season and he showed his liking for the seaside again either side of lunch when he picked up van Zyl, Laurie Evans, Ben Brown and David Wiese without conceding a run.

Bowling up the slope and getting movement back into the right-handers, his telling burst came just when Sussex harboured hopes of batting through the final day and saving the game.

They started it on 59 for 3 needing 378 more to win but van Zyl and Robinson negotiated almost the entire first session with few alarms, although van Zyl was dropped at slip by Alex Lees on 47.

Raine struck three balls before lunch. Left-hander van Zyl had faced 188 balls for his 48 before nibbling at an away-swing. His seven boundaries included four in five deliveries off left-arm spinner Liam Trevaskis.

With the breakthrough made, Raine rushed in. Laurie Evans was caught behind off the next ball – the first after lunch – and in his next over Raine pinned Brown (1) and David Wiese (0) on the crease with late movement.

But from 143 for 7 Sussex rallied through Jordan and Robinson, who shared 54 for the eighth wicket and more importantly used up 18 overs.

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Robinson, who made a hundred on his Sussex debut against Durham in 2015 batting at no. 10, passed 50 for the sixth time in his career before his spirited resistance was ended by Chris Rushworth, who struck in his second over with the second new ball when Robinson was well taken by the diving Jack Burnham at third slip for 55.

After tea, Raine switched to the Cromwell Road end to finish things off. Jordan, who played well for his 44, edged a beauty which held its line to wicketkeeper Ned Eckersley and Aaron Thomason was held head-high at second slip by Bancroft, leaving Delray Rawlins 20 not out.

Durham's win lifted them off the bottom of the table to eighth and although Sussex remain third they have played a game more than most of their promotion rivals.

Reflecting on his side's defeat, Sussex captain Ben Brown said: "I felt Durham out-bowled and out-batted us. We were four down for nothing against the new ball again and that is something we have to rectify pretty quickly because it meant we were up against it for the last couple of days. We probably have to look at making changes because we can't keep being 30 for 4 every time.

"Ben Raine was pretty relentless today and there are lessons for our bowlers to learn in the way he bowled straight and kept coming at us.

"We fell below our usual standards and that is a big disappointment. It's a brutal schedule at the moment with another game starting on Sunday but that gives us a quick opportunity against Northants to put things right.

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