



# SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



## Sussex Sharks vs Hampshire Vitality Blast The 1<sup>st</sup> Central County Ground Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Reece Topley enjoyed a Sussex debut to remember with four wickets - three of them in four balls - as the Sharks beat Hampshire by 15 runs in the Vitality Blast at The 1<sup>st</sup> Central County Ground.

Topley, who left Hampshire at the end of last season, laid waste to their top order by removing Aneurin Donald (13) and James Vince and Sam Northeast for ducks – his first T20 wickets since 2017 – in a sensational second over. He then returned to end Hampshire's brave pursuit of a target of 189 when Kyle Abbott was caught in the deep off the final ball of the 19th over to finish with 4 for 33.

It was a special moment for the 25-year-old left-armer who made 16 white-ball appearances for England between 2015-16 before his career was badly disrupted by injuries, including five stress fractures in his back. He worked his way back to fitness and earned a contract for the rest of the season at Hove last month.

Donald was pinned in front by a full-length ball, Vince caught behind off an inside edge and Northeast bowled through the gate to send a 6,000 Hove crowd into raptures. At 18 for 3 it was a long way back for Hampshire but opener Rilee Rossouw made 60 off 38 balls with eight fours and a six, although his innings was interrupted after he was hit on the side of the helmet attempting a ramp shot off David Wiese and had to go off for treatment. Lewis McManus struck 32 off 15 balls but Topley's burst had left them with too much to do.

Despite the absence of World Cup winner Jofra Archer, who watched the game from the players' balcony, and the injured Chris Jordan Sussex still look a formidable outfit. Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan took two wickets and slow left-armer Danny Briggs 3 for 35.

The Sharks had been put in on a sticky, slow pitch and their 188 for 6 looked above par. Opener Phil Salt, who was called into England's T20 squad earlier this year, led the way with 73 off 46 balls while Wiese (44 not out) and Khan, who smashed 22 off seven

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balls, provided impetus at the end.

After a watchful start, Salt took 18 off South African all-rounder Chris Morris's first over as he dominated a stand of 53 for the first wicket with skipper Luke Wright (15) during the power-play which ended when Wright top-edged an attempted pull off Abbott.

It was no surprise that the canny Liam Dawson put the brakes on, conceding just 24 in his four overs, but Hampshire struggled to contain Sussex at the other end. Salt hit leg-spinner Mason Crane's first ball out of the ground as he raced to a 28-ball 50 and although Laurie Evans (15) and Delray Rawlins (6) went cheaply Salt took the score to 124 in the 14th over when he mis-timed an expansive extra cover drive at Chris Wood, having hit seven fours and three sixes.

Wiese and Khan provided acceleration at the end as 44 runs were plundered from the last three overs. Khan took 21 off Abbott in the 18th including two sixes and two boundaries and Abbott suffered again in the final over which fellow South African Wiese hit for 17.

Reflecting on his side's opening victory in this year's tournament, Sharks captain Luke Wright said: "It was a great win for us and obviously a special night for Reece Topley. At one stage he wasn't sure he was going to play again and it's great to see him come through some tough times. He's an international class bowler and we hope he goes from strength to strength.

"We thought 188 was a good total. Phil Salt played really well again. He's played a lot of franchise cricket in the last year or so and he's picked up a lot of things and moved his game forward. He gave us a good platform and then Rashid Khan's little cameo at the end was crucial."

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