



SUSSEX CRICKET MATCH REPORT



Sussex Sharks vs Surrey Vitality Blast The 1st Central County Ground Friday 26th July 2019

Alex Carey marked his Sussex Sharks debut with a brilliant 78 to set up a 13-run Vitality Blast victory over Somerset at Taunton.

The 27-year-old Australian cracked 7 fours and 4 sixes in a 46-ball innings that entertained a 7,400 crowd. Laurie Evans (33) and David Wiese (26) gave good support in a score of 184 for eight after losing the toss, while Lewis Gregory claimed three for 30.

In reply, Somerset could make only 171 for five, despite an opening stand of 96 in less than 12 overs by Babar Azam (83) and Tom Banton (51). Tymal Mills was the most economical Sussex bowler with one for 27 from 4 overs.

The Sharks had managed only 34 for two in their six-over power play, losing the wickets of Phil Salt, caught at extra cover off the second ball of the innings, sent down by Max Waller, and Luke Wright, bowled off stump by Jerome Taylor, who had dropped him off Gregory two overs earlier.

But the arrival of Carey soon changed the tempo of the innings. The left-hander hit the first six of the match over mid-wicket off Roelof van der Merwe in the eighth over.

Soon Carey was timing the ball sweetly and he took a particular liking to the left-arm spin of van der Merwe, lofting him for 2 straight sixes in the 11th over.

Evans provided positive support, claiming a maximum off Craig Overton's bowling before being caught at deep cover off Somerset's young left-arm seamer Tom Lammonby, having faced 27 balls and added 73 with Carey.

The Aussie went to an impressive fifty from 30 deliveries, with 4 fours and 2 sixes, in the 14th over. And, with David Wiese also striking the ball cleanly, 49 runs came off just four overs before Carey was brilliantly caught by Lammonby at long-off.

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Gregory was the successful bowler at the start of the 19th over, which also saw him dismiss Wiese with the next ball after the batsmen had crossed, caught at deep mid-wicket, and clean bowl Delray Rawlins with the fourth delivery.

Sussex had two late batsmen to run outs by Somerset wicketkeeper Tom Banton attempting a bye, but still added 15 to their total off the last over, in which Taylor contrived to send down 2 no-balls.

Somerset were given an encouraging start by Banton and Azam, the pair taking the score to 49 after six overs.

Both players quickly gauged the pace of the pitch. Banton swept Danny Briggs for a flat six over deep square in the seventh over and soon Azam cleared the ropes too with a big hit over long-on off the same bowler.

At the halfway stage, Somerset were well placed at 85 without loss. But Mills stemmed the flow of runs by conceding only three from the 11th over.

Banton went to his fifty off 45 balls, with 6 fours and a six, but the next delivery saw him caught at short fine-leg top-edging an attempted pull off Ollie Robinson.

Azam then brought up his second Blast half-century in as many home games, having faced 32-balls and hit 5 fours and a six. Peter Trego smashed Rashid Khan for a maximum over mid-wicket, but with five overs left Somerset still required 67 and when Azam fell to Khan in the 18th over, having faced just 50 balls, the home side's last chance had gone.

Following his match-winning performance, Carey said: "It was a crazy build-up to the game for me. Australia's Ashes camp in Hampshire did not end until Thursday night and on Friday I travelled to Sussex, but could only watch the game because I didn't have my visa stamped.

"To get that done, I had to fly to Geneva at 8 o'clock Saturday morning. I flew back last night and travelled to Taunton today.

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"Although things did not work out for Australia in the World Cup, I really enjoyed the experience and have been loving my time in England. Today has built on that.

"We have batsmen who go hard from the start and when things don't work out, which is bound to happen sometimes, the middle order have to come in, absorb the pressure and build momentum back.

"Laurie Evans and David Wiese helped me do that today and then out bowlers did really well to restrict Somerset on a fast-scoring ground."

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