

Steep 1st v Petersfield 1st XI

Steeps 100% record came to an abrupt end as they lost by 6 wickets to a well drilled and motivated Petersfield team.

Overnight rain meant that it was a damp but drying wicket that greeted the captains and it was soon clear that winning the toss would be huge advantage. Skipper John Smith fulfilled his weekly task of losing the toss and Steep were unsurprisingly asked to bat first.

Petersfield took no time in making Steep pay and the top order showed little resistance in being reduced to 19 for 4. Makeshift number 6 Graham Hughes and John Hegan showed some steel but Hughes chased one outside off and Hegan soon followed.

Steep have the advantage of a long batting line up and so it showed as Smith and key all-rounder Ally Bone forged a 96 run partnership as the demons in the pitch disappeared. Both fell to sharp stumpings but late hitting from Mark Turnbull saw what could have been a demolition end up a respectable 177 for 8.

Steep started knowing that their fielding performance needed to be at its best to defend this total. However, this was not the case as chances came and went at regular intervals. The first wicket fell to a Bone mis-field followed by a great recovery but this was as good as it got.

Rice and Spencer made the most of the chances that went begging and moved the score on until Spencer was caught by Bone. Smith rotated his bowlers to try and take wickets and was rewarded when Tom Mercer collected two in an over. Rice moved on past his fifty and saw the victory target with a huge six.

All credit must go to Petersfield whose promotion charge remains on track. Steep remain top of the league and must refocus on a trip to bottom club Midhurst where a better performance will be demanded from the skipper