

Steep 1st XI v OTs and Romsey 2nd XI

After their annual first day drubbing, this year to the hands of Hythe and Dibden, Steep started their home campaign with a 26 run victory against OT's and Romsey. The final margin may suggest a close contest but Steep were always in control against a youthful but inexperienced OT's side.

The afternoon started in normal fashion with Skipper John Smith losing the toss and being asked to bat on a surface that was damp but in good condition. Scoring was hard as tight bowling and lack of pace off the pitch meant timing the ball was difficult. However, Dean Knight and his new opening partner Dale Collins started to dominate with Knight showing why he is regarded as one of the best batsmen in this division. The fifty partnership came up in the 11th over and the hundred partnership in the 20th giving Steep a real platform to push on. Collins was adjudged LBW for a remarkably mature 31 and Knight soon followed for a chanceless 73. Last week's batting hero Joe Hughes-Stanton missed a straight one but Mike Preston made use of his new-found golfing skills to muscle the ball over the boundary as the score mounted. His departure saw the familiar Steep batting collapse, but Graham Hughes made sure that the score went past 200 before falling for an agricultural 42.

The final total of 212 was felt to be a winning score on a wicket that was not going to improve after tea.

The OTs approach to the run chase was to treat the game as a twenty over thrash. Eldridge departed in the 5th over having scored 30 off 12 balls; Steve Curtis having far too much experience for the young man. Curtis then picked up three more quick wickets as the batsmen continued to throw their wickets away. Meanwhile at the other end Tom Callingham was putting together a miserly spell that concluded with 8 maidens and only 10 wicketless runs off his allocation. OT's seemed dead and buried as Biddlecombe became Curtis' fifth victim only for Kay and number 10 Wyatt to chance their arm to great effect. They were particularly severe on skipper Smith and Lewis, trying out his leg breaks for the first time. Kay perished to Lewis but Wyatt kept going getting OT's worryingly close to the victory target. It was not to be as Tom Mercer picked up a deserved 2nd wicket to finish the game with Wyatt not out 50.

Credit should go to Steep's batsmen for setting up a good target and the combined skills of the miserly Callingham and experienced Curtis for strangling the middle order and setting up the victory and a well deserved 23 points.

Next week it is newly promoted Denplan Mansbridge for Smith and his men as they look to build on this week's victory.

Innings of Steep

D Knight	caught Eldridge	bowled Jordan	73
D Collins	LBW	Wood	31
M Preston	caught Kay	bowled Wyatt	31
J Hughes-Stanton		bowled Jordan	5
G Hughes	caught Wood	bowled Newman	42
T Callingham	LBW	Wyatt	0
G Dale		Bowled Wyatt	3
M Lewis		Bowled Wyatt	6
J Smith		Bowled Wyatt	9
T Mercer		not out	1
S Curtis		Bowled Newman	0
		Extras	10
		Total	212 all out

Bowling

S Kay	5 overs	2 maidens	25 runs	0 wickets
J Welch	6	0	23	0
S Smith	5	0	29	0
N Woods	10	0	29	1
D Jordan	7	0	26	2
P Wyatt	6	0	38	5
P Newman	5.3	0	40	2

Innings of OT's and Romsey

G Eldridge		Bowled Curtis	30
D Biddlecombe	caught Hughes	Bowled Curtis	32
S Smith	caught Knight	Bowled Curtis	0
P Wathen	caught Knight	Bowled Curtis	2
A Wythead	caught Dale	Bowled Curtis	8
S Kay	caught Hughes	Bowled Lewis	45
J Welch		LBW Collins	1
P Newman		run out	2
D Jordan	caught Knight	Bowled Mercer	0
P Wyatt	caught Smith	Bowled Mercer	50
N Wood		not out	8
		Extras	8
		Total	186 all out

Bowling

J Smith	9 overs	0 maidens	85 runs	0 wickets
T Callingham	10	8	10	0
S Curtis	10	2	37	5
T Mercer	6.2	4	12	2
D Collins	3	0	5	1
M Lewis	5	0	32	1