

## Steep 1<sup>st</sup> XI v Sparsholt 2<sup>nd</sup> XI – Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2013

A Dean Knight masterclass followed by some inspired bowling saw Steep dispatch a spirited Sparsholt and secure second place in the table.

A bright afternoon at Steep's headquarters started with the inevitable loss of the toss by skipper John Smith and the prospect of setting a target on a rock hard track with plenty of runs in it.

However the Steep top order struggled against the young opening attack and wickets fell at regular intervals. The decline was halted when Smith joined Dean Knight in the middle with the score a precarious 46 for 4. The pair added 83 runs at a good pace until Smith fell looking to move the score on further. Knight took this as a signal to accelerate and scored freely without receiving any meaningful support. He finally was out for a wonderful 88 and fully deserved the standing ovation from the Steep faithful. Tom Mercer played a brief cameo and the victory target was set at 195 - about par on the wonderful batting surface that Steep offer these days.

What the Sparsholt batsmen didn't bargain for was the rampant Steep opening partnership of Tom Callingham and northern import Mike Murray. Whilst Murray unsettled the batsmen with a spell of genuine pace and accuracy, Callingham benefited from loose shots to collect 4 wickets and a sensational run out from the boundary. Although the opposing skipper Worth did his best, Smith was able to set a field of 4 slips and a gully for Murray but he was unfortunate to end wicketless.

The Steep change bowlers of Smith and Tom Mercer worked in a similar double act with Smith acting as enforcer and Mercer reaping the rewards. A couple of dropped catches at the end of the innings were a minor blemish on what was otherwise an excellent day in the field for Steep.

With another 22 points in the bag, Steep head to early pace setters St Cross for a top of the table clash next week.