

Steep 1st XI v Dinton

Steep showed their championship credentials with a mauling of fourth placed Dinton who spent more time travelling than they did playing.

A minor miracle occurred at the start of play as skipper John Smith won the toss and elected to field on a beautiful afternoon and on a Steep wicket full of runs as usual.

This did not seem the case after 10 minutes of the game as Dinton found themselves three down and with nowhere to go. Tom Callingham struck with the first ball of the game getting key man O'Neill caught by the reliable Graham Hughes. He then bowled Gale with the last ball of the over, but Smith wasn't letting him get all of the glory as he himself took a wicket in his first over. All of this occurred with Steep only having 10 men as normal opener Mike Murray was otherwise occupied.

Steep continued to keep up the pressure and picked up regular wickets. Callingham picked up 4 in a spell of unerring accuracy and skill whilst Murray bowled with great pace to collect 2. The Harrowmen refused to allow any partnership to form and built pressure through excellent fielding and catching throughout. Key all-rounder Ally Bone picked up a cheap wicket and Mark Turnbull completed the demolition to leave Steep with a victory target of 69.

Such was the level of destruction that it was decided that Steep would bat for 10 overs prior to tea being taken. Dale Collins and Sean Noble opened up but Noble was unfortunately caught to give Dinton the faintest glimmer of hope. This was quashed by Dean Knight who unfurled some trademark drives in a cameo of 29. Although Collins fell before the end, playing back to a half volley, makeshift number 4 Graham Hughes finished the game in the 12th over to give Steep a fine victory.

In all the game took 40 overs which left Steep with plenty of time to enjoy a scouting mission to the Heath to watch next week's opponents Steeple Langford stumble to a tie with Petersfield. If this week's performance is anything to go by there will be no danger of a repeat performance as the two unbeaten sides meet to decide Div 4 supremacy.