

## Potters Bar C.C 1<sup>st</sup> XI Vs Langleybury C.C 1<sup>st</sup> XI

Potters Bar CC 1<sup>st</sup> XI traveled to Langleybury this weekend hoping to continue their excellent form, and retain their 100% record so far this season. In previous years this fixture has proved to be some what of a banana skin for the Bar and, although Langleybury sat just 1 place from the bottom of the table, it was vital that all players went in to the game with the attitude and desire to win that has been so impressive this season.

On a bright morning Potters Bar skipper Leonard Cooper won the toss and elected to field first on a wicket that looked green and would hopefully provide some assistance for the Potters Bar seam attack. Ex Leicestershire pace-man, Nick Walker and Captain Leonard Cooper took the new ball, but found it difficult to find an early breakthrough. Langleybury Skipper Greg Cooper looked in good form and was making the most of some average bowling. Eventually, Walker made the breakthrough taking two quick wickets, and it looked as though he was going to rip through the Langleybury batting line up. Greg Cooper and the Langleybury Number four held firm though, and both batsmen were hitting the ball with confidence taking them to 100-2 after 33 overs. The opposition looked all set for a big total, but the introduction of Left arm veteran spinner Paul McGee put an end to their chances of this as he managed to pick up three quick wickets including that of Greg Cooper (60) and former Pakistan Test Batsmen Shazzad Malik (2). McGee continued to baffle the Langleybury batsmen picking up four more wickets, pegging the opposition back to 207-9 from their 60 over allocation.

Having chased well so far this season the Potters Bar batting line up would have felt confident of chasing this relatively small total. Bar openers Steven Gale and Nesan Jeyaratnem were making the most of some very bad bowling and made it to 75 without loss after just 15 overs. Soon after this Jeyaratnem was adjudged LBW for 30, but no real pressure was created by the opposition and Potters Bar overseas player Lanka Da Silva left off from where Jeyaratnem had started by hitting the ball to the boundary at regular intervals. Opener Gale was eventually dismissed, after another fine innings, for 67 and Lanka Da Silva soon followed Gale back to the dressing room for 50. It was left for David Breeze (13 n.o) and Adam Norman (12 n.o) to bring home the bacon for Potters Bar as they cruised to a 6 wicket victory.

## Evening Standard Cup

### Potters Bar CC 1<sup>st</sup> XI Vs Black Heath CC 1<sup>st</sup> XI

Sunday's game saw Potters Bar travel to Black Heath Cricket Club in the Evening Standard Knockout National Cup Competition. Black Heath made it to last year's final at the Oval, and even with a full strength first team Potters Bar would have gone into this game as the underdogs. However, due to poor

availability, injuries, and late drop outs Potters Bar had to travel with 10 men, of which only 5 had played for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI against Langleybury a day earlier. The other five players were made up of 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4th team players, with two U15's and two U17's amongst these also. With such a depleted side, stand in Skipper Nesan Jeyaratnem would have been happy to just give Black Heath a good game of cricket on a beautiful Sunday afternoon.

Things began badly for the Bar. Having won the toss and electing to bat on a good pitch, Jeyaratnem was extremely unlucky to be caught at silly Mid-Off in the 1<sup>st</sup> over when the fielder, trying to avoid a firmly struck drive, managed to catch the ball between his curled up torso and arms. Jeyaratnem had to go though and Bar were scoreless and already a wicket down. Adam Norman then came and went for just 3 runs, and at 15 for 2 Potters Bar were really struggling. Some good batting from David Breeze and Tom Coughlan helped steady the ship, but things soon took another turn for the worse as Breeze was caught at point for 28 and Coughlan was caught at Mid-on for 33. With new batsmen at the crease Black Heath rallied behind their bowlers and managed to dismiss Mark Taylor, Adam Titmuss and Tom Pett without really troubling the scorers. With the scoreboard showing 85 for 7 Potters Bar looked as though they were heading for an embarrassing defeat, and with only 2 more wickets needed to bowl out the 10 man team, Black Heath would have fancied their chances of bowling the opposition out for under 100. However, with all-rounder Charlie Hodge and Northamptonshire youngster Will Van Der Maat at the crease Potters Bar still felt that they could gain some respectability out of their innings. Both, Van Der Maat (48 n.o) and Hodge (50 n.o) rose to the challenge, playing exciting shots to all parts of the ground. The Black Heath bowlers just couldn't handle the pair's ferocious batting, and Potters Bar finished with a more than respectable total of 183-7 from 50 overs.

The fine batting of Van Der Maat and Hodge provided the underdogs with a reasonable total to defend, and this gave the bowlers the freedom to attack from the start. Things didn't quite go according to plan though, as the Black Heath opening pair dispatched some average bowling and were on 45 runs without loss from just 5 overs. A bowling change was required, so Captain Jeyaratnem turned to a fired up Charlie Hodge in order to find a breakthrough. Hodge bowled with good pace and discipline early on, and in just his second over he took three wickets dismissing both openers and their number three. All of a sudden the young Potters Bar side felt as though they were in with a shout, and when Jeyaratnem picked up the wicket of impressive Kent youngster Warren Lee the fielding team seemed to be just on top. Tight bowling spells from Will Van Der Maat and Mark Taylor helped to put pressure on the incoming batsmen, and with 20 overs to go Black Heath required 85 runs with four wickets remaining. With Jeyaratnem, Taylor and Van Der Maat nearly running out of their allotted overs the captain turned to the experience of Adam Norman at one end and the inexperience of U15 colt member Tom Rowlands at the other. Many youngsters would have crumbled under the intense pressure of the situation, but Rowlands

seemed to thrive on it. He bowled with accuracy and pace, and was soon rewarded with the scalp of Black Heath's impressive number eight batsmen. The Black Heath number 9 was then quickly run out for 0, and with the scoreboard at 160 for 8 from 45 overs the game could still go either way. In the 46<sup>th</sup> over Adam Norman bowled the Black Heath Captain who was looking dangerous, and Potters Bar needed just 1 wicket for the unlikeliest of victories. The Black Heath number 10 and 11 seemed to be decent players considering their lower order status, and they took Black Heath to within 10 runs of their target with 2 overs remaining. Adam Norman was chosen to bowl the penultimate over under intense pressure, and with the second ball of his over the ball was played high into the air by the Black Heath number 11. U15 Colts member Adam Titmuss was directly underneath the ball, and showed unbelievable calmness to catch the ball under immense pressure. The youthful Potters Bar side were ecstatic when the catch was taken, and they fully deserved their against all odds victory.

A special mention should go to the Potters Bar youngsters who performed so admirably when having to fill in for the regular first team players who for one reason or another couldn't make the long trip to Black Heath.