

Potters Bar 3rds 170-9 (53 overs) lost to Broxbourne 2nds 171-8 (45 overs) by 2 wickets

In a nail-biting relegation battle at Dame Alice Owen's School on Saturday, Potters Bar 3rds were shaded by fellow strugglers Broxbourne 2nds by 2 wickets. Potters Bar should have won this encounter but all too familiar frailties in the field, with 7 catches going down, cost them the game.

On a windy afternoon the Broxbourne skipper won the toss and invited Potters Bar to bat. Rob Daley (33) and Adam Titmuss got the Bar off to a good start, putting on 38 for the first wicket, before Titmuss skied one to mid-off. This heralded a middle order collapse as 6 wickets fell for 29 runs in the space of 12 overs to leave the Bar reeling at 67-6. The innings was rescued by a bright stand of 64 between Nawindra Nath and promising colt Tom Rowlands. The stand was finally broken when Nath fell to a faint edge to the keeper for a hard-hit 33. Rowlands fell soon afterwards for the top score of 36, but the tail wagged and the total of extras climbed to 40, enabling Potters Bar to post a competitive 170-9 before their allotted 53 overs ran out. Bailey was the most effective bowler for Broxbourne taking 4-23 in 20 miserly overs.

Potter Bar got off to a dream start in the second half when Rupert Pyrah yorked the Broxbourne skipper with the first ball of the innings. Pyrah took a further three wickets and Rowlands one to leave Broxbourne in deep trouble at 46-5. It should have been six down soon after as the number seven bat, Wilkins, offered a simple chance to point which was inexplicably dropped by one of Potters Bar's best fielders. Wilkins went on to make 36 as he and White added 60 for the sixth wicket. Potters Bar hauled themselves back into the game when Hayden Rogers bowled Wilkins and Pyrah took a one-handed catch at mid-off to remove Watt for 0. At 106-7 Potters Bar were clear favourites to win, but a string of dropped catches allowed the Broxbourne tail to edge towards the target. The eighth wicket fell with the score on 143 but White and Davies eventually took the visitors home with 2 overs to spare. White batted sensibly to top score with 55*, but both he and Davies were fortunate to survive routine chances. Pyrah was the most successful bowler with 4-65, and Raisborough's figures of 1-35 in 17 overs did not do him justice as he suffered more than most from lapses in the field.

A haul of 14 bonus points was enough to lift Potters Bar out of the relegation zone, but on the evidence of Saturday's woeful fielding performance they will have to show a marked improvement if they are to avoid the drop.