

Potters Bar 3rds 119 all out (34 overs) lost to Hitchin 2nds 260-6 (48 overs) by 141 runs

After last week's victory over Welwyn Garden City, Potters Bar 3rds had high hopes of improving their league position in Saturday's fixture against Hitchin 2nds at The Walk, despite five changes to the team.

The Hitchin skipper won the toss and elected to bat first on what was to prove a slow but easy batting track. Potter Bar opening bowlers, Manjula Abesekera and Alex Whitehouse enjoyed early success as they removed both openers to reduce the visitors to 35-2. Hitchin skipper Collins and Lee set about repairing the damage by compiling a 3<sup>rd</sup> wicket stand of 47, until Rupert Pyrah removed both in quick succession to leave Hitchin wobbling at 97-4. At this stage Potters Bar were hopeful of restricting the visitors to a below par score, but the 5<sup>th</sup> wicket pair of Thomson (62) and Woolley (74) took advantage of inaccurate bowling and lacklustre fielding to compile a match-winning stand of 136. Hitchin eventually declared five overs early on 260-6, setting a tough target for a depleted Bar batting line-up. Pyrah was the only Potters Bar bowler to emerge with any credit, taking 3-69 from 16 overs.

Bar's reply started badly with Adam Titmus and Steve Moore departing for single-figure scores. In-form opener Rob Daley (33) and John Lewis (40) then compiled the best stand of the innings to give Bar some hope of getting near the target, but the departure of Daley heralded a woeful batting collapse, with the last 8 wickets falling for just 51 runs. The only other batsman to manage double figures was Alex Whitehouse, who was last out for 15. Slack was the most successful Hitchin bowler, taking 5-23 in 10 overs. The result means that Potters Bar drop to 12<sup>th</sup> in Division 6, and they must hope for improved availability over the coming weeks if they are not to be sucked into a relegation dogfight.

***Rupert Pyrah***