

Potters Bar 3rds 90 all out (40.0 overs) lost to Old Camdenians 1sts 95-3 (20.3 overs)

Potters Bar 3rds travelled to Mill Hill on Saturday to take on Old Camdenians 1sts in their final Division 6 fixture of the season. The game was crucial for both sides as Old Camdenians were pushing for promotion and Potters Bar were still in danger of relegation.

Old Camdenians won the toss and inserted Potters Bar on a sodden, grassy wicket which was indistinguishable from the rest of the square. From the outset Bar's batsmen struggled to get the ball away against tight bowling from Gravett and Old Camdenians skipper Salter. The first wicket fell in the eighth over when Titmuss chipped a ball to square leg, and from then on wickets fell rapidly as the Bar's batsmen played a succession of rash and panicky shots. None of the first eight batsmen made double figures as Potters Bar's innings slumped to 40-8 in the 21st over. The abysmal efforts of the top order were put into perspective by the 9th wicket pair of Michael John and Rupert Pyrah who mixed caution with calculated aggression to almost double the score to 76 before John fell for a top score of 29 to a controversial lbw decision. This was one of several questionable decisions from the umpire Crawford who compounded his ignorance of the laws of cricket with repeated and unnecessary interference in the game. The last wicket pair of Pyrah and number 11 Raisborough took the score to 90 before Pyrah fell, also lbw, for 13. Gravett and Salter bowled a tight line throughout to take 6-38 and 4-26 respectively.

With the wicket still offering assistance to bowlers who adhered to the principles of line and length Potters Bar felt they had a chance of snatching an unlikely victory. They started well as Michael John removed both openers with 22 on the board. When Dan Brown ran out Blackwood with a stunning direct hit from mid-on Old Camdenians were becoming distinctly nervy at 35-3 with a weakened batting line up to come. Salter came to the wicket and proceeded to play a captain's innings by hitting shots all round the wicket, and the game ended when he hit occasional off-spinner John Lewis over mid-off for 6 to secure a win by the margin of 7 wickets. Michael John was the most successful bowler for Potters Bar with figures of 2-32 from 7 overs. Results elsewhere meant that Old Camdenians secured promotion by one point and Potters Bar had avoided relegation by a margin of 18 points. Unfortunately the game had been spoiled by a disgraceful home umpire who completely lost the plot, arguing incessantly with Bar's players. His performance was so poor that several members of the home team felt compelled to apologise for his behaviour after the game.