

Potters Bar 3rds 207-9 (53 overs) beat St. Margaretsbury 2nds 149 all out (43.1 overs) by 58 runs.

Potters Bar 3rds travelled to St Margaretsbury on Saturday for a crucial Division 6 relegation battle. The St Margaretsbury skipper won the toss and surprisingly elected to bowl first on a good batting wicket. Adam Titmuss chopped on to his stumps in the second over, but veteran opener Rob Daley and Ben Scarisbrick set about building a solid foundation with a 2<sup>nd</sup> wicket stand of 57, although Scarisbrick was fortunate to survive a huge appeal from St Margaretsbury for a caught behind. The departure of Daley for 36 heralded a mid-innings collapse as the Potters Bar batsmen succumbed to some fine catching by the home side's fielders. At 98-6 Potters Bar were in serious danger of subsiding to an inadequate total, but the 7<sup>th</sup> wicket pair of colt Tom Rowlands and Potters Bar stalwart Michael John set about repairing the damage. When John was caught in the deep for 33 with the score on 165, Potters Bar had built the foundation of a challenging total. Rowlands departed soon afterwards for a mature 34, but the icing on the cake was provided by an unbeaten partnership of 30 for the 10<sup>th</sup> wicket between Alex Whitehouse (23\*) and Rupert Pyrah (12\*). Pyrah swept the last ball for 4 to take Potters Bar to a final total of 207-9. St Margaretsbury's young leg-spinner Monk was the pick of the home attack, taking 5-50 from 19 overs.

Potters Bar got off to a great start when St Margaretsbury batted, Alex Whitehouse removing numbers two and three for ducks. The next 20 overs witnessed a turgid period of play as Anstead and Spencer ground out a third wicket partnership of 62. The required run rate climbed steadily to over 6 an over, as the two St Margaretsbury batsmen took few risks and seemed content just to survive. The breakthrough finally came when Titmuss took a diving catch at gully off Raisborough to remove Anstead for 43. At this stage St Margaretsbury attempted to up the run rate, but their slow start meant the following batsmen had to play risky shots. Michael John took two well-judged catches at deep mid-on, and Whitehouse held on to another at deep square leg. Although the home skipper Frost batted well for an unbeaten 30, he regularly lost partners at the other end. The end finally came with the first ball of the 44<sup>th</sup> over, when Pyrah nipped one back to trap last man Monk lbw with the score on 149. Pyrah was the pick of the Bar attack, bowling a straight full length to take 5-40. He was well supported by Whitehouse and Raisborough who took two wickets apiece, while John gave nothing away in his 15 overs. The win lifts Potters Bar out of the relegation zone, but they will face tough opposition next weekend when they travel to high-flying Hatch End.