

Youngsters get a good run out

Potters Bar 2nd XI, lost their opening game of the season to St Albans, at a sun soaked Clarence Park. With a very young side, the sole aim of the day was to make sure everybody got in some practise before the league season starts this weekend.

Bar skipper Hodge lost the toss and was asked to bowl first on a green looking wicket. Hodge took the new ball alongside 15 yea-old Alex Whitehouse. Both bowlers bowled very well in the early stages, with Whitehouse seeing two catches go down off his bowling in his first two overs, the youngster swung the ball and bowled an excellent line and length. It was Bar's skipper that made the first break through, removing St Albans' openers leg stump. Hodge took a second wicket with the last ball of his fifth over to leave St Albans' 45 for 2.

Veteran Chris Boyce and another Under 16 Isaac Moore then entered the attack. Boyce bowled a beautiful nine over spell, picking up five wickets in the process. At 100-7 Bar could have really turned the screw on the opposition but maintained the spirit of the game by using a total of seven bowlers. Dan Brown and Luke Owers picked up a wicket a piece before Dan's younger brother Steve was unlucky not to end St Albans' innings on a 140 with a close run-out call. In the end Dan wrapped things up with the final wicket in the 38th over, with St Albans reaching 165.

Bar's run chase was always going to be reliant on a handful of more experienced batters, with only Dave Pett, Charlie Hodge and Luke Owers present from the side's regular top eight. Alas when Luke Owers fell for 0 in the 12th over, Bar we struggling at 50 -3. Dave Pett played nicely for a well made 40, however wickets continued to fall at the other end. Pett was unlucky to be bowled by a ball that kept frighteningly low, however he will be happy that he put away a couple of his trade mark boundaries.

In the end Bar were bowled out for 140, with Dan Brown making 15 not out with only Charlie Hodge (18) the other batsman to make double figures. Captain Greg Hodge dwelled on the positives from the game, reflecting, "Only four or five of our regular league side were on display today so I wouldn't read too much into the result. It was great to play with a few of the youngsters and see at first hand the promise that players such as Alex Whitehouse have. Looking ahead to the new season I think we can build on last years fantastic display and continue to develop first team cricketers. We have a tough start, but if we can get through that with a couple of wins, there is no reason why we can't better last years 6th place finish."