

HERTS v STAFFS REPORT 030509

For the second week in succession Staffordshire outplayed strong opponents to make it two wins out of two in the group stages of the Minor Counties Knock-Out Cup.

Hertfordshire were the latest side to be swept aside, despite coming into the game themselves on the back of a first day win at Northumberland.

Put into bat Staffordshire dominated from the outset. 18 year old Tamworth batsman Jack Manuel followed on from his cameo display against Suffolk last week, by smashing 75 from just 64 balls. The innings contained four sixes and six boundaries as he reached a maiden half century for the county from just 31 balls.

In partnership with Longton's Peter Wilshaw, the pair rattled up 85 from the first ten overs, to put Staffordshire very much in the driving seat on an excellent batting track.

Dave Wheeldon, the second of the Staffordshire players on Worcestershire's books, showed his ability following the dismissal of Wilshaw and Manuel. The former Cheadle and Leek left hander, who made his county championship debut against Yorkshire in mid week, started steadily but gained more composure in guiding Staffordshire to their ultimate score of 270 for seven. Wheeldon's 82 contained seven boundaries before he was the sixth batsman dismissed with the total on 230. Stone batsman Jimmy Dawson, drafted in to replace Ben McGuire who was refused permission to play by Nottinghamshire, scored a run a ball unbeaten 21 with captain Paul Goodwin hitting one six in his 20 as the late order batsmen maintained the necessary momentum.

Following on from his six wicket haul for Norton the previous day, Greg Willott struck an early crucial blow, bowling former Kent and Middlesex player James Hewitt with just 16 on the board.

The 18th over proved a turning point as two outstanding pieces of work in the field brought about the dismissal of both Andy Lewis and Dan Blacktop. Firstly Nick James' direct hit accounted for Lewis and then Wilshaw showed similar accuracy to get rid of the dangerous Blacktop.

Left arm spinner Nick James came on to wrap up proceedings with a superb spell which brought him a five wicket haul at the expense of just 35 runs.

Only Ben Frazer with 47 offered any real resistance before becoming one of James' five victims.

The home innings came to an end on 189, giving Staffordshire the luxury of an 81 run victory to go into their next match on Sunday against Norfolk at Leek in good spirits.

After maintaining his 100% record as captain, Paul Goodwin admitted he was "Delighted with the overall performance. We were superb all round and are getting up to somewhere

near our best. Jack Manuel was brilliant at the start of the innings and Dave Wheeldon's superb knock kept the innings going to enable us to post a challenging total of 270. We then bowled exceptionally well on a good wicket with Nick James outstanding.

We have got to keep it together and repeat it next week."

Scorecard

Staffs

P.Wilshaw lbw Frazer 18
J. Manuel b Barker 75
D.Wheeldon b Frazer 82
R Harvey lbw Southgate 13
N. James ct Walker b Southgate 13
M. Sheikh st Blacktop b Southgate 0
J.Dawson not out 21
P Goodwin b Hewitt 20
G. Willott not out 4
Extras 24
Total 270 for 7 innings closed

Bowling

A.Laraman 5 0 44 0.

N. Lamb 8.4 0 62 0
B. Frazer 10 2 32 2
P. Barker 10 0 43 1
J. Southgate 10 0 35 3
N. Jeyaratnam 3 0 22 0
J.Hewitt 3.2 0 24 1

Herts

D. Blacktop run out 28
J. Hewitt b Willott 6
A Lewis run out 22
N. Walker b James 34
A Laraman lbw Sheikh 3
B.Frazer ct Wilshaw b James
J. Southgate st Goodwin James 6
N. Jeyaratnam b Willott 4
N.Lamb ct Wheeldon b James 11
P. Barker not out 6
A. Hicks lbw James 1
Extras 21
Total 189 all out
Bowling

W. Purser 8 2 19 0
G. Willott 10 1 56 2
C. Barker 8 0 39 0
M. Sheikh 7 0 30 1
N.James 7.2 0 35 5

Staffordshire win by 81 runs.