



DIGITAL MATCH PROGRAMME



# Kent vs Worcestershire

5 – 8 September

10:30 starts



The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence, Canterbury

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# WELCOME

By Matt Walker  
Head Coach

Hello everyone and welcome back to The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence and the LV= Insurance County Championship. A warm welcome too to the players, staff and supporters of Worcestershire.

Although in a different format to this match, firstly I'd like to congratulate the entire squad for reaching our first Vitality Blast Finals Day since 2009. It was a fantastic evening last Friday, with a good Birmingham Bears side defeated by a superb Spitfires performance. The atmosphere was also electric – one of the best I've seen at Canterbury – and definitely helped spur the team on. Everyone played their part in us getting to Edgbaston.

For now, our full attention is on the Championship, and following a win against

Leicestershire this week, we're finally showing the form we merit in the longer form of the game. Darren Stevens' brilliant century in our second innings set us up for a win after a good first innings bowling performance, and then Matt Milnes led the way to victory with his 6 for 53 to take us to a deserved 132-run victory.

Now we face a tough Worcestershire side with a lot of good players in what promises to be an enthralling contest between two sides that, on paper, really deserve to not be in this 'Division' for the second half of the Championship.

Enjoy the match,

Walks

## LAST TIME OUT

Kent registered a first LV=Insurance County Championship win of the season as Leicestershire were beaten by 132 runs inside three days at the Uptonsteel County Ground, after an extraordinary afternoon that saw the home side avert humiliation with a defiant rearguard action.

Darren Stevens had completed a superb unbeaten century against his former county, pace bowler Matt Milnes finished with a

career-best six for 53, but that told only half the story of two sessions of play.

Needing to score an unlikely 386 to win on a pitch aiding spin and in swing-friendly overhead conditions, Leicestershire slumped to 20 for six at lunch.

But an aggressive Ben Mike hit 70 off 52 balls to set off a vigorous wag of the tail that saw Ed Barnes match him with an unbeaten 70





## LAST TIME OUT (CONTINUED)

and Will Davis make a career-best 42 as the last four wickets added a scarcely credible 233.

Stevens lit up the early part of the day, transforming his 55 overnight into an unbeaten 107 off just 28 deliveries before Leicestershire were able to winkle out his final partner.

The veteran lofted Mike swept Callum Parkinson for four sixes over the short boundary on the popular side and as he celebrated his 37th career first-class century, Leicestershire needed no reminding that he should have been out on the second evening on 40 when he hit Barnes in the air to midwicket but neither of two converging fielders made the catch.

Stevens scored 107 of the 120 runs added for Kent's last five wickets before Colin Ackermann bowled James Logan to claim the one outstanding overnight. Stevens hit 13 fours and six sixes, facing just 70 balls.

What was always a daunting target then soon looked impossible for Leicestershire.

Milnes made his first breakthrough in his third over as Hassan Azad was trapped in front and he could not have imagined he would have a five-for under his belt 21 balls later.

He had Ackerman caught at second slip off a yorker-length ball, bowled Louis Kimber, celebrated a fourth success as Harry Swindells misread the line and a fifth when Lewis Hill was caught behind down the leg side, sending Leicestershire to Lunch at 20 for six from 12.1 overs, Stevens picking up the other wicket with an inswinger to Sam Evans.

But Mike began the afternoon by driving, hooking and pulling three fours in an over to see Milnes removed from the attack and continued apace as he and Parkinson added 77 in 10.3 overs before the introduction of Logan's spin saw the latter caught behind.

Mike ultimately sliced Logan to wide long off and though the result never looked in any doubt Barnes delayed it with an impressive



second first-class fifty, adding 33 with Chris Wright, who was unlucky to be given out caught behind from a ball that appeared to come off his helmet as he went to hook Milnes, and 92 with Davis before the latter slashed at one from Nathan Gilchrist and Kent could celebrate.

Kent's Matt Milnes, who took a career-best six for 53 in the second innings, said: "It was almost a feeling of relief to get the win in the end. Darren's hundred gave us the lead and for us then to come out and take early wickets as we did put them on the back foot and pretty much killed the game.

"But credit to their lads, they batted pretty well. Barnes played well and Ben Mike very well but from our point of view we have a bit to learn from that last hour if we want to go to the next level.

"We were creating chances but they seemed to not go to hand. They are allowed to have partnerships and we had enough runs on the board for it never to really be an issue but we maybe need to learn when to go hard and when to sit in a little bit, although nobody bowled badly.

"But what can you say about Stevo? I would say he surprises me every time but he doesn't any more. I've been playing with him for three years and he just keeps doing it. He is just a freak and when and if he retires I don't think anyone can replace him."

# KENT V WORCESTERSHIRE

Kent first played Worcestershire in 1900, since when they have met on 142 occasions, Kent winning 64. times. Worcestershire's record of just 29 wins (20.42% of matches) is only beaten by Leicestershire's 18.29% of success in Kent matches. This is despite a recent run of matches, spasmodic in the two division county championship, of only two Kent wins in eleven this century. 49 matches have been drawn and two abandoned controversially when the Severn flooded the New Road ground. At Canterbury, the teams have met 18 times, Kent winning six, Worcestershire five with seven drawn. The last first-class match to be completed in a single day, going the full distance, was the Worcestershire match at the Nevill in Tunbridge Wells in 1960, while Kent's then world record partnership for the tenth wicket by Woolley and Fielder was made against Worcestershire at Stourbridge in 1909. This is the first meeting since 2017.

|  |  |                             |   |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Highest Innings Total</b>           | Kent: 602-7d<br>Worcestershire: 627-9d | Dudley<br>Worcester         | 1938<br>1905                            |
| <b>Lowest Innings Total</b>            | Kent: 50<br>Worcestershire: 25         | Dover<br>Tunbridge Wells    | 1955<br>1960                            |
| <b>Highest Individual Score</b>        | Kent: 227<br>Worcestershire: 246       | J.L.Denly<br>R.E.Foster     | Worcester<br>Worcester<br>2017<br>1905  |
| <b>Best Bowling Analysis (Innings)</b> | Kent: 9-61<br>Worcestershire: 9-30     | D.J.Halfyard<br>J.A.Flavell | Maidstone<br>Dover<br>1959<br>1955      |
| <b>Best Bowling Analysis (Match)</b>   | Kent: 15-117<br>Worcestershire: 14-107 | D.J.Halfyard<br>S.H.Martin  | Maidstone<br>Gillingham<br>1959<br>1939 |

## Highest Wicket Partnerships - Kent:-

|      |     |   |               |      |
|------|-----|---|---------------|------|
| 1st  | 217 | W.H.Ashdown (108) & C.Fairservice (110) | Gravesend     | 1933 |
| 2nd  | 307 | H.T.W.Hardinge (151) & J.Seymour (170)  | Kidderminster | 1922 |
| 3rd  | 285 | M.R.Benson (122) & C.J.Tavaré (152)     | Worcester     | 1987 |
| 4th  | 251 | C.J.Tavaré (112) & A.G.E.Ealham (153)   | Canterbury    | 1979 |
| 5th  | 236 | M.J.Walker (151*) & M.A.Carberry (112)  | Canterbury    | 2004 |
| 6th  | 155 | A.P.F.Chapman (158) & L.E.G.Ames (90)   | Folkestone    | 1927 |
| 7th  | 149 | J.L.Denly (227) & A.D.Rouse (68)        | Worcester     | 2017 |
| 8th  | 120 | A.P.E.Knott (87) & R.A.Woolmer (56)     | Dartford      | 1973 |
| 9th  | 98  | P.Hearn (172) & D.V.P.Wright (34*)      | Dudley        | 1954 |
| 10th | 235 | F.E.Woolley (185) & A.Fielder (112*)    | Stourbridge   | 1909 |

## Highest Wicket Partnerships - Worcestershire:-

|      |     |  |            |      |
|------|-----|--|------------|------|
| 1st  | 277 | D.Kenyon (152*) & L.Outschoorn (126)           | Gravesend  | 1954 |
| 2nd  | 274 | H.H.I.H.Gibbons (132) & Nawab of Pataudi (144) | Worcester  | 1933 |
| 3rd  | 303 | H.K.Foster (123*) & R.E.Foster (174)           | Worcester  | 1907 |
| 4th  | 260 | C.F.Walters (226) & C.H.Bull (86)              | Gravesend  | 1933 |
| 5th  | 123 | T.S.Curtis (97) & M.J.Weston (76)              | Worcester  | 1985 |
| 6th  | 185 | P.A.Neale (119*) & S.J.Rhodes (94)             | Canterbury | 1990 |
| 7th  | 159 | S.J.Rhodes (66) & S.R.Lampitt (88)             | Canterbury | 1996 |
| 8th  | 126 | T.C.Fell (94*) & J.A.Shantry (54)              | Worcester  | 2013 |
| 9th  | 98  | R.E.Foster (246*) & G.A.Wilson (45)            | Worcester  | 1905 |
| 10th | 102 | R.K.Illingworth (59*) & P.Mirza (40)           | Canterbury | 1994 |

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# BEATING THE BEARS IN A BEARPIT!



**The triumphant heartfelt Kentish roar that swirled round The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence said it all. Kent had beaten the Bears to reach Vitality Blast Finals Day for the first time since 2009. Even in normal circumstances that would be a noteworthy moment, but after the twenty months we have all endured, it was all rather cathartic.**

Ultimately the 4,000 people inside the ground cared about the final outcome, they weren't there to see some "entertainment", they were there because fundamentally they wanted a Kent (or Birmingham) win. Supporters "support" a team, fans are "fanatics", they aren't a passive audience and for the first time since 2019 home felt like a properly hostile bearpit. That

is how it should be. Kent boundaries and Bears wickets were rapturously received, Warwickshire boundaries greeted in almost sullen silence and Kent wickets with a groan. Proper atmosphere.

The earlier T20 home games in 2021 have been fun, 1,500 people is enough for a crowd, but it lacked the usual intensity of the 6,500 with the Ames Stand lower "kop" singing and the Nackington Road grumbling. For the first time in this curious Summer, it felt like "normal" at least on the Southern bank side where people stood and mingled and drank and cheered.

The Woolley Stand is still closed and the team "bubbles" remain, but if you ignored that it could have been 2019. The beers

## BEATING THE BEARS IN A BEARPIT! (CONTINUED)

flowed and the street food was gobbled up. It felt like a proper party. At last. Something we have all missed. I will never take it for granted again.

Given Kent's mixed record in quarter-finals, the fact that they had won the Southern Group which had provided the three other Finals Day counties cranked up expectations albeit many of the team had been away on non-playing Hundred duties for assorted franchises. Would they have retained their mojo?

I usually fear the worst when it comes to big cricketing occasions, but when I heard the Bears had won the toss and invited us to bat, I did wonder whether they had done their homework given in six home games when at full strength Kent have won five batting first and setting a target and squeezing the opposition with tight bowling.

Bell-Drummond (53) and then Billings (56) were the mainstay of the Kent innings. DBD was victim of a freak run-out and 162-7 from 20 felt 15-20 runs short but it turned out that the wicket was not a typical T20 road and that spin was key. Denly and Milne made a tight start and the crowd immediately sensed Kent were in the game. Dot by dot, single by single the required run rate edged up. Klaassen released the tension but then Qais came on to weave his magic.

The Afghan was superb and in tandem with the totemic Leaning they spun a web of impossibility. From 32-1 off five overs, the visitors were reduced to 56-6 and the game looked up at 84-7 off 14. Inevitably there would still be a twist and Lintott took a liking to the returning Klaassen. 128-7 off 18 left Warwickshire needing 17.5 per over. Once Milne snared Lintott for 41 (20 balls) Kent were virtually at Edgbaston.



The final over saw Milnes pick up the last two wickets including a satisfying final ball catch for Blake to spark glorious celebrations on the Southern Banking.

The massed ranks of Kent fans celebrated gleefully, it was good for the soul and a tonic for everyone. It was just fantastic to see so many old Kentish faces beaming with delight.

Kent now face Sussex in the Semi-Final. Curiously three of the four same finalists as in Kent's previous appearance in 2009. I will be a nervous wreck on the day! Come on Super Kent!

Eddie Allcorn





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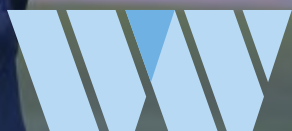
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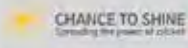
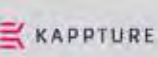
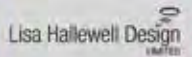
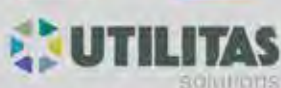
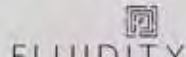
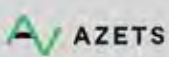
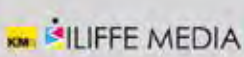
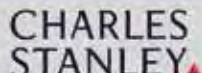
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