

CRICKET MANAGERS REPORT 2009
(Unrelenting Pessimism / Criticism: Happy Ending)

At the beginning of the year I set out our challenges for 2009. They were:

1. Have Fun
2. Keep the Sat 1st team in Div 1
3. Develop Young Player Coaching
4. Develop Young Players through the 2nd X1
5. Field 4 teams on Saturdays , 2 on Sundays and reform the JDD team

How did we do?

Re 1. The excellent bar takings this year suggest we did have fun and the atmosphere in the club house, after a slow start, has been fantastic

Re 2. Thanks to an excellent 2nd half of the year, our 1st team, who were the youngest in the league and were not supported by an overseas player , ended well above the safety zone .This was a result above and beyond that expected by many in the club and I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Matt and the team, **this achievement felt like promotion!**

Re 3. The Head Coach roll was established and feedback from the Colts set up suggests it has been a success and an area we can further develop, Richard Soulsby was a real star with the colts (as well as a wonderful asset to the 1st scoring over 300 runs as was predicted by Matt).

Re 4. The young players moved through the teams quicker than expected, our 1s sometimes had an average age of 22 and I can not find a Saturday after the 3rd week of the season when we had more than 39% of the players over 23! And importantly these young players were contributing , witness Andrew and Pete Dunning in the 1s , Will P , Pete S , Ryan and Freddie in the 2s , Josh Josh and Josh in the 4s to name a few. **If you look at the Sat 1st and 2nd team photos for this season 16 of the players have come through our colt's organisation and a Sunday 1st team picture would have the same balance!**

Re 5 we honoured all bar 1 of our fixtures

So we could say we have had a successful year and if on the 18th April I knew all 4 Saturday teams would enjoy mid table security I would have been thrilled and delighted (albeit a tad sad that the 3s were not challenging for promotion) Sundays also proved easier to run than expected thanks once again to Nigel, well supported by Mike.

As expected the bowling throughout the teams was up to standard and often beyond. We had the best slow bowlers in Div 1 with Matt and Duncan likely candidates for a divisional select 11 and Mike D improving every game .If there was a Div 6 rep team who could deny Penders and Russell a place and of course Rosey would be first pick for the Div 10 equivalent .Batting remains a concern and while the merger may help we need to be pro active for the first time in the clubs history in trying to boost batting resources for 2010...it has to be a concern that the top run makers in the 2s 3s and 4s are all the wrong side of 40 and it did mean we had to pack sides with as much batting as we could and we risked unbalancing teams .

However, beneath the happy surface in terms of final league placings there was alot of desperate paddling primarily by Ben and myself for Saturdays and Nigel for Sundays. By putting out 4 teams I believe we over extended ourselves. To deliver 44 players on a Saturday we needed

- 1. Top Organisation**
- 2. Good player availability**
- 3. Good player availability discipline**
- 4. Organised selection**
- 5. Willingness of players to move around the teams**

Sadly we did not achieve all of the above

Re1. The captains were never in the same room together at any time this season, often the 1s were not sorted out until late Tuesday causing real problems for the other teams

Re 2. This was generally ok although I did have some odd conversations from Mums / Dads, Sons, Wives about where off spring / parents/loved ones were playing

Re 3. This was, frankly appalling; in one particular week each day I got a call from a 1st team player saying they had changed their mind

and now could not play. Some of the excuses across all teams were farcical

“Something better has come up”

“Just got tickets for Lords so will have to let the team down”

“It’s my Dads birthday “

“Forgot I was working”

Re4 see 1

Re 5 Often this was excellent, the attitude of, for example, Steve Dunning, Andy Elsmore, and Jamie Smithson was excellent and top examples of putting the club first.

I point out the above because if the club merger takes place as planned the new Cricket Committee will have to manage 5 or 6 teams on a Saturday and 2 or 3 on a Sunday and will need to review selection processes / procedures and all players will need to understand the impact of their actions . Players will need to be more self reliantuse of the web has improved but captains were still getting pestered by players asking about meet times / away ground addresses when all this info is available via the club and league web sites.....and finally why was there always one player who was late for every away game meet time / delaying the rest of the team from travelling?

So on organization we have problems that need to be and can be addressed, personally weekdays were very difficult with continual calls and drop outs but the weekends were great fun and on that noteback to the cricket

The final records were

Team	Overall	Sat League	Sun League
1 st	W14 D2 L22	W5 D2 L11	W3 D0 L6
2 nd	W15 D2 L13	W8 D2 L6	W4 D0 L4
3 rd	W4 D5 L9	W4 D5 L9	
4 th	W6 D0 L7	W6 D0 L7	
Oth	W6 D0 L0		
All	W45 D8 L52		

The team averages are on the web and I will cover off individual performances and averages at Fridays Awards Night....but some highlights worth noting;

We had 17 father / son combinations

Hardcastles

Dares (two versions)

Hodgkinsons

Brooks

Sinderberrys

Toms

Fowlers

Dunnings (three versions)

Roses (two versions)

Rices

Peglers

Harragins

Pendreds

Ryans

Bungards

Duas (two versions)

Brydens

Other highlights (apologies to those left out, we had 104 players turn out for the club this year)

Pete Sinderberry's match winning 44 v L Green in the 2nds, an innings of class on an appalling track

Matt Watson's 2 first team league hundreds...a first for a non overseas batsman

Any innings by Jonny Rice v Peter Such

Tweed's and Freddie's 6 blazing half century opening stands which kicked off the 2nds season after a slow start

Andy Dunning's 29 v Hoddesden ...the key game of the season for the 1s

Duncan spending 90 mins throwing the ball down to Doris one Tuesday evening

Doris hitting 69 the next weekend

Uday hitting 4,4,4 to win the 2nds match v Totteridge

Russell taking 6 times more wickets than he scored runs

Will P's 7-46 and 6-15 over one weekend

Josh Ryan 5-20 v Coopers...the youngest player to take 5 in an adult game?

Rose's smile after his 6-34 v Codicote which meant he did not have to put up with me boasting I had a better best analysis than him this season

The Dunning's fielding on tour

Josh B's catch of his Dad's bowling v Bentley followed by his Dad's catch off Josh's bowling to seal a 24 run win defending 89

Hendo's sensational improvement in his fielding

No doubt you all have other memorable moments, why not share them on the web guest book

Finally I want to take this opportunity to thank John Watkiss and Rob Moore for Umpiring and Brian / Helen / Steve / JJ / Jane / Ken for the excellent support we have received from the Scoring teamI believe I am correct in stating that we are the only club which sends out all 4 teams on a Saturday with scorers and the fact we back this up with 100% coverage of Sunday teams is a fantastic achievement and can I end by reminding everyone ...We are a Sports Club****

Simon Dare