

Barnards Green Second Eleven - End of Season Review 2010

In a season which had many ups and downs, to finish fourth in a highly competitive league was, all told, an excellent achievement for the Green's second eleven. Beginning the year as defending champions we all, ambitiously, felt we could go out and win successive titles but, in the end, were most weeks, relieved to field eleven able-bodied players on a Saturday afternoon.

The chronic shortage of players across the club did nothing to help the balance or the consistency of the side but we were rarely beaten, even less so by a heavy margin (we won 50% of our games played). Indeed, it was often a case of triumph in adversity with young players such as Jack Mackintosh, Eliot Hennessy, Georgia Hennessy and Jack Cullity all winning games for the side against all the odds. The development and success of these young players was, perhaps, the real highlight of the season, above and beyond league places, victories against local rivals or accumulation of points. The club's future rests firmly with these youngsters and all of them now have second eleven match practice as we enter a new and exciting chapter in the club's history. Last season the side were victorious using just 26 players across the summer whereas this year, because of unavailability, injury, illness and work commitments amongst other things, the side used 46 players, including a number of players who thought their playing days were long gone! A big thank you goes to those players who stepped in to help in our hour(s) of need.

Incredibly, players such as Ashlea Brewer, Louis Loader, Ryan Scullion, James Scullion, Tom Banks, Dan Hunt and Tom Clack were looked upon as senior players although all are still teens, and each one contributed well across the season with dismissals, excellent fielding and runs scored in a stylish manner. The veteran players of Andy Wheeler, Judd Doughty and Adam Greaves scored 674, 670 and 445 league runs respectively and papered over some rather large cracks in the batting department at times. Too many players have bags of talent but lack the patience and application, especially away from the batting paradise of North End Lane. This is something which needs to be worked upon over the winter months. The mercurial talent and wristy stroke-play of Faroukh Fiaz was a welcome addition to the side but his sudden disappearance did nothing to help the batting line-up.

Lewis Hooper, Brad Adams and Rich Brown all bowled well and used their collective nous to take wickets and restrict the run scoring opportunities across the season. James Scullion, who led the attack with 27 wickets, Lewis Hooper with 23 and Tom Clack 9 all progressed to first team level and were unlucky not to showcase their talents more often in either side.

Playing at North End Lane was, as always, an absolute pleasure. The wicket was remarkably true and reliable and the outfield perfectly presented each and every Saturday. Thanks must go to the unsung hero's who work tirelessly each week to create what must be, without a doubt, the best ground in the county. Also best in class was Anna Brewer and her team's top cricket teas which were outstanding and did nothing for my waist line but were fantastic nevertheless! With so many players unavailable each week the role of Cricket Manager was vital this season and I would like to thank 'H' for all of his 'behind the scenes' work each and every weekend. As always, I'd also like to thank publically Anne Wilson, who everyone agrees keeps the neatest score book we've ever seen and did a lot of the unpopular jobs without any fuss or grumbling. All of you, your hard work really is much appreciated.

So, as the club and the second eleven moves to pastures new, it'll do so with a new captain as I stand down after two fun-filled but stressful years at the helm. Whoever takes over the captaincy will be sure to have some talent and ability at their disposal and if the perfect blend of youthful promise and slightly older experience can be found, they are likely to find more success in the near future. I wish them all the best in this new chapter for the club.

Judders (September 2010)