

## BGCC 3<sup>rd</sup> XI:

### The 2012 season in the Worcestershire County League (Division Four) (1st XI) by our Newland correspondent

Poor weather and constant injury shaped the season. After a string of rain cancellations and defeats, and no help from the selectors, the 3<sup>rds</sup> looked ripe for relegation at the halfway point. With a determined burst they clawed to safety: good news, but with no improvement on last year's batting chaos.

When you have repetition of calamity, the calamity begins to lose its emotional weight<sup>1</sup>. In the 12 League games that began, the Green lost 106 wickets of which 23 were ducks and 69 were for scores below 10. The average score for each lower-order batsman (numbers 7 to 11 inclusive), in the 10 matches where the Green lost all 10 wickets, was roughly 4.9. The opposition recorded only 10 ducks.

**Steve Alamutu** fired on few cylinders until 68 against Old Hill and 32 against Old Vigornians: each in a lost cause, but significantly improving team morale.

**Graham Baddeley**, involved in one or two changes of lifestyle and haircut, confessed to a poor year with the bat. He averaged 9.5. Rarely allowed to bowl, he seized his chance at Martley with two useful wickets.

**Andy Banks** took six senior wickets with his legspin, and fielded well, but was unlucky to find the pitches soaked and bounceless in a wet summer.

**Dick Brown** missed half of 2011 with a hurt Achilles, and a third of 2012 with a torn hamstring. He did not bowl, and achieved very few runs before or after a violent 32 against Cleobury. But his enthusiasm and support were beyond criticism, and his presence as umpire, adviser and chunterer-in-chief was noted.

**Jack Cullity** appeared in only four games but bowled at increased pace and showed great promise.

**Jack Dickenson** took a step up in standard and revealed no nerves, with good all-round keeping including several fine catches and stumpings. He proved an excellent (perhaps already taller) deputy for Dave White. Even keen fit youngsters often find matches of 50 overs difficult; Jack will note that his older teammates share this view and constantly seek new ways to be bowled out in under 45 or even under 40.

**Chris Hill** lost more kilos and more hair. He averaged 25 with the bat as usual, mostly as opener, and led the bowling with 17 wickets at 15. After a few unfortunate early-season dismissals he approached decent form in the relegation battle at Martley, with 3 wickets and 69 crucial runs. But then he crushed a toe at Lye, in a swift 4<sup>th</sup> XI defeat linked by some to the adjacent beer festival.

**Kevin Ratcliffe** distinctly improved on last season's run of poor scores, making 224 runs at 25. For some reasons he did not bowl.

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<sup>1</sup>A Wachowski, *New Yorker* (9 September 2012)

**Ian Scullion** again showed that a good bowling line and common-sense cricket can succeed as age creeps on; after some 25 years he and Hill featured in a veterans' reunion, driving the team to safety in July and August. Son **Ryan** developed most of the teen fast bowler habits and muscle strains. Son **James** thought he was past that stage, but was bullied into playing three games and took 8 wickets at 10, with a fine effort to win the game at Old Hill.

Newcomer **Lee Smith** impressed with solid all-round skills and 4 important wickets in his 17-over stint at Martley. A tendency to set his own field and everyone else's could not be hidden; responsibilities on the committee may await.

**Roger Thompson** regularly injected pace in the middle order, with 318 runs at 40, and 5 wickets – two of them at very important times. Promotion to the 2<sup>nds</sup> was a frequent threat, and after one 3<sup>rds</sup> cancellation a reality; Roger responded with a calm 85\* and a trademark cramped leg muscle.

**Dave White** rose to the challenge of replacing skipper Brown (who had replaced skipper Dean) while coping with a tremendous variety of wides and wild throws behind the stumps. His batting suffered.

Some substantial cameo appearances were noted:

**Cyril Dean's** efforts to control an unbalanced team in early season were appreciated more than he knows. **Georgia Hennessy** top-scored with 34 at Cleobury. **Jon Lewis** floated between 2nds, 3rds and University life, with a creditable 17-over spell at OVs in difficult circumstances. **Rob Lewis** took 0 for 28 from 11 balls in the opening match; weaker men would have cracked, but the next week he bowled 17 overs for 3 wickets against Ross. **Dave Price** floated between 3<sup>rds</sup>, 4<sup>ths</sup> and medical retirement, with his late-2011 batting promise unfulfilled and his place in the order (if any<sup>2</sup>) uncertain.

**Andy Wheeler** played three games and made a fine 103 against Hanley and Upton; yet Hill suggested that the scorers, confusing two batsmen of dissimilar outline, had awarded Wheeler one of his boundaries. **Anshuman Shukla** made a bright 47 against Cleobury, and took 4 wickets at 20.

**Euan** and **Rob Wilson**, and **Zach Marsh**, were welcomed to the side and played a full part in the Martley win. **Louis Loader** played three games in the first half of the season and took 8 wickets at 20. **Ben Alamutu** fielded with great keenness, fully earned his large intake of cakes, and sometimes played at very short notice because his seniors were injured or absent.

Under the cosh throughout from the weather and the strains of running four Saturday XIs, the 3<sup>rds</sup> did well to remain in Division Four. Many thanks are due to the captains, tealadies and ground staff.

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<sup>2</sup>C Hill *et al.*, "An example of noncomputability in ordered lists", in press.

**Publisher's Note:** In the current financial climate, a major scientific series combining art history, world literature and Worcestershire league averages [1] is a bold gamble. The response surpasses all expectations. Now BGCC experts, deeply versed in classical and Renaissance working practice, dominate this new field of evidence-based research. Recent progress [2], [3] will be of exceptional interest to historians, sports coaches and museum acquisition committees.



Figure 1. The classic doosra.



Figure 2. J M Brearley: captain, mentor, friend.



Figure 3. Training techniques: left, J Anderson, mid-career adjustments of head position in delivery stride; centre, the young J R Thomson (see [1]); right, P Tufnell (?), arm ball or slider, guide clamps applied, finger positions not disclosed.

[1] <<Lillee et Thomson>> at the *Petit Palais* (2010) and *Cricket Teas* (2012).  
<http://www.malvernoptics.co.uk/odd-science>

[2] Figures 1-3 are from *Antiquity In All Its Glory: the Illustrated BGCC Coaching Manual*, ed. Williams and Mayo, in preparation.

[3] A F Lamb, "Vardon Grips at Crécy and Agincourt", *J. Ridic. Hist. Theor.* **17**, pp. 45-51.