



## The Soapbox

What a finish to 2015. The first team pulled off a brilliant win at Brentwood, led from the front by Nick Bailey to achieve the league title.

The other league teams did well too. The third team and Sunday firsts won their leagues. The fourths and fifths performed very strongly and the seconds won 14 games from 17. The T20 side retained the Warsop title and were runners-up in the Essex League competition.

Friday night coaching was a great success with increased numbers, some new volunteers doing a roaring trade in burgers and a large presence in the bar. A few more club members helping out with coaching would not go amiss though.

This is not the time to rest. We have a brilliant club but it can get much better. It would be a (small) tragedy if there were no more titles in the next 22 years.

There is plenty to celebrate inside. As I write this though only four people have sent in reports (a month after I asked) and one of those came by post.

Achievements in the Colt's section that you might not have been aware of were the under-9 boys and under-10 girls meeting in the Grand Final of Central Essex District competition; the under-11 girls winning the regional title; and the under-13s winning the Central Essex League.

Away from the Club, Aaron Beard has been contracted by Essex and is on the ECB

Development Programme. Shona Keane was a regular for the Essex Women's side. Sam Cook and Jack Sterland were stalwarts of Essex 2nd XI and produced some very fine performances. Ben Clifford also made his debut at that level and made a half century.

Not the least of the things to celebrate is that this is the last Soapbox with me as editor of the Toss. Tom Halsey will take over in 2016. For his sake I hope that he has a cheerier tone but it would be nice to think that news will be sent out more than once a year.

It would feel wrong if I didn't sign off with a look back to the period when the club was not so strong. The first edition of the Toss (and yes, I have kept a copy) was issued in the Summer of 2001. At that time the firsts were struggling in Division 1, the seconds struggling in the Premier League and the thirds bottom of Division 1 (and on the way to Division 3). The Sunday 1sts were in the midst of a humiliating relegation campaign too. There were green shoots in the colts section, Nick Prowting made his 1<sup>st</sup> XI debut and the under-13s reached the County Cup final.

2015 was a great season but win or lose, every season that I have been at Chelmsford has thrown up great memories. Enjoy your cricket (real do as I say coaching here), work hard at your game, help your team-mates and there are better times ahead.

The first few pages are the remains of the abandoned pre-season newsletter before we get to the post-season stuff.

## Darts Night

The first ever Chelmsford Cricket Club Darts night proved to be a resounding success. A total of 64 competitors was a very impressive number, with even Andrew Rycroft being persuaded out of hiding (brought about by Liverpool's typically and predictably catastrophic season) to compete.

The teams of four were organised into four distinct leagues and the winners of each league progressed to the semi-finals.

The league winners of the Young Bucks, Golden Oldies, Families and Ladies leagues respectively were Out on the Bull, The Darts of Hazzard, The Gas Monkeys and Cutie-cles, although the suspicions of corruption investigators nationwide were aroused by the victories of Out on the Bull and Cutie-cles. Colin Lloyd was suspiciously more adept at hitting finishes for Out on the Bull than he was for their opponents such as Cave Appreciation Society, prompting mutterings of a fix.

The winners of the Ladies league, Cutie-cles, were a team captained by a certain Kathy Clayden. The Darts of Hazzard were helped in their league victory by one of their opponents being a man light for the opening round of fixtures; prima donna Rycroft turned up half an hour late.

Justice was arguably served in the semi-finals as Out on the Bull and Cutie-cles were sent packing by The Gas Monkeys and The Darts of Hazzard respectively.

It was congratulations to The Gas Monkeys, with a team consisting of Jay, Andy, Luke and Julie Smith for winning the inaugural Chelmsford CC Darts Trophy by beating The Darts of Hazzard in the final.

Thank you to Barry (Clayden) and to Colin Lloyd for their time, effort and organisation which helped to make the event such a success. Thanks also go to Kathy for providing food, Rosie (Prowting) and Berna (Cranmer) for serving it and to Julie (Witham) and Hannah (Devenish) for doing the bar.

Tom Halsey

## Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> XI Preview (Review later)

I am looking forward to the new season. This will be my fourth season at Chelmsford but the first as a captain. I have had previous experience at captaincy when I captained Little Waltham for three years in the T Rippon League.

From experience the Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> team struggles for consistency in selecting the same team every week. I am sure that this will continue this year, but all I will ask of players who do play for the 4<sup>th</sup>'s is to be fully committed and to also enjoy the games. We all give up a lot of time on a Saturday afternoon to play the game so let's go out and enjoy our cricket and be supportive of each other. I am sure that the team will have its usual blend of youth and experience. One of the main objectives will be for the experienced players to help develop the younger players through encouragement and the sharing of their knowledge of the game.

Here's to a successful season!

Phil Arnold

## Do You Remember? – The Under-13s 2003

In 2003, Colt's cricket at Chelmsford was reorganised with new managers at under-11 (Peter Drain), under-13 (me) and under-15 (Bob Shortman). This structure remained in place for nearly a decade with I think good results for the Club.

In my memory the season ran pretty smoothly. This was a very different world. For one, mobile phones were still a bit flashy. This meant it was very rare for anyone to pull out of a game late; perhaps a phone call at home being not quite as easy as a text or email. Perhaps it is also that I was a bit younger and slightly less embittered although that seems unlikely.

It was also helped by a dreadful opening round cup performance which restricted the number of fixtures to organise.

The season started and finished in very shambolic fashion. The last match of the season was particularly memorable as we failed to defend a huge score at Wanstead. The thing that I particularly recall is Nick (Bailey) snapping at the dreadful standard of fielding and screaming 'get the ball' at any number of his charges.

It was quite a strong side and several of the team are now regulars, with a couple of others progressing to first team cricket. Current 1<sup>st</sup> team captain Nick Bailey was captain with Rob Hayto, Neal Abhyankar and Craig Thompson also in the age group. The under-12 year contained Jack Moss, Imran Ahktar and Chai Pandya.

In terms of performances, Rob was excellent, taking 14 wickets at 5.5. He performed well with the bat but the star performer there was

Ali Panjwani, a very solid player at the top of the order.

The revelation of the season was Jonathan Smith who did a really good job at number 3. Neal also did well as a pinch-hitter although only at home. In a game at Bentley, he told Paul Jones (who I had persuaded to umpire) that he could not score runs away from home and promptly got out for a duck. Clearly, I had managed to have some influence on the mindset of individual players.

What the season does show is that colt's cricket whilst being important for developing players cannot guarantee or predict success or failure. The skills involved are not necessarily those that are needed.

I was certain that Rob would be a very good player but was equally sure that Ali would be.

The other person that I was sure would do well was Nick even though he was absolutely useless, scoring just 71 runs in 9 innings. Despite that his attitude suggested that he would improve and that the failures were a bit of a freak. I am sure that Neal and Rob would pour scorn on this but he did carry an air of authority that is unusual in a 13 year old. The game at Bentley –another that was running away from us – was notable for his rallying team talk after a wicket fell 'we're bowling \*\*\*\*, we're fielding \*\*\*\*, we're even walking in \*\*\*\*'.

The team went on to win the U15 County Cup two years later with Nick scoring a huge number of runs. In that year, five of the squad (Nick, Neal, Rob, Chai and Jack) were part of the U16 Matchplay winning side.  
Alistair Fergus

## The Soapbox that never was...

And so it begins...the 2015 season is off and running. A time to look forward to the joy that another year of cricket will bring; unless you're like me (and I hope otherwise) when all you see is a yawning chasm of despair.

It will be fascinating to see how we fare. On paper, we are a very strong club and there is also plenty of untapped potential. Most of all though it would be nice to see things run smoothly with a minimum of scrambling about to raise teams.

I often say that it is interesting to look back at earlier years, it is important to realise that things can easily go wrong at an amateur member club and that when they do it can take years to turn things round. The vast majority of our players are too young to recall when the club went through a very difficult period, clearly I am not but I also had a clear-out of old stuff recently and found a few reminders.

Item 1 was from 2000 and was a prospectus for a merger between Chelmsford and Old Chelmsfordians Cricket Clubs. This was an idea that emerged as both clubs were struggling and there were strong connections between us. The proposal eventually foundered but the discussions reinforced what the strengths of our club were; mainly excellent coaches (Keith, Bob, Eddie) and a large playing field (Chelmer Park). Based on that, we worked really hard on the youth section and now several years later we have achieved most of our aims.

What would have happened if the merger had gone ahead? One of the main stumbling blocks was what to call the Club; Old Chelmsfordians and Chelmsford was unacceptable to Chelmsford members;

Chelmsford and Old Chelmsfordians... in a parallel universe maybe there is a COCs Cricket Club; actually I think I've played against them a few times.

Item 2 was the Essex League Handbook from 2003 containing our season report from 2002. Coming in at just over half a page it lamented poor batting, availability and a season that ended with league positions of 6<sup>th</sup> (Div. 1), 8<sup>th</sup> (Prem. Div.) and 9<sup>th</sup> (Div. 2); the third team being relegated to Division 3. The highlights picked out were Eddie Lawrence's bowling, Nick Prowting's batting and successfully fielding five Saturday sides. The report ended with a comment about the fourth and fifth teams; 'Under the overall guidance of Bob Shortman, these elevens are the training ground for the future. Hopefully Essex League opponents will rue the fruits of this over the next decade'.

The last thing I found was the statistics from my first year running the under-13s. Five of the players were regulars last year and some are now prominent members.

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Post script: 2015 was a fantastic season. For the first time to win the Premier League was a huge achievement and it was very moving to see how much it meant to some of the younger players in particular.

Things did not run smoothly though, it was very hard work. Please do what you can to provide further success.

In 2015 the most likely merger that we could be involved with is Chelmsford Cricket and Kennel Club.

## Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> XI

As the nights get darker and colder, it would appear that another cricket season is over and what a season it was! I can still remember thinking about my hopes for the season in the spring time and though I was optimistic about our chances for success, I was hesitant to be too positive. In an email that I sent out to the squad at the start of the season, I drew the following conclusions:

"We have an excellent squad, with an excellent mix of youth and experience. We have bowlers of all types, ranging from genuine pace to slow back-spinners. We have outstanding team spirit, particularly as many of us have played together for years. Finally, if I'm going to get stick off Becky for playing so much cricket, I would love to win something!"

The season started on a cold wet day at Chelmer Park and I remember thinking it was likely to be just our luck that Reece Topley was available for Colchester for the first game of the season. I then proceeded to lose the toss and when we were inserted to bat on a wet-looking pitch, I'm sure I was not alone in thinking that it could be a tough start to the season. As would become a common trend throughout the season, Nick Prowting and Dan Hagen provided the backbone to the innings with half-centuries and useful cameos from me and Ben Clifford managed to boost the score to 190 all out. Another trend that also proved true in this match was that our bowlers would perform, with five wickets from Ben and three from Ollie Devenish leading us to a relatively comfortable win; my first as 1<sup>st</sup> XI skipper!

More runs for Nick and a quick-fire fifty from Jack Sterland, combined with wickets for James Clifford and Anthony Hill, led to comfortable wins against South Woodford and Harold Wood. A particular pleasing feature was 92\*

for Aaron Beard against South Woodford, showing that he has not only the ability but also the focus to succeed at this level. Our first couple of high-pressure situations arose in chases against Ilford and Buckhurst Hill, with Chris Prowting demonstrating the virtue of experience with two exceptional innings under pressure. It was especially pleasing to see James Clifford play a confident counter-attacking innings against Buckhurst Hill, demonstrating that he has the ability to take apart attacks at this level. The Buckhurst Hill game is one that will go down in folklore, firstly by Buckhurst Hill bowler Petchey managing to rile Nick enough to bring out Churchill, before Rosie usurped this by brilliantly informing Petchey that "I've heard quite enough of that language thank you very much", a quip delivered so calmly that he did not quite know how to respond!

With five league games played and five victories, we perhaps had too much belief in ourselves. After racking up an imposing total of 288 against Chingford, we were promptly put in our place by a destructive batting display from a talented line-up, a match which also highlighted our need for a second frontline spinner.

A weakened side bundled out of the League Cup by Hornchurch the next day. This could have been the beginning of a downward spiral in our fortunes worsened by rain ruining a dominant situation against Loughton and a fixture list throwing up a difficult fortnight with games against our main rivals Wanstead and Brentwood.

Sam Cook has been a consistent performer throughout the year, developing a rather uncanny knack of taking a wicket in the first over of the match. He set the tone at

Wanstead by removing former CCC tormentor John Chambers with the first ball of the match, a feat that he would repeat later in the season. Three wickets from Karamat and three for Hilly were followed up by a quite remarkable batting performance from Nick and Dan, combining to put on 204 and earn a nine-wicket win, a chase of almost perfection that was ruined by yours truly throwing away his wicket early on.

Karamat's impact continued as he tore through Brentwood to return five for 45, before an outstanding 70\* from Sterls proved that he could perhaps score runs on something other than a flat one.

With the pitches beginning to dry out, spin had become particularly important to our success. In the next three games James took ten wickets and Karamat eleven and it appeared that no one had an answer to their accuracy and guile. The team was now beginning to gain in self-confidence and it felt as if no matter what situation we got ourselves into, we were able to find a way out of it.

At 42 for five against Harold Wood, in previous years we may have crumbled, but this time James and CP combined brilliantly to mount a recovery and guide us to a defendable score. With Aaron Beard able to bowl the attack had gained an extra edge, with his pace providing an ideal strategy to mop up lower orders.

After bowling out Ilford for 152 at home it appeared that we were heading to another comfortable win, an idea that seemed a certainty with the chase at 72 for none. The Ilford spin pair of Nijjar and Tavarasa had other ideas however, with a dramatic collapse leading to a four-run loss. We were able to bounce back with comfortable wins against Buckhurst Hill and Chingford, with all of our batsmen in excellent form. A significant

moment occurred in the field with Nick Prowting suffering an unfortunate injury, meaning that although he was not required on this day we would have to find another batsman to fill his place. After discussion with Chris, it was decided that we would have to finally test Ben's theory that he bats like his batting position, by promoting him up the order to 3. He promptly responded the way that only Ben can, with an outstanding maiden century in a comfortable win away at Loughton, full of his entire arsenal of strokes ranging from the audacious to the simply destructive. Karamat proved his value yet again with six wickets on a very flat pitch, aided by a couple of exceptional slip catches from Dev.

The win against Loughton had returned us to the top of the table, holding a four point lead going into the final two games against Wanstead and Brentwood. With everything on the line, Sam Cook provided one of the best spells of bowling I have ever witnessed, destroying the Wanstead top order; a run out for Karamat and a wicket for Ben helped reduce their innings to 24 for six. Although their lower order was able to bolster their total to 93, the result seemed a foregone conclusion. However, in one of the most depressing and dismal batting displays I have been part of in a long time we conspired to collapse dramatically to 50 for seven as I had to stand and watch a procession of wickets fall at the other end to the spin of Kishen Velani, including a hat-trick of wickets clean bowled. Although a cameo from Karamat gave a glimmer of hope, sadly this was not to be and we collapsed to defeat.

After we heard the news that Brentwood had won and we now faced the task of overhauling a 12-point deficit in the final week the mood was low, particularly given the fact that Chris

was missing the final game and Karamat was required back in Pakistan for training, as well as missing Nick due to injury. An early wicket for Cooky was promising, but it appeared that former Chelmsford colt Guy Balmford could prove to be the thorn in our side, playing confidently all around the wicket. Two wickets for Ben and a run out raised hopes of a collapse, but some intelligent batting from Brentwood captain West and overseas Younghusband meant that they went in for lunch in a strong position at 100 for four, with the pitch appearing to offer little to the bowlers.

James Clifford had other ideas however, removing West soon after lunch and then beginning to work his way through the Brentwood lower order, demonstrating outstanding control and variation of pace. He took four wickets quickly which, combined with a wicket for Beardo and a run out, led to a quick demise of the Brentwood innings to 143 all out. With memories of the Wanstead game still fresh in our minds and the early loss of Dan Hagen, even the most optimistic of Chelmsford supporters must have been nervous, even more so when Ben was dropped at slip before he had got off the mark. Thankfully this appeared to be a fillip for Ben as he took it upon himself to take the attack to the Brentwood bowling, demonstrating that the Loughton innings was not just a one-off. Between us we began to slowly reduce the runs required for victory, with the scoring rate accelerating as the Brentwood energy began to drop and the ball became softer.

With Brentwood morale extremely low and victory appearing inevitable, Ben fell for 51. With 40 still needed, nerves around the ground began to jangle. Sterls came in and made a significant dent in the requirement with a

breezy 17 but he too fell with 13 required to win. Fortunately this proved to be the last wicket to fall and we were able to get over the line without further trouble, completing a dominant win and securing the league title by the narrowest of margins and in the most dramatic manner. It was particularly pleasing that I was able to be there at the end, finishing unbeaten on 67 and able to watch from the other end as Aaron showed the maturity of a stalwart by calmly knocking the winning runs. The atmosphere was electric as we walked off the pitch, with the significance of what we had achieved now slowly beginning to sink in.

It was particularly pleasing to see the loyalty of some of our club members, with my brother Alex and uncle Barry both leaving their game early along with Tom Iliffe to come and watch the final moments. As I was walking off it probably seemed that I didn't appear to be happy, but I was simply mentally and physically exhausted after what had proven to be a rollercoaster of final day emotions. It was wonderful that Rosie and Roger were there to witness the victory, longstanding supporters of the club and obviously to represent the significant contribution of Nick and Chris not only in this season, but also over the previous decade.

The final statistics make great reading for the season, not least because they highlight our exceptional strength in depth and the fact that we have not been overly reliant on a few individuals. With the bat, Dan Hagen and Nick Prowting were the standout performers, with Dan scoring over 600 runs and Nick averaging a shade below 60. On top of this, myself, Aaron and Sterls were all able to score over 290 runs at an average of over 30, with both Cliffords and CP contributing over 200 runs. I have not looked into the figures in too much detail, but

from a glance it would appear that no other club in the league has anywhere near this number of people contributing so impressively, with arguably eleven players contributing significant innings at some point during the season.

With the ball, Karamat was the obvious standout with 36 wickets at an average of 10 and a remarkable strike rate of just 17 deliveries per wicket. However it was the depth and variety of the attack that proved to be the key, with six of our bowlers being among the top 30 wicket-takers in the league and four among the top 20. Aaron Beard undoubtedly would have been in that list too if he had been fully fit to bowl in every game. With such depth and youth in the attack it would appear that the only risk in the future is their ability leading to progression to first-class level.

There are so many people to thank it is difficult to know where to begin. Firstly I would like to thank Bernice for her constant support and positive attitude, revelling in her role as the surrogate mother of the team by making sure that we were organised and for completing endless thankless tasks on my behalf. Secondly I would like to give a special mention to our travelling parents who provided invaluable support (and vehicles) throughout the season, particularly Steve Clifford, Steve Cook and Harry Hill who helped me out significantly when dealing with Karamat's residence in Chafford Hundred! It would be a tragedy were I not to mention the excellent lunches that are provided for us during all-day games, as every week I am told by the opposition that they are (by far) the best in the league. There are quite simply too many club officials to thank, but I would like to thank everyone for helping to make my job a lot easier and I apologise for any extra work that I may have created.

It would be a crime to finish without a special mention of thanks to all of the coaches that have worked with all of us during our time at the club, giving up their precious time to help us to develop as cricketers. Bob Shortman, Alistair Fergus, Eddie Lawrence and Keith Goodman to name but a few have all played a significant part in this success and we are all grateful for your time and effort. A particularly pleasing part of the victory was the outpour of congratulations from many other teams in the league who were pleased that we had won the title as they consider us to be a great bunch of lads as well as a group of talented cricketers.

I would like to conclude with a particular thank you to all of the players who have been part of the success, in particular those who came up from the second team to help us out when numbers were short. Each one of you has contributed in some way to the success of the team, even if in Stuey's case on the final day it was by providing the best celebratory pose! It has been an honour and a privilege to captain such a talented group of people and I hope that we can go on to achieve even greater success in the future. Let's not make winning a one-off, let's make it a habit that lasts for years to come.

Nick Bailey

Nick suggested that I might like to edit this but I didn't really know where to start. He has earned an indulgence though for producing match reports almost every week and for winning the league.

At the recent AGM there were only 4 full adult subscription paying members in attendance.

If there had been a vote on playing matters, there were only 8 eligible voters.

## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> XI

2015 saw a new Sunday captain in the shape of James Clifford. He had considerably-sized shoes to fill, Rob Hayto have done an excellent job over the past few years in raising sides that have usually been reasonably successful in the face of considerable indifference towards Sunday cricket. It is fair to say he did manage to fill them though, winning the league in his first season.

The Sunday season started in inauspicious fashion away at Buckhurst Hill, in what transpired to be the only away game of the season. Availability was poor (the Saturday season still being a week away probably not helping), and on the back of a destructive century by their overseas player, Buckhurst Hill racked up 282. It may have been useful to be able to call on the services of Harry Green with the ball in this innings, but unfortunately he was wicket-keeping. Whilst we were on track with the run-rate we fell some way short, all out for 161 in 23.2 overs. Looking back at the Play-Cricket scorecard for the purposes of accuracy, I find that I batted at number 3 in this innings, and dropped anchor for 2\*. This is not something that I can truthfully say I remember happening.

A month passed by before the second game, at home to Hadleigh & Thundersley. A stronger (though very bowler-heavy) side was assembled and restricted the visitors to 153. This was chased for the loss of six wickets, with Liam Keaney (59) to the fore, though when Sterland ran several yards past one to leave us 129 for six with a side containing at least three number 11s, things hadn't looked quite so good. We were guided home by Anthony Hill and an uncharacteristically sensible innings from Steve Pleasant.

Harold Wood were dispatched fairly comfortably in the following match, Ollie Devenish (94), James Clifford (61) and Ben Clifford (53\* from 35 balls) playing well in our 268. In stark contrast, Harold Wood did not

play very well at all in reply. They were bowled out for 89, with me profiting with five for 7. It is possible that I have Lee Cranmer's advice to the batsmen from slip ("this bloke is rubbish") to thank for contributing to some overconfidence on their part.

After a rain off against Bardoli, the next game was at home to Waltham, where more selection problems were encountered; these were worsened by a gruesome injury sustained on Saturday by Rob Hayto. However several people helped out late on in the week, for which I am grateful, and Aaron Beard also procured an 11<sup>th</sup> man, Billy Wander from Writtle, on Saturday night.

We did at least turn up for the game on time. Waltham didn't and by the time the match started half an hour late they still only had three players. Winning the toss and electing to bat, had they lost two wickets in the first ten or so overs, they would have been all out. They didn't, batting understandably cautiously, and eventually limped to 145 all out once the rest of their side had shown up. Harry Green impressed with four for 21, along with Alistair Fergus who conceded just two scoring shots in seven overs; Aaron Beard (61\*) then batted excellently to see us home by five wickets.

Upminster conceded the penultimate game meaning that all of a sudden we could potentially win the title with a win in the final game over Belhus. This game was staged the day after the Saturday season so availability was expected to be difficult, but surprisingly by some distance the strongest Sunday side of the season was gathered with some time to spare. As things transpired, the first team won the Essex League for the first time in 22 years on the Saturday (no doubt detailed elsewhere), and when I turned up at Chelmer Park on that Sunday morning it was to a scene of some suffering.

With the exception of one spell of bowling, we played well though. Belhus were restricted to

just 121 in spite of what may be the worst spell of new ball bowling I have ever seen courtesy of Jack Sterland, with Sean Sullivan, myself and James Clifford chipping in with some wickets. Sterland did atone for his bowling in compiling a fluent 63 to underpin our chase, which was successful by the margin of six wickets.

A few hours later the news came through that Upminster had beaten Waltham and consequently we were champions. This was a considerable achievement for James given the start against Buckhurst Hill, the selection issues almost throughout the season, and the fact that it was his debut year as captain. The constantly changing nature of the side (and the small amount of cricket played) is evidenced by the season's stats; only two batsmen topped 100 runs (Jack Sterland, with 106 at 26.5 and James himself, with 104 at 34.67) and only one bowler managed 10 wickets (me, with 15 at 7.27) in the side that won the league. However, everyone who played the odd game here or there did a decent job.

Thanks to Maureen Green and Bernice McGowan for scoring, and to Dave Goddard for his tireless work in helping to get sides together, making the life of James and myself far easier. Thanks also to everyone who played a part in the campaign.

Tom Halsey

A strange sort of season with only 5 games actually played. With Tom as part of the management team, it was perhaps appropriate that a crucial result was Upminster calling off when we were struggling to raise a side; poker skills coming in useful.

For understandable reasons Tom has chosen to elide the other Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> team game; a poor defeat against the MCC on President's Day. Just as in 2014, the batting was very poor, mustering just 154.

## Results

### Shepherd Neame Essex League

#### 1<sup>st</sup> XI (1<sup>st</sup> XI Premier)

P 18 W 14 D 0 L 3 A 1 Pts 310 **1<sup>st</sup>**

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> XI (2<sup>nd</sup> XI Premier)

P 18 W 14 D 1 L 2 A 1 Pts 307 **2<sup>nd</sup>**

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> XI (3<sup>rd</sup> XI Premier)

P 18 W 12 D 2 L 3 A 1 Pts 294 **1<sup>st</sup>**

#### 4<sup>th</sup> XI (3<sup>rd</sup> XI Division 1)

P 18 W 9 D 5 L 3 A 1 Pts 234 **3<sup>rd</sup>**

#### 5<sup>th</sup> XI (4<sup>th</sup> XI Premier)

P 18 W 8 D 1 L 7 A 2 Pts 246 **4<sup>th</sup>**

### Essex Sunday League

#### (Premier Division)

P 7 W 5 L 1 A 1 Pts 100 **1<sup>st</sup>**

### Dukes Essex League Cup

P 2 W 1 L 1

(lost to Hornchurch who won the competition)

### Dukes Essex League T20

P 5 W 4 L 1 **Runners-Up**

### Warsop T20

P 6 W 6 **Champions**

Harlow were 2015's Kryptonite

P 4 L 4

Points 11

The two lowest scores of the season were against Harlow; 57 by the 5ths; 61 by the 3rds

It felt good at the start of season knowing that we were getting the worst game out of the way first – Ilford away at Fairlop! We travelled with a very young and inexperienced team. We did not have a keeper so for the first (and last) time I volunteered to stand behind the stumps. The bad news was that we were bowled out for 73. The good news was that I only had to keep for 16 overs as Ilford knocked them off for the loss of one wicket.

We left Fairlop thinking it could be a long, hard season. Thankfully we were wrong. Loughton at home saw Matt Davis score 96 as we fell three short chasing 243. Settling for a draw seemed like a defeat but it was a vast improvement on the first game.

We then travelled to Upminster where Harry Arnold showed some good early form claiming three wickets. The game ended in a draw but it felt like things were improving all the time.

The following week we claimed our first victory at home to Chingford. The highlight was a maiden century from Steve Bond. The ever reliable Rory Skepelhorn picked up three wickets whilst the not so reliable Luke Wells picked up two. Defeat the following week to South Woodford proved to be our last for a while. Dave Goddard chipped in with his first half century and Abhi Kumar started to show some form that would return in the coming weeks.

A draw the following week with Colchester saw some mature performances from Messr's Iliffe (100 not out), Rycroft (73) and Goodman (four wickets) and the following week saw the only rained off game of the season at Hornchurch having set them a daunting 246 to win.

Now the season really started as we hosted the league leaders Wanstead. Chasing 257 we knocked them off in the last over. 152 not out from the skipper was supported by the rest of the top order. A great win which proved to be the only defeat for Wanstead all season!

Five more back to back victories followed against Southend, Ilford, Loughton, Upminster and Chingford. We found ourselves in third place. The season ended with two more victories, a defeat to Colchester and a draw at Wanstead meaning that we kept third spot.

Over the season 45 players were used in the 4<sup>th</sup> XI. Neil Raisborough was as reliable as ever bowling 175 overs and leading the wicket taking stats with 25. Tom Arnold played a few less games this year but still ended the season with 16 wickets. Rory Skepelhorn deserves a mention. He bowled extremely well and hardly missed a game picking up 11 wickets.

Phil Arnold led the way with the bat scoring 810 runs with Dave Goddard and Abhi Kumar also contributing throughout the season.

The season was an enjoyable and successful. It was good to see Matt Davis, Harry Arnold and Steve Bond move up to the thirds. It was equally as good to see Jay Smith, Jordan Champion and Micky Burns playing well when they came up from the fifths.

#### Phil Arnold

As he seems to have tried to hide it, it is worth highlighting that Phil scored 810 runs at an average in excess of 60 for the 4<sup>th</sup> team. This is a huge tally of runs and his overall total placed him in the top 10 run-scorers for Saturday cricket across all the divisions.

As well as that, he did not miss a Saturday game.

Champagne Moments were awarded to the two successful Saturday captains; fittingly both Nick Bailey and James Arnold were at the crease when the leagues were won

## The Numbers

### Highest Score:

For: **352-3**

U16s v Hornchurch Athletic

Against: **314-4**

South Woodford v Sat 4ths

### Lowest Score:

Against: **41**

Brentwood v Sat 3rds

For: **57**

Sat 4ths v Harlow

### Highest Individual Score:

**232** – Sean Sullivan

U16s v Hornchurch Athletic

### Centuries:

**2** – Phil Arnold

**1** – Nick Prowting; Nick Bailey; Ben Clifford; Miles Clark; Rob Hayto; David Thrift; Henry Brisland; Steve Bond; Tom Iliffe; Micky Burns; James Banfield; Jack Champion; Sean Sullivan; Sheeraz Sohail; Connor Cheverall; Lee Cranmer; Paul Keaney; Jay Smith; Alistair Baldwin; Matthew Cole

### Best Bowling:

**7-59** – Harry Green

Sat 3rds V Harlow

### Five-fors:

**3** – Harry Green

**2** – Stuart Everard; Ben Clifford; Karamat Ali; Ian Hare

**1** – James Clifford; Anthony Hill; Mark Drain; Craig Thompson; Alistair Fergus; Neal Abhyankar; Jack Champion; Tom Halsey; Andrew Shepherd; Jay Smith

### Hat-tricks

Karamat Ali

Ben Clifford

### Ever-presents (Saturday League)

Phil Arnold

Jack Champion

Jordan Champion

Sam Cook

Lee Cranmer

Alistair Fergus

Tom Halsey

Jack Moss

### League Centuries

Saturday 1sts: 3

Saturday 2nds: 2

Saturday 3rds: 2

Saturday 4ths: 4

Saturday 5ths: 3

Sunday 1sts: 0

## Willows Season Overview

It was always going to be very difficult to follow on from the very successful inaugural season the Willows had last year, but we managed it! This season the girls played in 51 matches across 4 age groups, we had more (16) of our players selected for Essex and we won 3 trophies. Not a bad year in all.

Shep has elsewhere spoken at length about our U10 girls team who were pitted against the best U9 boys team in the local area and were a force to be reckoned with, finishing second only to Chelmsford's own U9 boys team across both leagues, a great achievement for the Willows and Chelmsford CC in general, the future looks promising.

With 60 names on the books and 30-35 girls regularly turning up to Friday night training we were able to field teams at u9, u10, u11 and u13 age groups, playing a mixture of hard and soft-ball matches in both leagues, friendlies and tournaments, plenty of cricket for everyone. Despite that the u9 soft-ball girls were left a bit short on matches due to a lack of appropriate opposition. The one organised friendly they had was against a very strong U11 Hutton team who won comfortably, but all of the Chelmsford girls enjoyed (for a lot of them) their first experience of a proper match, so smiles all round.

Glossing over our U10 team, our U11 team are county and regional champions! Sounds good doesn't it! Ignoring mini-matchplay type games, our U11's were undefeated over the whole 2015 season, coming up against and beating a variety of local and regional clubs along the way. There were 6 Lady Taverners victories as well as 3 full length friendlies against Hutton (twice) and the Essex U11 Development Squad.

Our U13's fared pretty well too, but unfortunately could only manage a strong

runners-up finish in the Lady Taverners soft-ball competition to Hutton. They did enter the T20 cup for the first time and started with a very convincing victory over Loughton CC but that was followed by an agonising 1 run defeat to Colchester & EE CC. The highlight of the season however, was being crowned champions in the inaugural Woolpit CC soft-ball competition, remaining undefeated after 4 matches. There were also a number of friendlies organised with local clubs (Harlow Town CC, Hutton CC twice and the Essex U13 Development Squad), with the Willows gaining 1 win and 3 losses, but that included some very close matches and also the girls first ever 30 over match (vs Hutton), a real development and learning opportunity for all the girls involved.

There have been so many girls playing for the Willows this season it's hard to highlight every individual performance, but credit must go to all the girls involved for being keen to play cricket whatever the format, team, opposition, location etc. (and obviously to parents for getting them there!), ensuring we've never had to cancel a fixture, we'd never had too few players and we've been able to support the wider club whenever asked. A number of our girls got invaluable experience playing in the U11 and U13 boys leagues and let's hope that continues for the coming seasons. We are blessed to have so many keen and able girls within Chelmsford CC and we need to ensure we continue to develop them and keep them engaged.

We are building on the success this year and adding in two further teams for the 2016 season: namely an U12 team entered into the U11 boys league; as well as an u14/u15 team involved in the Girls Friendly league we are setting up with 6 other local clubs (Hutton CC, Woodford Wells CC, Loughton CC, Upminster

CC, Harold Wood CC and Bentley CC), the latter guaranteeing 12 home/away hard-ball matches for our older girls. So there should be plenty of opportunity for everyone to play plenty of cricket next year if they are keen and interested. We will also continue to look out for appropriate soft-ball opposition for our younger and less experienced girls who aren't quite ready or keen on hard-ball cricket, and may have to start looking at school opposition rather than club opposition.

So to quickly summarise: we've got more girls than we've ever had; together they have represented the Willows in 51 matches this season and been present at a variety of events and competitions; we have won 3 trophies which we'll aim to defend next year; and we are looking to expand from 4 to 6 teams next season. It's looking very rosy for the Willows and for Chelmsford CC in general.

To support our expansion plans for next season we are looking for some help from parents on the organisational side; and therefore if you think you could help organise league matches, or team selection then we'd be very happy to hear from you. You can either talk to me (Adrian Tuff – [Adrian.tuff@gmail.com](mailto:Adrian.tuff@gmail.com) / 07775 800885) or catch Shep at a training session!

Thanks to all those parents who have helped out this season, and continue to help out at winter nets; you know who you all are so I won't embarrass you by naming everyone. But I will say a very big thank you from myself and all the parents to Shep, for continuing to develop and push the girls, as well as umpiring, coaching and co-ordinating large numbers of the matches. It is very much appreciated.

Here's to a very successful 2015 season and looking forward (already) to an ever bigger, better and more successful 2016 season. Cheers everyone. Adrian Tuff

## U10 Willows Report

U10 Willows took part in their first season in a hardball league - the U9 Central Essex District Cricket Board (CEDCB) West League. It was clear after their success in softball tournaments last year that with the right attitude, they would be competitive against the boys. If nothing else, and as the only all female team in the league, the girls could get regular hardball games in 20 over Terrier Cricket.

The terrier format is a fair and equitable way for everyone to play a part in the game. Importantly, it also tests everyone's ability to think as a team, as you cannot win a game unless everyone contributes with bat and ball.

In the west league we had to play eight matches in the season. The team by numbers of appearances was: Zoe Good (captain), Mel Welch, Beth Wright (wk), Jess Tuff (wk), Abbie Camp, Isabella Copeland, Olivia Copeland, Angel Sharma, Khajaul Sentihikumaran, Izzie Sawyer and extra special player Jack Wright. Jess Ackhurst, Poppy Farmer, Gracie Cowan, Jess Spinks and Georgie Bidwell also made valuable contributions. There were highs and lows, of course, but here are some of the highlights:

Game 1:	Willows 309-3 v Brentwood 234-8. Win by 75 runs.	Highlights: Bella 2w/0runs, Mel 4w/5runs.
Game 2:	Willows 331-3 v Hutton 278-9. Win by 53 runs.	Highlights: Abbie 11runs, Zoe 3w/2runs.
Game 3:	Willows 210-15 v Springfield 279-6. Loss by 69 runs.	Highlights: Olivia's diving catch.

Game 4:	Willows 283-4 v Shenfield 280-5. Win by 3 runs.	Highlights: Beth 10runs, Olivia 2w/7runs and on a hat trick!
Game 5:	Willows 240-7 v Billericay 241-11. Loss by 1 run.	Highlights: Khajaul 2w/10runs, Jess A's fielding.
Game 6:	Willows 264-8 v Maldon 287-6. Loss by 23 runs.	Highlights: Beth 26runs, Poppy's fielding.
Game 7:	Willows 234-8 v Bentley 215-10. Win by 19runs.	Highlights: Jess T 4w/1run. Angel 1w/1run.
Game 8:	Willows v Herongate. Win by walkover.	Highlights: Herongate threw in the towel rather than face the girls!

This performance was enough to get the Willows into the District Finals as one of the four teams to play on the day, along with Maldon, Springfield and the Chelmsford Boys!!

The first final was against Springfield. Everyone batted well, scoring 262 for only 3 wickets. In reply Springfield were overwhelmed by our strong bowling and excellent fielding and could only reach 234 at the end for the loss of 4 wickets.

At the other end of the ground, the Chelmsford Boys had also had a win against Maldon, which set up the ultimate final of the Boys v the Willows. The grand final match was therefore played between the two best teams on the day - and both Chelmsford Teams had deserved their place in the perfect finale to the season..!!

The game was hard fought, but against good straight bowling, the girls found

scoring runs hard and ended up on 227-5. This put the girls under pressure, as the bowling and fielding would have to be amazing to keep the boys down to 3 runs per over. Despite some fine bowling and two run outs, we were not able to get more than four wickets, and the boys ended up with 242-4 to win the game and to be crowned winners.

But the girls put up a courageous fight and everyone was proud of what they had achieved. For their first competitive season, the Willows have exceeded all expectations - 2nd place overall in a league of 17 teams - with Chelmsford taking both No.1 and No.2 spots in the District – and the award of medals afterwards at the presentation. Certainly a season to remember, and with half the girls able to play U10s next year, we are looking forward to putting another Willows team forward next season in hardball cricket for 2016.

Finally, thanks goes again to the amazing organisational and IT technical skills of Adrian Tuff, who as Willows Manager has created the availability system, liaised and arranged games seamlessly with the opposition and become a legend in the lengths of emails (highly informative of course). Also thanks to all the parents who have supported, Sean Good for umpiring and Adam Wright for additional coaching.

Andrew Shepherd

If you are aware of a Sponsorship opportunity, please speak to someone on the Committee. Any support would be very much appreciated.

## Under-13s

With a talented team, skilfully nurtured by Bernice for the previous two seasons, I thought the under-13s would perform strongly through the season.

Two games in, two Cup runs over; what do I know? Hutton were simply too powerful, an excellent side, Herongate were not though and the defeat was due to poor batting. With a wide pool of talent, I decided that everyone should bowl in each match (unless they did not want to). With batting it is more difficult but there was variation in the top order slots, with the B team matches used to provide opportunities for the middle and lower order players as well as the less experienced players.

The A team did superbly after the Cup setbacks. Seven league games played and six won, including gaining revenge against Hutton in the final game. Neither Hutton nor Bentley (to whom we lost) completed their programmes and so the team were crowned champions, a really fine achievement.

Luke Smith and Matthew Cole scored the only half centuries of the season and played other good innings along the way. Matthew Cook, Jack Karmy, Ryan Cheverall, James Boyden and Fabian Bright also played notable innings. The bowling was generally good with a genuine depth of quality although Sam Bowen was outstanding in the games he played. Some of the fielding was also impressive with James Boyden and Henry Pearce leading the way but the highlight here was Fabian breaking a stump with a direct hit run out at Billericay.

The key batting performances were cool partnerships between Luke and Fabian to secure a win against Springfield; then, Luke and James to break the back of the target set by Hutton.

The best game though was a last over thriller against Brentwood. The visitors looked set for a bigger score before Billy Brunger produced an inspired five-wicket burst. Matt Cole played brilliantly before retiring and in a tense finish, Matt Cook struck two sixes cleanly over straight midwicket to secure the win.

For the B team, it was very much a case of gaining experience and five of the six games were lost. Generally though, the performances were reasonable with the exception of an appalling game at Herongate, where the best batsman was last minute call-up Jessica Tuff (9). Henry Pearce and James Boyden generally played well and retired on a number of occasions.

There were also three friendlies played, home and away to Coggeshall and home to Stock. The Stock game was really enjoyable, principally because Chelmsford provided 17 of the 22 players; the best parts of this were Izzy Lander playing well and retiring and Jaydhan Prabhakar cleaning up Matt Cole (sorry, Matt). All of these games were won with plenty of good performances, particularly the catching at Coggeshall.

What is particularly pleasing though is to see the under-13s feed into the adult set up. Luke Smith and the two Matts have been regulars in the Sunday seconds and performed very well. Luke and Matt Cole have done well in league games for the fifth team. James Boyden and Henry Pearce have also done really well and impressed with their attitude. Jack Karmy, Sam Tremelling, Fabian Bright and Will Boyden have also played to good effect and hopefully a few more will join them next season. Amongst the new players and Mohammad Ahmed has to be mentioned for his keenness and after a winter of coaching will hopefully have acquired another shot. It was great to see the under-11s play so much cricket and some of those players will join the experienced players like Sam Tremelling, Dan Cornell and Mollie Tuff to hopefully have a decent side next season. Thank you to the parents who helped out and encouraged; especially Derek Cook for scoring and Nigel and Julie Smith for occasional umpiring and biscuits. Also, of course to Adrian Tuff who was always able to provide players from the girl's section when asked (it took some time to phrase this sentence appropriately).

Alistair Fergus

The most important member of the fifth team did not take the field for us on any occasion. However DG saw that we took the field with a full team in all but one of our fixtures! As last year, a mixture of young and old, Dads and lads turned out, all giving their best.

We got off to an outstanding start at Brentwood when 'Dad' James Banfield turned out for his only game of the season and scored a century! His son, Peter, then took 4 for 20 as we bowled Brentwood out for 89. We came down to earth with a bump as the side took a thrashing from Harlow in my absence.

We travelled to play Upminster at Champion School. What a nightmare! The school was hosting a swimming gala so there were no changing facilities. A very rude steward sent us to some locked changing rooms before we took root in the swimming changing rooms much to the chagrin of the locals. No chairs, no scorer's table and nowhere to put our kitbags. This venue MUST have been vetted by someone! Upminster's batting was poor and Dr Priantha Siriwardana's bowling was far too good for them. Tea was 'served' on the outfield with no plates! The sight of players collecting their tea in their caps or on their pads was not what is expected! Upminster's bowling was as poor as the facilities so we quickly knocked off the runs.

Jordan Campion was the star of the show against Belhus with a quickfire 61 off a good bowling attack. Ali Baldwin played his first game and lived up to his boast of being 'a better batsman than Alex Bailey!' Shep and Ali teamed up to bowl out Belhus giving us the remarkable record in May of played four, won three.

Leigh on Sea were the best side that we played this year even though they finished third in the league table. With only 10 men Alex Bailey returned to the bowling attack after suffering an ankle injury and bowled a fiery 15 over spell. Young Matt Cole scythed through the lower order but their score of 199 was too many despite Mark Coups getting us off to a flyer in his sole performance of the season!

Despite the inclusion of Essex 50+ players Zishan Panjwani and Glyn Evans a total of 228 was not sufficient to stop Horndon inflicting a second successive defeat. We were entertained by Callum Rudd hitting four 4's in his 18 and Jack Campion bowled his heart out taking 4 for 53 from 13 overs but it was not enough.

Jack then played superbly on a difficult Buckhurst Hill pitch scoring 50 not out in a total of 114. That looked sufficient to win with them 62-6 before the heavens opened shortly after their opening bowler smashed Alex to wide first slip where Jack took an outstanding catch only for the batsman to stand his ground! Alex was enraged and gave the umpire a piece of his mind 'you can't speak to me like that, I am the Club Chairman' he cried. Not when you are out in the middle as the umpire you are not! Get back to your position and do your job was the gist of the reply!

Harold Wood were too strong for us but we picked up full batting points thanks to 93 from the captain and a last wicket stand of 11 runs! We then had to play on a dreadful pitch against Chingford at the Peter May Centre. The two captains moved the original pitch to another one further down the square but that did not stop Carey the Chingford captain being pole-axed by a ball that flew off a length. Thankfully, Adi Vohra played his only game of the season and was way too good for our standard. His quick-fire 69 saved me from having to ask my youngsters to bat on that surface!

Chingford were so poor that they were virtually relegated and Brentwood were locked with them at the bottom of the league, so it came as a surprise when they knocked off our total of 232 for the loss of only 3 wickets. Jack scoring another half century and Burnsy was bowled off the last ball of an over from which he had already scored 20!

We were very good in the field against Harlow for 45 overs but faded in the heat and allowed them to reach 217 for 8. Nigel Smith (3-44) did a particularly good job against a very strong batting line up. Sarwat Ali is exceptional at our level, he

took 59 league wickets. He bowled 14 overs at a good pace but it was 15 year old Tyler Dobson who did the damage taking 6 for 30 with some very average seam bowling. We dug in for 35.4 overs whilst scoring only 78 runs but could not hold out for a draw.

A home banker followed against Upminster with both Jay Smith (86) and Ben Turner (53) providing fine batting displays. To round off an excellent day for the youngsters Jack then took 6 for 30 to set up a win by 122 runs.

Next up our top order played very well against a strong Leigh on Sea side. Veterans, Peter Marshall and Graham Watson both scored 42 and the Champion brothers Jordan (33) and Jack 57 not out saw us to 243 but the lower order could not cope with spinner A Raza (6-64). We play Leigh's 3<sup>rd</sup> X1 and John Threadgold should really play for their 2<sup>nd</sup> X1. He was too strong for our young bowlers and comfortably steered his team to victory.

Micky Burns scored a century at Horndon on the Hill. By now the team featured three 'Coles' and Dad, Andy, scored an enterprising 25 not out. Younger son Matt (3-16) continued his marked improvement throughout the season to secure victory. Jack followed up with a maiden league century the following week against Buckhurst Hill. Predictably they batted out a draw, their youngsters not being allowed to play with the same freedom that we instil in ours!

Our penultimate game was at already promoted Harold Wood. Neil Parrish rolled back the years scoring a composed 92 before Jack continued his superb run of form scoring a high class 72. The rain prevented a result but not before Callum had given a few of their batsman the hurry up!

Our minds were at the Old County Ground rather than Chelmer Park for the final game against relegated Chingford. They had the temerity to bat first and were bowled out for 128 with Matt Cole taking four more wickets. Alex and I departed for Brentwood leaving instructions that we would concede the game if we did not get back in time to bat. We returned just as the players were leaving the field as we knocked off the runs in 17.2 overs!

We have enjoyed a roller-coaster season winning 8 games and losing 7. As a 5<sup>th</sup> X1 playing against the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> X1's of other clubs we are somewhat up against it. However, once again, we have unearthed some players that should go on to playing the higher teams in the near future.

Jack Champion was the undoubted star, finishing the highest run scorer in the league (564) and 6<sup>th</sup> highest wicket-taker (28). We have seen the last of Jack and I wish him well next season. Ben Turner made a big impression when he came into the team and I shall look to him and Jay Smith for runs next year. The first game I played with Ed Cole was an end of season friendly last year. He was out for two ducks on the same day! He has progressed to the stage where he is opening the batting and scored 20 against a strong Harold Wood side and 39 in the final game of the season.

It is the 'very young' lads that I shall look to for a major improvement over the winter. Matt Cole progressed from being a 'tiddler' that I had to protect to become an accomplished leg spinner. Luke Smith has bundles of talent and confidence. He can only get better. Fabian Bright and Matt Cook can expect an extended run in the side next year. The opportunities are there if they put in the work.

We had the ridiculous situation that our 2<sup>nd</sup> X1 were playing 45 over cricket whilst the 'young and old' of the 5<sup>th</sup> X1 had to play 52 over cricket! The league committee needs to reduce the length of the game or we are going to lose many talented youngsters whose concentration levels cannot be sustained for such a period of time!

I wish to thank Alex for his support throughout the season and all those that work so hard to make Chelmsford an exceptional club. We have much to celebrate and the talent within the club to continue our success for many years to come.

Barry Clayden

Harry Green's three five wickets hauls came against teams beginning with H

## Sunday Friendly XI

Despite a good set of results for the Sunday 2nds, it was a rather disappointing season in that that so many fixtures went unfulfilled. Of the 17 matches scheduled in the fixture card only 10 took place, with an outcome of 8 victories and 2 defeats. 4 cancellations resulted from wet conditions, the agreed games with Great Baddow and Terling never made it into their final fixture schedules, and we had to scratch against Havering Atte Bower when unable to raise a side.

On balance, across the Sunday season, player availability was pretty strong. 32 different players turned out across the 10 games, and the teams were a fairly even split of adults and colts. The objective of Sunday 2nds' cricket is mainly to provide development opportunities for our younger players, and there was no shortage of impressive performances. Jay Smith's 150 not out away at Writtle was the headline performance, sharing in a 6<sup>th</sup> wicket stand of 141 with Steve Bond (73) and onwards to a final total of 288-9.

Apart from an abject batting performance (Alex Bailey's 39 and Matt Cook's 16 excepted) in the final game defeat against Capricorn, the side performed consistently well and enjoyed satisfying wins against the stronger sides such as Forest Gate, Sheering, & Little Baddow. Though losing by a single run away to Aythorpe Roding, this was one of our best efforts of the season against what was pretty much their Saturday first team.

Against Forest Gate, an opening stand of 86 in 16 overs between David Thrift (38) and Liam Keaney (81) had suggested a large total but their change bowlers slowed the run rate, took wickets, and we closed the innings at 190-7. As is their way, Forest Gate went on the attack with Zafran (56) and Farooq (54) testing the

bowlers. An excellent spell from Luke Smith (2-18) dismissed two of the middle order, and then controlled second spells from Luke Wells (1-21) and Alex Bailey (2-25) broke the threat. Luke Wells claimed the critical wicket of Farooq, with Forest Gate finishing on 177-8, and 13 runs short.

It was always unlikely that the President's Day game with Sheering would match up to last year's thrilling victory against the same opponents, though our 7 wickets victory was no less impressive. On a flat track with a fast outfield, all the bowlers had put in good stints to hold Sheering to 212-7. From the U13 contingent Luke Smith (2-21) and Matt Cook (1-15) had done well, both being played carefully by S Greenall (118) enjoying successive centuries on his visits to Chelmer Park. In a textbook reply dominated by Matt Davis (95), he and Jay Smith (48) had 107 up in 20 overs, with their opening stand worth 154 when Jay fell lbw in the 26<sup>th</sup> over. Matt was out 3 overs later with the total on 170, though there was no slackening of the pace with Rory Skepelhorn (29) and David Thrift (12no) seeing us home with just under 6 overs to spare.

The 2 wickets victory away at Little Baddow was especially memorable for a classy, undefeated innings of 82 from David Thrift, batting at the lowly position of no.8. On a ground with short straight boundaries and with the strip cut on the far side of the square, all the bowlers had done well to hold Little Baddow to 202-8. Matt Cole (3-43) had dismissed their three top-scoring batsmen, with Matt Cook (2-19) and Thrifty (2-24) also disrupting their innings. Though Jordan Champion (26) got us away to a decent start, it wasn't looking too settled when Chris McQuitty joined David with the scoreboard showing 84-7 in the 22<sup>nd</sup> over. Eleven overs

later the total had rattled up to 175-7, with Thrifty taking 21 runs (5 boundaries, and a single) from the 33<sup>rd</sup> over, bowled by the unfortunate Ashton. With Chris (21) departing in the next over (184-8) the match was still in the balance, though the incoming Callum Rudd (6no) demonstrated great application in supporting David as the remaining runs were gathered with just over 3 overs remaining.

At Aythorpe Roding, we put in an excellent bowling performance to dismiss the hosts for 174 (36 overs). Rory Skepelhorn (2-16) and Jack Champion (1-19) both did a great job with the new ball, with Ed Cole making a smart stumping to dismiss the dangerous S Gravatt (27). Aythorpe were well placed at 86-3 when Luke Smith (1-28) bowled McKenzie (24), and there was no loss of impetus with Paul Gravatt coming in to join Rosewell. However, the tempo of the innings turned markedly upon Jay Smith's introduction into the attack. Rosewell (33) was quickly dismissed by Jay (5-25) who steadily worked his way through the rest of the order, with Gravatt (49no) having to alter his approach from one of attack to more of a shepherding role to try and control the strike. In reply against accurate bowling, steady batting from Matt Davis (47) and Luke Smith (21) had taken us to 81-2 at the drinks interval. Losing Matt shortly afterwards was a setback, and we now lost our way to stand at 129-6 (35 overs) with Jay Smith joining Jack Champion at the crease. 26 runs were added in the next 3 overs before Jack (17) was caught in the covers, with Rory Skepelhorn now joining Jay in a do or die effort to squeeze 20 runs from the last 2 overs. 10 runs came from the penultimate over, and the match boiled down to a target of 3 to win from the final ball. Jay's strike required a misfield, but the fielder remained calm and executed a run out to give Aythorpe victory by a single run. This had been a fascinating match, with Jay (29) and Rory (9no) taking us so close to what would have been a remarkable win.

In other notable performances from the season, Ben Turner scored an impressive 56 in the victory at home to Writtle. In the home win over Boreham, Luke Smith (49) and Lee Cranmer (54) were the main scorers, with Matt Cook (4-29) being the pick of the bowlers. Losing visitors Maylands Green took some stick from Matt Davis (78) and Matt Cole (35no), before having to deal with a useful spell of 3-8 from Luke Smith. In the heavy victory away to East Hanningfield, mature batting from Jack Champion (47) and Steve Bond (64no) had rescued us from the troublesome position of 74-5. Tom Arnold's unbeaten 36 from the final three overs then closed the innings at 264-7.

Leading averages:

Jay Smith: 278 runs @ 55.60  
Matt Davis: 220 runs @ 73.33  
David Thrift: 210 runs @ 70.00  
Steve Bond: 141 runs @ 47.00

Matt Cook: 11 wickets @ 11.64  
Tom Halsey: 9 wickets @ 11.67  
Luke Smith: 8 wickets @ 11.75  
Jay Smith: 6 wickets @ 6.67  
Matt Cole: 6 wickets @ 19.67  
Callum Rudd: 6 wickets @ 24.17

It would have been good to have played a few more games, but it's still been a successful season for the Sunday 2nds. The goal of encouraging and developing the younger players has been achieved, and their names come through regularly in this report. Many thanks to all 32 players who turned out this season, it's been a lot of fun, and I'm sure we'll have an equally enjoyable campaign in 2016.

David Goddard

Number of Chelmsford Players who had the Courage to be Measured by the Speedgun on Colt's Presentation Day: 0
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## Essex League T20

The Shepherd Neame T20 side enjoyed a successful run this year; eventually falling just short to Colchester in the county final.

The group stages started with a less than convincing performance against Southend on Sea. Nevertheless, some tight bowling and responsible batting from Nick Bailey saw us get over the line. Next was an altogether more convincing win at Leigh on Sea. Some great striking from Aaron Beard, Dan Hagen and Gary Chidley saw us make an imposing score of 247. This was always going to be enough and some tidy bowling ensured a victory margin of over 100 runs. With Stanford le Hope dropping out of our group, these two wins saw us through to the knockout stages of the competition.

Only the group winners so advanced, so the next game was a quarter-final and we were faced with a tough draw away to Brentwood. Knowing the importance Brentwood place on this T20 competition, it was particularly satisfying to come out on top. James Clifford produced an excellent all round performance, providing great control with the ball and showing his class and power striking ability with the bat. Chidley also played a vital role in partnership with Clifford, and we reached the total of 147 with 2 overs to spare. On a personal note, this was the end of my part in the competition due to an injury sustained in an unfortunate boating incident whilst on holiday.

A strong Chelmsford contingent made their way down to Billericay to watch Chelmsford in a semi final clash against the much hyped

Hornchurch. In helpful bowling conditions, Nick Prowting showed his class and experience in an unbeaten 82; this innings being the mainstay in setting a competitive total of 155. The bowling attack then performed superbly with special mentions to Sam Cook and Ben Clifford who took five wickets between them. One noticeable difference between the two sides was the standard of fielding, those watching may have wondered whether some of Hornchurch's cash would be better spent on a fielding coach for next season.

This semi-final victory set up a final against Colchester. Again, the bowling attack set the tone with some excellent new ball bowling. However, we were unable to keep the pressure on and a combination of some loose bowling and powerful batting allowed Colchester to post 149. Unfortunately, we never really got going in the run chase and the consistent loss of wickets meant we fell 37 runs short.

I would like to thank everyone for their availability throughout and in particular for James Clifford for taking on the responsibility of captaincy on finals day. I hope we can continue to do well in this competition and go one better next year!

Jack Sterland

This competition provided a couple of my favourite memories of the season. With the quarter-final fairly well poised, James launched four sixes in two overs to break the tension. In the semi-final Nick played a magnificent innings, full of quality strokes and good running.

## View from the Bar

After 14 years in the hotseat I will not be seeking re-election at this year's AGM. I would like to thank everybody who has helped in any way over the period but particularly two people. Firstly, Max Gibson - Sports Club Secretary - who has been there on virtually every Saturday for so many years working behind the bar. Secondly Julie Witham, who has run the show for the last two years with great success. Without them, it would have been a struggle.

This year has been another good one for the bar with very little cricket lost to the weather. Friday night colts and T20 matches have been great income generators. However, many other events have occurred midweek which we have benefitted from. The SNEL committee met six times, MECL had their distribution night, St Cedd's School held a very successful Sports Day and a Year 6 social event. There were four AGMs, three other hockey related meetings, four cricket club social events and sixteen midweek and one weekend cricket matches in the Last man Stand competition run by Rob Hayto. The bar was open for all of these as well as the crossover events such as hockey tournaments and the hugely successful Colt's Day. We never ran out of stock. We tried different items, we hope you enjoyed what was on offer.

As for 2016, I hope you will all get behind the new Honorary Bar Secretary, expect to host as many if not more 'other events' and prove what a very sociable club we are. The gross take was £21,526.03 which was £53.37 down on 2014.

Brian Poole

Thanks must be recorded to Brian for his efforts over the years.

## AGM news

Brian was not the only officer or committee member to stand down at the AGM. Rosie Prowting, Maureen Green and Rob Hayto stood down from their roles. Peter Anstee also stood down as President.

Without playing favourites, Rosie will be particularly missed. Rosie has given many years of service and has always been a leading light in organising events. I know she would encourage all members and their families to get involved in the administration and social side – which includes catering. Rosie has certainly been one of the driving forces behind Chelmsford's recognition for hospitality at 1<sup>st</sup> team level. Premier League sides actually want to play Chelmsford away in all-day matches such is the reputation of the lunches provided.

Maureen has done an excellent job in two years in the demanding role of Treasurer and also organised this year's Dinner, a very successful event.

Hopefully, Rob will return to the Committee in future years and remain one of the keenest members of the Club.

Peter has brought a lot of passion to the Presidency and his four year stint ended with tremendous success. His role is being taken on by Michael Vandome who is also taking on the Treasurer position.

Also joining the Committee are two Neils; Raisborough and Parrish whose experience will be very useful.

The new Bar Secretary will of course be Julie Witham.

Jimmy Arnold and Lee Cranmer stood down as captains of the Saturday 3rds and Warsop T20 sides. Both of them having achieved back-to-back titles.

How did the third team win the league? We were well led; Jimmy did a fine job as captain, having to deal with some difficult characters and the odd misery-guts (sorry). We had a decent bowling attack; eight bowlers took more than 10 wickets at less than 20. We had some very good batsmen, although generally only on paper. Mainly, I think it proved the old adage that winning is a habit. Amongst the twelve wins, three were achieved in the most thrilling (or chilling if you are a lower order player) fashion, by a single wicket.

One thing that has to be said is that the Third XI Premier was a very hard fought league. The team who finished bottom had a points tally that would have seen them survive in any other division and finish mid-table in most.

The season started with two routs. Brentwood were shot out for 41 by Craig Thompson and Stephen Drain. Then we were shot out for 61 at Harlow.

The first batsman to find form was Steve Pleasant with important half centuries in wins over Upminster and Shenfield. The Upminster game though was the first to be won by a single wicket; Harry Green was the hero with Keith Goodman also playing his part well.

Woodford Wells were slaughtered with Henry Brisland absolutely destroying their attack in a stunning century. Was the batting clicking into gear and would this be the season that Steve showed what a good player he is? Perhaps we should have taken bets.

David Thrift did at least run into form, passing fifty in four games out of five, including a brilliant century in difficult conditions against Hutton. In the game where Dave missed out (only scoring 33) at Buckhurst Hill, a superb bowling display from Jimmy helped defend a low total. Four games out of five were won, with one abandoned and we were firmly in the title race. Vit Sapaetharan was the only other player to post a half-century in this period before being promoted to the second team; as a bowler.

The second half of the season started abysmally. A poor batting display at

Brentwood and an even worse one against Harlow saw back to back defeats. Upminster managed to hold out for a draw nine down.

The Shenfield game proved pivotal, they scored 230 but as they had a poor attack, this probably should have been chased down. It came down to another thriller with Stephen Drain finding the boundary twice in the last over to secure a second one-wicket win.

A strong Woodford Wells side were well beaten, Buckhurst Hill were bowled out again (after runs from Sam Trowell and Chris Drain) but the wheels came off against Wanstead at 9 for four. Excellent batting from Chris and Stephen Drain plus Harry Arnold salvaged a draw and secured a couple of batting bonus points that would prove crucial.

With two games left, Harlow seemed certain to win the league. Even more so when a horror collapse saw us at 150 for nine chasing 187 against Hainault. So to the most remarkable of the one-wicket wins with Neal Abhyankar playing brilliantly and me at the other end. Harlow lost and we were top with a 6 point lead so that any sort of win would do on the final weekend.

The final game was the season in microcosm. We bowled pretty well but not amazingly; Hutton being restricted to about 130. We then made heavy weather of chasing that, losing five wickets along the way, including Chris being involved in a run out. Connor Cheverall made a half-century, one of three in the last five games as he ended the season in good form.

I have hardly mentioned the bowling. It was really a case of consistency rather than spectacular performances except perhaps for Ian Hare who claimed 17 wickets in just four games. Neal Abhyankar, Jimmy Arnold, Stephen Drain, Keith Goodman, Harry Green and Craig Thompson were the others to round out the opening paragraph stat.

Personally, when you find yourself filtering play-cricket stats to find out who had the best economy rate in the division, it is time to take a long hard look at your life.

Alistair Fergus

## Chairman's Log

Although the season just finished did not enjoy the hottest weather of recent times I am sure that as Club members reminisce their memories of playing exploits from the summer will feature a blazing sun and blue skies. It was that sort of season.

We knew at the start of the season that the adult sides would be strong and they proved just that in some style. To win four competitions out of nine entered, finish runners up in the League 20-20 and beaten in the League Cup by the eventual winners surely qualifies 2015 as the Club's best season ever.

The Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> XI led the way with a well-deserved and, judging by the reaction at the League Dinner, popular triumph in their Premier League. Astutely led by Nick Bailey, this triumph is the result of several years graft and progress and credit must be given to previous Captains, Paul Jones and Chris Prowting, for their part in this success.

Any team that can boast Mark Drain and Stuart Everard in their bowling ranks is always going to be in contention for a title and that was the case with the Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> XI. They blew many sides away with their all-round quality but so did Wanstead who pipped us to the title by a measly 5 points. Better luck in 2016 boys.

Once again the Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> XI won their Premier League title, their eighth in nine years. Very well led by Jimmy Arnold, this is a team that knows how to win and they had several wins during the season in games they never gave up in; crucial as they only won the title by a single point.

The Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> XI were captained this year

by Phil Arnold, new to the job, who led from the front in amassing over 800 runs in his uncomplicated (but very effective) style. This team punches above their weight in the 3<sup>rd</sup> XI Division 1 and a third place is a highly creditable achievement by Phil and his team.

Another team punching above their weight is the Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> XI competing in the 4<sup>th</sup> XI Premier Division. More than any of the other League teams this side is a real combination of youth and experience and getting the right balance is important. We obviously did this on enough weeks as fourth place is an excellent accomplishment for a team that mainly competes against 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> XI's.

Colin Miller's 6<sup>th</sup> XI is the all-important Nursery team that introduces young players to senior cricket. When I was starting out it was the 4<sup>th</sup> XI, then called the Extra 3<sup>rd</sup> XI which shows how much the Club has grown in 30 years. Colin does a really good job bringing this team together and deserves much credit.

The Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> XI were led for the first time by James Clifford whose attitude and commitment gelled his side to top place in the Essex Sunday League. Availability was not always easy but congratulations to James and the team for a job well done.

Like the Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> XI, the Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> XI is an important Nursery playing friendly cricket and giving further experience to the younger players. Craig Thompson is stepping down from this role in 2016 and I thank him for his hard work.

The Colts played more cricket than in 2014 and this season saw the emergence and continued development of a number of

talented young players. There are more opportunities for young players than there ever has been and I have enjoyed seeing several of these take their chances and look forward to seeing them progress in 2016.

With a growing son I took a more active role with the Colts section this year and ended up looking after the U9's; the only age group I had not previously managed. Although my son, Ben, was in this group I believe I stayed impartial throughout (I have had enough experience of seeing sad Dad's running Colts sides to know what not to do) and enjoyed watching Ben do something I rarely if ever did myself when I played; hitting over mid-off for a one bounce four. I do recall a lad playing for Chingford Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> XI who was my 'double' putting me over my head for six but he was no relation (met with much amusement by my team mates but oddly enough I did not see the funny side!).

Off the field my Committee works very hard to ensure the smooth running of the Club. I thank all of them for their efforts without which the Club would not be in the position it is.

At this time I believe Chelmsford Cricket Club is the strongest Club in Essex and one of the strongest in the Country. We are well regarded by those who play against us and our model is one that many Clubs aspire to. It has taken a lot of hard work to get the Club to the position it is in now and will need just as much work, if not more, to keep it there. Let's enjoy the successes and look forward to 2016. Until then, winter well.

Eddie Lawrence

## Award Winners

Outstanding Individual Performance:

**Phil Arnold**

Spencer George Bowling Trophy:

**Sam Cook**

Allen Jerman Batting Award:

**Nick Prowting**

Fielder of the Year:

**Jack Sterland**

All-rounder of the Year:

**Aaron Beard**

T20 Player of the Year:

**Ben Clifford**

Thompson Cup (Outstanding Colt):

**Harry Green**

Rawsthorne Trophy (Outstanding Young Player):

**James Clifford**

Most Improved Player:

**Jack Campion**

Prowting Hollamby Smith Trophy (Highest Score):

**Sean Sullivan**

Team of the Year:

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> XI**

Shirley Carter Cup (Clubman):

**Maureen Green**

## Not the Usual Suspects

There are some people who do a lot of work for Chelmsford Cricket Club for little thanks. That applies even to the people who have been thanked.

Our scorers, Bernice McGowan and John Everard do a fantastic job, far more than just scoring. Maureen Green also does a lot of scoring as well as the Treasurer duties.

The captains and David Goddard in particular have to work really hard every week.

We are also tremendously lucky to have the team that keeps the Clubhouse tidy, does administration work and organises social events. Shirley Bailey and Rosie Prowting lead these efforts with help from the likes of Sue Beard, Gill Hickman and Jane Drain.

However, there are some people who should be thanked but are usually overlooked.

As **Eddie Lawrence** does not play anymore, it is easy to forget the work he does as Chairman. There is a lot of administration involved, as well as trying to cajole people into taking on roles within the Club. Examples of the frustrations are dealing with the Council about work to Chelmer Park, filling in dreadfully-formatted questionnaires from governing bodies and completing grant applications. My main role as Vice Chair is to listen to Eddie moaning about these things, definitely better than doing them.

This year, we had our first ever Colt's Presentation Day. It was a great success and the brainchild and principal organiser was **Sue Lawrence**.

Another first was our hosting of the ECB Last Man Stands initiative. This is a midweek competition to try and encourage players

back into cricket. **Rob Hayto** did a very good job of organising this and portraying Chelmsford CC in a good light.

The bar staff have been mentioned by Brian although **Hannah Devenish** should also be thanked. However, as well as his work behind the bar, **Max Gibson** has been the Sports Club Secretary for a very long time, a job that needs to be done and is pretty much thankless; shamefully, I think this is the first time I've said thank you.

One coach who always seems to be overlooked when plaudits are handed out is **Peter Drain**. Summer and Winter, Peter is there pretty much every week, always staying commendably calm, unless Brian Coleman is in the vicinity.

The under-11s played a lot of cricket having played virtually none last year. Things never go entirely smoothly in running Colt's sides but lots of players made progress after being given the opportunity on the field. **Dan and Jas Prabhakar** and **Dave Hutchinson** have to be thanked for organising fixtures, teams and bringing a real passion to this.

Finally, we should remember that **Tony Edney** passed away early in the season. Tony was a great supporter of Chelmsford CC for more than quarter of a century. He was an umpire before taking on scoring duties and the fixture secretary role.

Tony was an early adopter of using a laptop for scoring. This was not unconnected with his handwriting. During an excellent eulogy by Tony's brother I was particularly struck by the image of a huge pile of undelivered letters from Tony sitting in a sorting office somewhere.

## The Other Teams

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Team

The second team won 14 of the 17 games played to a conclusion. This is a commendable record but was not enough to win the league as Wanstead had the same record but acquired an extra five points along the way.

As no one from the team wanted to have a say, I'll have mine. A side featuring the talents that they had should have won the league. There was certainly no lack of team spirit; Lee Cranmer, Tom Halsey and Jack Moss all played 18 Saturday league games and Rob Hayto would surely have joined them had he not been injured with three weeks to go.

The bowlers were led by Mark Drain and Stuart Everard, both bowled superbly and took more than 30 wickets. When Rob Hayto and Liam Keaney were also playing, the attack was one that many first teams would like to have.

Gary Chidley batted impressively as usual. The quality of the batting was reflected by the fact that Stuart Everard was batting at 10 on merit. Lee Cranmer and Bradley Green also had fine seasons. Ironically the only centuries scored (by Miles Clark and Rob Hayto) came in a game that was abandoned.

Youngsters Harry Green and Sean Sullivan stepped up from the 3rds with some impact. Sean made a superb half century in his debut match at Shenfield.

The highlight of the season was a tremendous chase against a strong Colchester side. Five batsmen passed 30 as a big target of 292 was achieved.

The low points were three awful matches at Chelmer, with poor and unmotivated

opponents losing before tea.

The key events were defeats by Brentwood and Wanstead and a draw at Brentwood. In both of the defeats, the batsmen played in slapdash fashion to waste overs. The Brentwood game was lost in the last over by a single wicket. For the draw, the team were united in their view that the declaration was correct, a look at the scorecard...

### 6<sup>th</sup> Team

The 6<sup>th</sup> team is the only place where 12 year olds and younger can get experience. There were rarely problems raising an eleven but finding opponents sometimes proved impossible and on other occasions, the calls for the league sides meant that the 6ths had to suffer a cancellation.

As usual, there were a number of outstanding performances. Two players made their maiden centuries; Matt Cole seemed likely to get there one day, Alistair Baldwin's was a more leftfield achievement, although I suspect more based on the right of the field. Ben Turner would have joined the century-makers but ran out of runs in a successful chase.

Jack Karmy came close to a maiden half century. Henry Pearce, Sam Tremelling and the Boyden brothers James and Will made good impressions. Andy Shepherd picked up the best figures of the season though.

### Under-16s

Despite a limited number of under-16s and no under-15s at all the under 16s had a pretty good season.

They won the first group, beating Harold Wood by walkover, Hornchurch Athletic (with only 8 players) and Brentwood. The

Hornchurch Athletic game featured a stunning double century from Sean Sullivan and five wickets for Harry Green plus a mature half century from under 13 Luke Smith.

Luke and fellow under-13 Matt Cook were amongst the small number of regular players. Matt played a good part in the successful chase at Brentwood, supporting Harry in a match-winning partnership.

A rain off and a win over South Woodford meant that the last game in the second group was effectively a knockout match.

The game could have been won but a good effort from Woodford Wells lower order gave them a defendable score. Wells had a very sharp opening bowler and some more sensible batting might have seen him off rather than losing three top order players. Harry was probably a bit unlucky and Henry Pearce played very well but the innings came up well short.

### **Warsop T20**

The winning run in this competition went on for another year. Only just though, Springfield really should have won at Chelmer Park. Ben Clifford held his nerve as well as a steepling return catch in an exciting last over.

At the group stage, three of the four games were won in fairly routine fashion. The Springfield game in front of a good crowd on a Friday night at Chelmer being the exception.

Chelmer Park hosted Final's Day again. The Cranmer family were to the fore in another superbly organised occasion and the Chelmsford side again had 11 players who had come through the Colt's ranks.

Chelmsford faced Rayleigh for the third year in a row but this time in the semi-final. With four players passing 30, Chelmsford got just over 160. Rayleigh built a solid base but that

did them no good as Tom Halsey conjured up his usual 'magic' to effectively end the contest. The game did have an exciting finish though because Ben Clifford took a hat-trick in the last over.

Wickford won the other semi-final but some great fielding from Ben was a key factor as their top order was destroyed. They managed to total 84 with Mark Drain taking four wickets. That total was achieved but in no great style with six wickets lost.

### **Under-11s**

The main feature of under-11 cricket was simply playing games. Two league teams, a number of friendlies and a great cup run gave chances to plenty of players.

The A and B teams both played seven league games, the A team winning five, the B team three.

The Cup run was the highlight with three excellent wins. Unfortunately, Springfield were far too strong in the Final but hopefully it will have been a useful experience.

### **Under-9s**

This was the first year for the under-9s and they struck lucky in having Eddie Lawrence as coach. With Neil Parrish as primary helper and Neil Fergus there too, there was a good core of experienced and high quality cricketers.

The improvement in this team from their first match at Maldon was great to witness. There are some very talented players in this age group and the spirit in the team appeared to be excellent. Apart from the usual story against Springfield they won their other five group matches. This qualified them for Final's Day where they realised their potential in excellent wins over Maldon and as already mentioned, the Willows.

## Colt's Presentation Day and Winners

Having started the year with a new concept (the Dart's Night), the year was also ended with a new event; the Colt's Presentation Day, held on Sunday 13 September.

The driving force behind this was Sue Lawrence but there was a great team of parents to help. There were plenty of refreshments available, a bouncy castle to encourage other family members and a speedgun to measure bowling speeds. This proved fairly lucrative, if only for the money spent by the Prabhakars.

It was probably not surprising that most of the helpers were those brought into the Club through the Willows. The organisation in this sector of the Club is outstanding. As she had done throughout the season with Friday night burgers, Liz Wright was very much to the fore.

For the youngsters there were a series of kwik cricket matches as well as the opportunity to test out their pace. The weather just about stayed fair.

It was a very enjoyable day and there were probably only a couple of wrinkles to iron out for next time. With it being a Sunday afternoon, some of the older players were away with the Sunday 2nds and so, missed the presentation.

The other was the length of the raffle and Shep's speeches meaning that it stretched well into the evening anyway. However, pretty much everyone went home with some kind of prize.

Thank you very much to all the people who helped out on the day.

Colt of the Year

**Harry Green**

Stan Doe Outstanding Performance

**Billy Brunger**

Most Improved Colt of the Year

**James Boyden**

Clubman Award (2)

**Connor O'Brien and Mollie Tuff**

### Willows

Batting Award

**Beth Wright**

Bowling Award

**Melissa Welch**

Highest Score

**Imogen Hill (29\*)**

Best Bowling

**Jess Tuff (1-4)**

Most Improved

**Izzy Lander**

Outstanding Performance **Zoe Good**

### U11s

Batting Award

**Luke Wilson**

Bowling Award

**Nabeel Asghar**

All Rounder Award

**Jaydhan Prabhakar**

Outstanding Performance **Joseph Durrant**

### U13s

Batting Award

**Matt Cole**

Bowling Award

**Henry Pearce**

All rounder Award

**Luke Smith**

### Hat-Tricks

**Jack Pearce**

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## The Last Word

There's a lot of things that I thought of signing off with. Tempting as it is to moan about things, I did a fair bit of that during the season. Everyone should be proud of being a part of Chelmsford Cricket Club. The performances this season show that we are one of the best cricket clubs in Essex, if not the best.

What I would say though is that being the best is not enough, not if you can be better.

