

HENLEY CRICKET CLUB

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT SEASON 2009

To say that Henley Cricket Club had a successful season in 2009 would probably be a gross understatement. The season almost certainly was the most successful the club has ever had and was notable on a number of different fronts. Until the last Saturday of the season all four Saturday sides were in contention for winning their respective leagues and/or promotion. Eventually, the 1st X1 won the Home Counties Premier League by some margin and the 3rd X1 gained promotion in the Thames Valley League. The 2nd and 4th X1s narrowly missed out on promotion having faulted in one or two important games during the season. Yet again, the Sunday X1 under the captaincy and guidance of Liam Dennison enjoyed another successful year and have now only lost four games in the last two years.

There were two notable features about the success of teams during the season, particularly the 1st and 2nd X1s. In the case of the 1st X1 the fielding was outstanding and clearly the best in the League. The 2nd X1 also fielded well, a feature which occasionally let down the lower X1s. The other notable feature was the team spirit within the club, a spirit which was of undoubted significance in the success of the 1st X1. Whilst only one player in the 1st X1 scored a century in the whole of the season, the consistency of all players ensured success. Particular mention should be made of the success of the opening pair of Barnes and Roberts, the latter scoring over 600 runs having had fallow seasons in 2007 and 2008. Other batsmen contributed well, notably Jono McLean, skipper Bjorn Mordt, Chad Keegan and Dave Allaway. In the latter case, Allaway followed his success of 2008 and, on his day, destroyed some of the opposition attacks. The bowling was usually effective and, once Carl Crowe had achieved success in the second half of the season, a top position in the championship was always assured. He was well supported by Lambert and Keegan. Similarly, in the 2nd X1, the White brothers once again showed their class as did Mick Hilditch and Steve Horne. Unfortunately, strength in depth was not always a feature of the lower sides and efforts must be made to recruit players who are used to playing and achieving at these levels. Once again, the 3rd and 4th X1s were ably captained by Jon Gould and Chris Johnson, the latter doing an effective job of bringing young cricketers into the fold of senior cricket and preparing for their future progress and development in the game.

On the Junior Section front, the club has also had enormous success under the guidance of Head Coach, Chris Ellison, who has ensured the on-going development of the Section and introduced the playing of more competitive matches for all concerned. His enthusiasm, together with that of his coaches and helpers, has ensured that the Section will develop further in the future. Unlike many other sports, cricket does require a considerable amount of individual attention, particularly where young people are concerned. Chris would welcome any assistance in this regard and I would ask parents to support him as much as possible in the season ahead.

The season of 2009 was also successful on another front viz the obtaining of planning permission for a much needed new pavilion. This will be larger than its predecessor which had undoubtedly seen better days and was costing the club too much money to maintain. Overall, the facilities were just not good enough to cater for the amount and quality of cricket now being played at the club. The new pavilion will be built over the winter and, weather permitting, should be available for occupation around mid-April 2010. This will be regarded as a centre which the community can use for a variety of different events. To assist with this process, the club has appointed a Pavilion and Events Manager to run the new facility and to ensure that maximum use is made of this new resource.

All in all, season 2010 promises to be an exciting time and one in which the club hopes to develop further the foundations which have already been laid.

Paul Bradbury, Chairman, Henley Cricket Club
16.10.09