



## Cobham Avorians Cricket Club

### Cricket Chairman's Report

#### **First Team**

This was the third time that Avorians had reached the top level of Surrey Cricket and the side should take great pride in being the first one to retain their status despite all manner of circumstances conspiring against us.

A fast start with two wins in tight games against Dulwich and Sunbury was followed by a series of draws and loses where just a few things going slightly differently would have made a massive difference. In a rain affected summer to win only 3 tosses all season makes it very difficult to win games. When eventually another win came in the 10<sup>th</sup> game to complete a double over Sunbury 47 points had been attained with some seriously good cricket and a massive effort all round.

All this effort was blown out of the water when it transpired that a second team player, who had averaged 17 in that side the previous year, played against Sunbury, didn't bat or bowl but due to a totally innocent administrative oversight was not registered! Minus 23 points, virtually half the points that had been sweated for through 10 games!

When we had Dulwich 6 wickets down in 16 overs chasing 223 the following week and the rains came, the writing looked on the wall!

It was to the massive credit of all involved that despite only winning one more toss we turned things around with great wins over Farnham and comfortably the best side in the league, Reigate. A final position of 6<sup>th</sup> with 58 points would surprisingly not have changed with the 23 point penalty added back on. A best ever finish for the A's.

The side was once again exuberantly led by Jerry Hinds. He remained patient and positive through all the dramas and his overall enthusiasm for the club is a credit. Two newcomers, Jono Maclean and Steve Naylor led the batting and their aggregates of 598 and 586 were not bettered in the Premier Division. Young wicketkeeper Ben Kingsnorth worked his way up the order and a return of 367 in his first season at this level was a great achievement. Aussie star turn, Mark Higgs would be disappointed with 396. The wet wickets didn't suit him and an injury sustained during his intensive mid week training programme put him out of his misery. Paul Pritchard scored 124 against Farnham and Andy Umpleby got a great 112 not out when it counted against Wimbledon. Stu Tomlinson started the season superbly but had lost his way a bit by the end.

Scott Jarvis once again led the bowling and proved to be one of the leading seamers around with a return of 38 wickets including the first 6 against Dulwich when the rain came to spoil the fun. He was well supported by Andy Umpleby and Jamie Lawrence with Stu Tomlinson showing his undoubted potential with the ball to put Reigate's party back a week. Slows, Higgs and Shirley Crawford looked menacing at times without showing enough control to be a consistent threat.

Whilst the highlight of the season was retaining our status in adversity, the most fun part was the advance through the rounds to reach the Sheperd Neame 20/20 finals day. Jono Maclean was class throughout the tournament and saw us past Guildford in the semis. However an experienced and classy Old Whits side proved too strong in the final. A fitting end to a roller coaster season.

## **Seconds**

With Division Three being won with games to spare the previous year and the First team being strengthened hopes were high pre-season. However it, somewhat fittingly during this summer, was all a bit of a damp squib! Sixth was a poor effort considering the classy looking sides that were turned out in the early weeks. As the results didn't come the availability dropped off and with only 7 players turning out more than ten times we got out of the season what we put into it!

Captain, Andy Bell topped the batting returns but the star of the show was Sammy Smart who scored his runs attractively throughout. Biggest disappointment of the year was the nasty injury sustained by Deisel Luff when just starting to reap the rewards for his efforts and patience.

Benny Hill, once he got over taking until the middle of June to get past Jamie Lawrence's 9 wickets in the first game, led the bowling strongly and returned 30 wickets. Joe Burnett, Sammy Smart and newcomer Will Cooper all bowled well at times. The most positive note was the emergence of 14 year olds, Tom Collins and Joel Bailey who played all the latter games and both bowled with massive potential.

The club should be strong enough to get this side out of this division but the application has to be addressed.

Andy Bell