

## Byfleet 3<sup>rd</sup> XI Captain's Review 2015

The 3<sup>rd</sup> XI was formed in 2014 to help develop our junior players which was by & large a success in its limited aims, crucially, it did establish the foundations for 2015 to be the season in which the 3<sup>rd</sup>s became a fundamental tier in the hierarchy of Byfleet CC.

A prime example would be the bowling "find-of-the-season" Ish' Hussain who would go on to destroy 2<sup>nd</sup> XI batting lineups in 2015, much to Andy & Daniel's frustration!

So in 2015 the 3<sup>rd</sup>s found ourselves able to host visiting teams as we had our home base at Byfleet Rec! The only thing I will say about the Rec is that both teams had to bat on it!

So what was our aim, or goal, for the season? Well this was 4-fold

1. To give our 15/16 year olds a reason to stay and continue playing cricket.
2. To help develop our young cricketers by game-coaching them during senior, competitive, games.
3. To prepare them for 2XI & 1XI call-ups.
4. To provide a source of "rehab" for senior players struggling for form.

By achieving these aims the 3<sup>rd</sup>s, by definition, were not a stable team due to the rotation of players so, to a degree, 'organised' chaos is proof of success!

So what was the proof of success? Charlie Black & George Mickley started with us, scoring runs & taking wickets. Both would go on to play 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> XI cricket respectively for the rest of the season. Josh Hill was outstanding behind the stumps & I encourage the committee to look at his development during the 2016 season. Jamie Collett found a new lease of life in the 3's & flourished in the end as an all-rounder & Lewis Deven continued learning the art of spin with some superb spells.

Notable contributions too from Alfie Mickley, Callum Batten, Louis Collins, Kieran Croall & Luke Bateman showed that the 2016 season will provide new talent for our senior teams on a regular basis.

While the emphasis has & should remain on youth development, let's remember the importance of providing game-time for our seniors, some of whom would not have played last year had it not been for the 3s. They not only performed, but found themselves coaching & more. Rob Deven would go on to skipper the 3s, Eddie Oxborough's batting would take him to the 2s, & Ged Hill's slip catching was a revelation considering he couldn't catch a cold in 2014. The key thing here is that they enjoyed the challenge of playing, coaching and all our youngsters benefitted from this. Both Ged & Rob also played cricket with their respective sons which they appreciated (although the sons probably didn't).

Some highlights for you.

The Mickley boys domination of our game v Sheen. 77 runs, 6 wickets & 3 catches combined. Eddie's innings of 50, 30 & 40+, Charlie's spell of 5-18 v Chertsey, Ashan's spell of 6-17 v Shepperton & finally the team performance v Camberley, winning when we were dead & buried at the Rec. In fact our whole season was a highlight. We should be commended for fielding an XI for every game played, while others forfeited or folded & we acquitted ourselves in most cases.

Some notable mentions

Rob, Ged & Eddie. The 3<sup>rd</sup> XI would not have met its aims without their support. The tents, hot water for tea, tables, chairs, trollies, coaching & advice were invaluable.

Shaky's time behind the stumps for us, he never shut up! & it was his advice during drinks v Camberley that made me switch bowlers, go with Kieron, & win the game giving us such a moral boost.

Linda, Lou' Deven, Yvonne Hill & Jenny who's teas under difficult circumstances, were outstanding, every team that visited us were hugely complimentary and finally Linda & Jenny for their scoring every weekend.

So to summarize, our 2<sup>nd</sup> season and 1<sup>st</sup> in a competitive league, was largely a success. I base this not on wins v losses but on what we were asked to do & that is to "develop our junior players".

Iain Bowman

3<sup>rd</sup> XI Captain