

2016 Sunday XI – Annual Report

CHAMPIONS

The secret of Sunday League success has at last been found. That's right – wait for the skipper to pick up a season-ending injury, and crack on with winning the title with him safely out of harm's way!

A superb Thameside Sunday League campaign saw the intrepid Byfleet end the season with 7 wins, an eighth via concession, and 2 losses. This gave us an impressive tally of 32 points from our ten fixtures, enough to win the Championship by four clear points.

Huge congratulations must go to everybody who contributed to this excellent achievement – most of all the stand-in captain, Matthew Rannie, who took-up the mantle without hesitation after the regular captain keeled over like a dying swan, in early June.

The campaign began with tremendous style with a terrific away victory at title-contenders Chessington. A massive 118-run win against a high-flying Surrey Championship side – achieved courtesy of big runs from Ty White (69) and Sam Coyne (84), and a five-wicket haul for Sam Tyler – more than atoned for a disastrous performance the previous season.

A hard-fought run chase saw us over the line in tricky conditions against old friends Ashford, with runs for Ty and Josh Roguski, and ultimately a match-winning 69 not out from Kieron Ferrary.

The success ground to a halt, as ever – with our first loss recorded at Indian Gymkhana (will we ever beat them on their own ground?) but we got back to winning ways again with a comfortable win at Wycombe House, courtesy of an excellent day for Ben Tyler (2/19 from 8 overs, and 60 with the bat) and some blatant jug-avoidance from the evergreen Simon Hockin (48*).

Old rivals Acton CC provided us with our 2nd loss of the season in a tough match with emotions running high, but a thumping victory over a talented Whiteley Village outfit saw the side begin a run of wins that ultimately proved too much for the rest of the division to follow – Ty White stealing the show with 114 runs and 5/10 from 5 overs.

A terrific win over the previously-unbeaten Surrey Deaf XI proved a real turning-point. Defeat for Acton in their fixture against the Surrey Deaf side opened the door for us go on a winning run – and good runs from Sam Tyler (47*) and 75 more for Ty took us to victory.

The penultimate fixture might've seen the nerves settle in – but the Byfleet boys were having none of it, as they racked up 272/6 against a hapless Old Rutlishians side – Charlie Black helping himself to 5 wickets, and runs for Tim Richards (88), Josh Roguski (70*) and 58 quick runs for Matt Rannie.

The job wasn't done, however – with rivals Acton expected to take maximum points on the final weekend, and a losing head-to-head record between the sides counting against us, the pressure was on us to defeat near-neighbours Cobham Avorians. On a tricky surface, no-one was quite sure whether an eventual target of 162 would be enough – but four wickets for Charlie Black and the rest shared around, the league championship was in the bag.

Some tremendous performances and the contributions from our younger players continue to stand the club in good stead looking forward.

We go into next season with a title to defend – can we make it two in a row?

-- Neal Jones

Captain, Sunday XI