

September 2024

ROFFEY CC NEWSLETTER

The cricket season has come to an end. As always, it's been an interesting season for very different reasons for each of the adult teams, the women's team and the colts and a précis of each of these teams is to be found below.

As a cricket committee, we would like to start by thanking everyone who has been involved with Roffey Cricket Club this year. The club would not run without the hard work of the management committee, the bar staff, the cleaner, the scorers, the sponsors, the umpires, the groundsman, the coaches, the captains, the parents and guardians, the families, anyone that has helped on the workdays and of course, all of the players. The success of the club is entirely dependent on individuals coming together for the benefit of the club. The old idiom that the club is greater than the sum of its parts, is entirely correct and we are a great club. We need to keep pushing to maintain this.

1st XI

It was an inconsistent season for the 1st XI, we had some excellent performances, particularly at home, beating both the top two sides in the league. However, we also had some bad losses against sides we would expect to beat. As a young side, I think it was always going to be a tough season, the ups and downs were expected but it was promising to see some big contributions from some of our younger players – particular highlights were Shams' 100* at East Grinstead and Toby Munt finishing as our leading wicket taker in the league. I think our 7th place finish is indicative of where we are as a team at the moment, hopefully we can bring in some players in the winter to help strengthen the side to allow us to compete at the other end of the table.

On a personal note, a big thank you to everybody at the Club that has supported me during my tenure as captain, it has always been a huge honour to captain the 1st XI. I have no doubt that it is the right time to step away; a new captain with fresh ideas is exactly what we need to progress in the coming years.

2nd XI

At the start of the season, I knew we had a good enough side to compete in the league. It was just about getting the right blend of experience to mix with the potential of the younger members of the squad.

The first half of the season was basically about us being 20/3 either setting or chasing, with the lower middle order combining to get us over the line or try and set a target to defend. We won more games than we lost and the games we lost we knew where we needed to improve.

One stand out finish from a game early in the first half was the taking victory from the jaws of defeat of Steyning at home. After being 15/3 we were able to post a respectable but slight under par 206 all out. Steyning were cruising at 141-2, then 197-3 after 41.2 – so with 22 balls left 10 to win 3 down, winviz would have had our chances at 1%, we end up winning by 3 runs – with them only scoring 7 off 22 balls losing 3 wickets more wickets! Half way through we were mid table and had 5 wins from 9. With no expectations to finish much higher than that. But we had a mini clear out and changed a few roles in the side and it was either that or learning from the first half of the season, the top order started to find a bit of form and the runs started flowing and we started asking a few more questions of the opposition opening bowlers. We went on a run of 5 unbeaten from halfway that took us to within 2 points of top with 2 games to go. The penultimate game at home to Findon, who were top.... We won the toss and bowled first, which seemed to be the right decision after they were 65-4, and we continued to take wickets bowling them out for 139 in 39 overs. We lost an early wicket but a 50 partnership between Alex Southon and Josh Gander, seemed to settle the nerves, but losing them both in quick succession, it was down to Pav and Tom Barnes with a 43-run partnership to see us home with 4 overs spare, 6 down.

Then with on the final day with rain around and following the confirmation we couldn't be caught by Billingshurst, after they were cancelled. We were shaking hands at Goring knowing that we were league champions! Then we began having the first of many celebratory beers from about 12.15! It was a good thing we got there early for breakfast and a swim!

A quick note to thank all my 'volunteers' that continue to provide the best home teas in Sussex and to Emma for once again scoring for us all season. Division 2 here we come!

3rd XI

Kyle's write up for the 3's is succinct and to the point. He says we started poorly but finished ok? What more is there to say?

Great to have Harry Grubb make such a positive impact this year. Also a real benefit to have Fred and Collo play a few games for the 3's. Team looked to be going from strength to strength throughout the season with the younger players adding even more than the year before, ably assisted by a few old heads and new players, Toby Wardrobe and a return to Roffey for Andy (Fishy) Walker.

4th XI

It's been another tough year for the 4's. It started with many games cancelled at the start of the season, including one due to weather after a dry week with glorious sunshine.....perhaps they couldn't raise a team and didn't want to concede, which they just happened to do for a number of weeks later in the season. Anyway, the standard issue for the 4's occurred again at the beginning of the season, availability. Thank you to everyone that made themselves available, but wins were very scarce. It meant we stayed at the bottom of the table for quite a while, but the fight back began. A few wins here and there, normally when the captain was not playing, meant we started to slowly climb up the table. It all came down to a last week shootout.

I now have to rewrite this bit! Because, as many of you know, we found out that Ifield cheated in their last game with Warnham by fielding ineligible players. Warnham and us objected and the league found in our favour, meaning Ifield are relegated and we get another year in Div11! There were some outstanding individual performances, Nick Walters 156 against Warnham, Tom Danahay's unbeaten 122 against Ifield of all teams, just about every game Roger Smith bowled! But we have been trying to do what the 4's is all about and bring on new Roffey talent. This year we have been able to give adult debuts to a number of colts who have all been amazing. Emma Brice, Fin Small, Theo Botevyle, Henry Dinsdale, Ellie Marlow. The future is looking good for Roffey. My thanks to Callum Budd too for scoring so many of our games this year. Thank you to everyone who has played this year. Onwards and upwards next year.

Women's Team

Roffey's Women and Girls section has continued to grow, with the squad of players trebling over the past year and the team cementing itself as an integral part of the club. Unfortunately the structure of the Sussex Softball Women's league meant that this year we faced up against a number of established and experienced teams, and results throughout the season did not go our way. But our league results do not reflect how far the team have developed, individually and as a collective. As the season went on each game became increasingly competitive, and we continued our trend of winning or (at worst) placing runner-up in local tournaments. We are also particularly proud of our junior players, those who have represented the club having never picked up a bat before this year, and the players who've gone on to represent the Sunday and 4th XIs. 2025 will see us form Roffey CC's first ever women's hardball team, and we aim to be the only club in the Horsham area to offer both softball and hardball cricket to new players of any ability. Thank you to those who have supported the development of Women's Cricket at Roffey, especially to Gary Marlow for his ongoing sponsorship of the team.

Colts Team's

The colts teams are absolutely vital to the long term viability and success of Roffey CC. But we need to grow the colts section. We need to support the colts section by having more colts teams, ideally through having a team at each year group. In order to do this, we need more team managers (parents) more coaches, ideally from within our own ranks to help with the training and of course, we need more colts to come and play for Roffey. So this is a "call to action" Spread the word, get the kids up to Roffey and hopefully we will find parents willing to run the teams.

Starting with the youngest colt team. The under 12's have had a season of growth and development. It's a very promising start. As with all of the colts teams though, more players are needed. Tell your mates kids!

With the Under 16's season delayed until after the GCSEs, we managed to get in a few league games and an enjoyable festival week.

Well done to Harry Day and Theo Botevyle for taking the most number of wickets in the league for us, with Fin Small ending up as top wicket taker over the whole season. To Harry Grubb and Ben Warren for getting their first centuries during a memorable victory over Ansty in the festival, ending up as the leading run scorers for the U16s.

A special mention to Monty Boniface who stepped up from the U13s to help us and bowled magnificently every time he played. One for the future!

Sunday XI

This has been my first season as a cricket captain of any description and to quote my skipper, Jon Moss, it's been just like "herding cats". At first I was pretty calm about it and thought it was just a matter of picking an 11 from the multitudes of players who assured me that they'd be available. I didn't even worry about such trivialities as setting up the scoreboard, finding a scorer who knew how Play Cricket worked whilst also fielding, and providing wicket keeping gear for, well, the wicket keeper.

And so, the first game, versus Old Castletonians, began with a hastily thrown together squad, no scoreboard for the first 11 overs and an emergency dash to source some kit. It was mayhem and my head was fried and it washed over me like a tsunami but, by God, I loved it. We got beat that day, but we gave them a good game and just ran out of overs to catch their high score. Old Castletonians are regular, annual visitors to Roffey and bring their own, unique mixture of Caribbean flair, loud, mostly Reggae music and some exotic fragrances blowing from the boundary bench. It was a baptism of fire and rum. I believe the bar takings were good that day.

We lost our next two matches, all in the month of May, before we had lift off by beating BN3 casuals, with notable performances from Emma Brice – 3 for 29 and a catch, plus good hits from Harrison Grubb with 53, and Mahi Raval with 49. Unfortunately, due to a mix of weather and unavailability of both our players (remember all those that promised me they'd be up for it?) and the opposition, we only managed 2 more games, this summer. The first, a defeat away to Trinity who told me they had expected Theo and the firsts to turn up given that we were named as Roffey 1st Sunday 11, and had loaded their team accordingly.

But the second, and what proved to be final match of the season, was a glorious thumping revenge over Old Castletonians who had requested a second match no doubt expecting a comfortable win. During a memorable win, by 5 wickets, their skipper, Donavone, said to me "you are beating us up Mark"! (I think). Everyone played their part but the hero of the day was Harry Roberts. In less than 3 remarkable overs Harry took 4 (four) wickets to skittle them out. He took 3 wickets in 4 balls and performed some memorable send offs, including a celebratory, but weird, dance aimed at some of the senior squad players watching from the boundary.

Its been exactly what I hoped for. An opportunity for some people who don't often get the chance to play, throw in some colts, and girls trying hard ball cricket for the first time, together with some 3s and 4s players for balance. Hopefully, next season, more volunteers will come forward. I know there are some very good "retired" cricketers in the club house watching us play and it would be great to see them walk the walk rather than just shout, what I'm sure is, well intentioned "encouragement" from the patio.

My particular thanks to Kyle for basically captaining the side for me and showing me that "spread out and take the catches" isn't really setting a field. Luckily he corrected my instruction to field at "short leg" to what I had intended as "short fine leg" before someone got hurt

Davo

“And finally, as Matt Davies has decided now is the time to move on from being 1’s captain, Josh Fleming has kindly written the following”

9 years ago, Davo took over as captain and has led the club to unprecedented success.

Multiple trophies along with some great cup runs leaves him as the greatest captain in the clubs history and one of the best to do it in the Sussex league. His longevity shows both how highly he is respected by his fellow players and also how popular he is amongst us.

In recent years, Davo has overseen a changing of the guard with several key players moving on and an influx of young talent into the side. The young players have gained great experience in this time and this sets the team up for further success in the future!

I don’t think many people truly appreciate the amount of dedication that Davo has shown to the club over the years. Being 1st XI captain is a huge task that requires a massive amount of time and effort as well as being incredibly stressful (his hairline is testament to this). Davo has been nothing short of exceptional, both on and off the field, during his time at the helm. He has managed to perform at a level where he is one of the best players in the league whilst leading the side impeccably.

I am sure everyone will join me in saying a massive thank you to him for the sacrifices that he has made for the club. We have been so lucky to have him leading from the front for so long. I’m looking forward to seeing him score many more runs for Roffey and hopefully be able to enjoy his cricket a little more now that some of the stress is relieved!

The Stats

Games - 251
Runs - 5482
High score - 115*
50s/100s - 37/3
Ducks - 13

Overs - 145
Maidens - 9
Wickets - 28



Wild Boars

Despite a number of rain affected days, the Wild Boars T20 team managed to squeeze in 8 games this season. Playing in the Sussex Slam, we topped the group stage of the Plate competition, but lost out to Ifield in the KO round - sadly not being able to repeat our appearance in the Gullick Cup final of last year.

Despite the loss it was a fun season again. We had a total of 26 players making an appearance this year as we tried to get as many people games as possible, with a minimum of 5 under 18s playing in each game. With more and more people wanting to play in the adult T20 games, we hope to play more friendly games next year too. Roll on 2025!

End of Season Groundworks

We have all benefitted this year with being able to use the new patio. It makes the ground look so much better and is so much more user friendly than the old one. As always, there is a requirement to complete some end of season works, to get the club ready for winter. Dates for works will be announced when finalised and we would urge as many as possible to come along and do their part. Too often it is the same people that answer the call. We hope that more will answer the calls this year.

End of Season Awards Night

This was confirmed as taking place on Saturday 28th September at 7pm at the club before the season began. It's not far away now. We hope that as many as possible will be able to attend, to celebrate the club, to celebrate the teams and to celebrate the success of the individuals that have won awards. Food will not be provided, but Gino's Burger van will be coming along for the evening.

C'mon you Boars!

New Players

We have been joined by many new players this year. It's really important we continue to attract new players as players leave and retire. This season will be no different as we will be saying goodbye to a number of players. Recruitment is vital, so please put the word out that new players are always welcome. Why wouldn't you want to come and join Sussex's premier cricket club?

On the subject of leaving, thanks to Tom Blackwell for taking on the role of Faygate Groundsman this year. Unfortunately, due to work and family commitments, Tom is unable to continue this role. Therefore, we are looking for a new groundsman for Faygate. Are you interested? Do you know someone that could be interested? If so, please get in touch with any of the cricket committee members.

Also, thanks to Jonny Phelps for his work as Director of Youth Cricket. Jonny has advised that due to work and family commitments, he will not be continuing in the role. The process to appoint a new director of cricket is ongoing.

Winter Nets

It may seem odd, but we are already looking at these. When dates and venues are confirmed, we will let you know. The winter nets were very well attended last year, let's hope the same will happen this year.

