



Princes Risborough Cricket Club



Report of Management Committee and Hon Secretary – Year to 31 December 2011

Once again the report covers the calendar year as, under Club Rules, our AGM will be held in January.

2011 in Brief

- We started the year with brand-new nets and high hopes with a full social calendar and a Bucks Cricket Board funded 'Chance to Shine' project which potentially could bring large numbers of juniors from local schools to the Club. Neither was fully realised; we were too ambitious with too many events in a year of recession and competition from other local clubs kept the numbers joining us lower than we'd hoped although we did see an appreciable increase in the lower age groups.
- Over the winter the small wood cabin adjoining the pavilion was re-sited and converted into a scoreboard, with a longer-term aim being to add an electronic scoreboard.
- Former player Tim Finch very generously provided the labour and materials to redecorate virtually the whole of the pavilion – in Club colours too – and, together with new curtains, the whole ensemble was completed in time for April's opening ceremony for the nets. We're very grateful to Tim and also to Dennis Cutten who's agreed to pay for replacing the old and worn-out curtains originally provided in memory of his father.
- The net opening was a great success and, blessed with glorious weather, was a terrific showcase for PRCC and enhanced our profile with Bucks Cricket Board, local politicians and other dignitaries. It's pleasing that the nets are being used well by seniors and juniors alike.
- This is a suitable point at which to record that Stella Lee has contributed £500 to the net fund to commemorate her late husband Ralph, who died in 2008. We shall be erecting a memorial plaque in the pavilion and will hold a ceremony to mark this in the New Year.
- It's disappointing to record that we could not hold three of our regular monthly Committee meetings – more of this below.
- The junior section continued to run successfully and Craig Williams did sterling work with the coaching team.
- We obtained renewal of our ClubMark accreditation in September (we have to undergo a full review every three years).
- Although numbers attending the fun day at the end of August were low, Fran Hall's auction beat last year's fundraising effort and brought in over £1,000. Many thanks to Fran and all who contributed by donating or buying.
- Take-up of tickets for the dinner in October was the lowest we can remember and, although the function went ahead, awards were presented at a social event held in mid-November.
- In November we learned of the death of Barry Spicer – a stalwart of the Club in the 1990s. The Club was suitably represented at his funeral.
- In mid-December Fran Hall, whose husband Kevin passed away earlier in the year, announced that she would be moving away to take up a new posting, although she would remain in touch with PRCC.

Awards:

Please see the full list in the panel alongside. Once again the main 1st XI awards went to veteran players with Adam Morton scoring over 150 runs more than Wes Strecker and averaging 75.5 to win the batting trophy. Steve Greaves retained the bowling award with 41 League wickets, though for the younger generation Wes Strecker was the year's best all-rounder.

The 2nd team had a disappointing year so we were forced to take the unusual step of making no awards for batting and bowling though Matt Gunnell's efforts earned him both the all-rounder and players' player honours.

James Willard just missed the junior trophy to James Bee but had some consolation in recognition of his performances for the Sunday team.

Awards - 2011	
Services to Club:	Steve Greaves
Batting:	1 st XI Adam Morton; 2 nd XI No Award
Bowling:	1 st XI Steve Greaves; 2 nd XI No Award
All-rounder:	1 st XI Wesley Strecker; 2 nd XI Matt Gunnell
Players' Player:	1 st XI Pratik Bhattacharya; 2 nd XI Matt Gunnell
6-Hits:	1 st XI Adam Morton
Sunday Star:	James Willard
Young Player:	James Bee

Cricket

- Our second season in the Thames Valley Cricket League was no more successful than in 2010. The first team was relegated for the second successive year and will now play in Division 6B in 2012.
- The 2nd XI again escaped relegation by the skin of its teeth.
- The Sunday XI started to re-establish a more permanent Sunday fixture list and continued in its role of giving as much experience to juniors as possible.

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- Once again PRCC hosted Bucks fixtures including an over-50s match and junior county and district matches.
- Unfortunately there was more than one instance of unacceptable on-field behaviour this season and at times some players did not put in the sort of effort that we would expect. PRCC has always prided itself on the spirit in which we play the game and it is important that a good example is set for our younger players.

Juniors and Coaching

- The junior coaching programme continued to expand but the summer programme was hampered by absence of some of our qualified coaches. We're grateful in particular to Mark Shimmin and Dan Knight for filling the gap – the former is a parent who has coaching qualifications equivalent to ECB Level 2 while Dan, along with James Bee, will be taking the Level 1 course this winter. If anyone else is interested please contact Steve Greaves as soon as possible. The Club will do all it can to meet the costs of the training course.
- Unfortunately we were unable to repeat the 2010 arrangements for winter indoor training for juniors with PR School.
- Although Bucks Cricket Board funded a 'Chance to Shine' project based around PR School and its associated junior schools, it only generated limited impetus to our junior programme with quite a few youngsters already committed to other local clubs. BCB has invited applications for further projects in 2012 and we are waiting to hear the result of our submission. This time the Club needs to be better prepared to take advantage of this scheme.

Finance

- Once again we had a successful financial year, and, although we were unable to match 2010, income was ahead of budget. These statements reflect the significant sum spent on the nets, the ECB grant and loan; we have earmarked funds to cover a substantial of the latter – but we are committed to repaying £2,000 per year for the next 5 years and need to keep raising funds to meet this schedule.
- A detailed report will be made at the AGM and the accounts are also available to those who log in to the website. We thank Jo Bee for her work as Treasurer which became difficult while running a busy family life and her teaching job. Andy Hitchcock has been persuaded to take the job on for 2012 and we're pleased to note his remarkable progress following his illness.

Ground

- Throughout the season the square was kept in excellent condition by Andy Sheldon and, in particular, thanks are due to Jon Witney for his sterling work on the outfield (this is precisely what we said last year but it is hard to think of a better way of putting it).
- Shortly after the end of the playing season (and thus in the new financial year) some of the lime trees adjoining the football ground received a professional 'manicure'; we hope that the work will help improve this part of the outfield although the main reason for the work was to forestall the risk of a catastrophic splitting of one of them.

Pavilion etc

- The improvements to the decor - mentioned above – were most welcome.
- Thanks to Steve and Matt Greaves last winter the existing wood cabin was moved and converted for use as a scoreboard. However further improvements/modifications are desirable and there are many who would like to see an electronic scoreboard – but this may need to wait until we have cleared our loan.

Committee / Organisation

- The reluctance of much of the General Committee to become more involved in the running of the Club through sub-committees continued. Although last year's report said that "people who take up Committee posts must be prepared to put in more effort" a number of those elected just did not contribute and for the first time in many years several meetings did not take place because of poor attendance. Consequently much of the running of the Club fell on just a couple of people.
- Despite a lack of support for completing the necessary paperwork we managed to obtain approval of our Development Plan and renewal of ClubMark status. Failure to do so could have resulted in withdrawal of our loan facility.
- It is important that on the cricketing side entries for teams, results and score sheets be kept up to date on the website. This often lapsed in 2011.
- In consequence your Chairman decided to review the running of PRCC with particular emphasis on stopping the downhill drift of the senior cricketing sides and sharing the administrative burden more widely.

Personal Thoughts

Although this review comes on behalf of the Management Committee, I shall not be continuing as Secretary and so this will be the last occasion on which I can bore you with some personal views.

- Although I only held the title for the past three years I have done most of the Secretary's work since David Brooker relinquished it at the AGM in October 2004 and in that time we have done a lot to improve and resurrect the Club, particularly on the administrative side.
- While the drift on the playing side is clearly the most important thing to tackle, the Club is always likely to be faced with further expenditure on non-cricketing matters for example replacement of the septic tank (which is likely to become necessary under legislation which is in the pipeline).
- Expressions of interest by playing members in such luxuries as bowling machines and electronic scoreboards do next to nothing to address this drift and there is a need for more commitment and proper standards – we still need to increase our playing strength and make more use of our youngsters.
- Both teams need to be fully aware that their lowly positions aren't just misfortune and that there are good reasons why they're where they are. Playing standards need to improve substantially – and the comments about the spirit in which we play the game and setting a good example for our younger players bear repeating. The new Committee will need to consider seriously its attitude to failures of on-field behaviour and self-discipline.
- If our expression of interest in a Chance to Shine project for 2012 is successful we must make efforts to establish proper links with local schools. Either way we need to continue to build on our recent successful colts' programme.
- With the departure of Fran Hall and the high average age of our other scorers and umpires, PRCC needs to be looking for replacements – an ideal opportunity for any player contemplating retirement (or who's recently stopped playing).
- While we have made a lot of progress in the past year there is still more to do and our Development Plan needs to be kept under review. In this respect the members of the General Committee need to do more in two vital respects: [a] there needs to be greater involvement in sub-Committees and making the system work rather than leaving everything to the Management Committee; and: [b] under the 'new' constitution of the Club the General Committee also has the role of appointing and monitoring the work of the Management Committee. This is an important function of which all members need to be aware and those who stand for the Committee should be aware of this responsibility.
- Finally I wish to express my thanks to all those who have assisted me over the past 6 or 7 years. They know who they are and it would be invidious to name some without including others who should appear on a fairly lengthy list.

John Bushby

(Hon Secretary) December 2011