



Matching Green Cricket Club Newsletter

November 2020

A whirlwind of a season and SO MUCH achieved!

Well, another summer season of cricket is over (or should I say half a season) and, considering the Covid restrictions we've had to abide by, it's been an absolute cracking season. We've achieved so much and made so many giant strides in just a few months, it's really quite amazing.

Everyone seems to have adapted well to the restrictions and have kept sensible about the whole situation. Undoubtedly the players have missed using the changing rooms and having a hot shower after the game. The on-field hygiene requirements seemed to have been dealt with easily; a hand sanitiser conveniently placed behind each set of stumps certainly saved a lot of time in the games. Everyone, to a man (and women), has behaved sensibly and, to our knowledge, no one at the club has contracted Coronavirus. Let's hope that continues to be the case.

The biggest disappointment was undoubtable not being able to have a usual cricket tea. We have built a fine reputation over the years and pride ourselves with our tea offerings. I think I can speak for everyone, including all the wonderful tea ladies (and men!), in saying we really missed the lemon drizzle, the builder's tea, the jam scones and delicious sandwiches. Let's hope that, even if restrictions are still in place for 2021, we will be able to entertain our guests in the traditional 'Matching way'.

There have been so many highlights this year, many of which feature in latter articles in this newsletter. But, without wishing to miss out anything, we've...

- purchased a new strip mower and, most recently, a new square mower to replace our very old mowers
- improved the outfield and square (and there's still more to do)
- finished top of the inaugural Herts & Essex Border league Premier Division.

- Reached the final of the Boardman's Davis Cup
- Introduced a whole raft of youngsters to league cricket
- Firmly established our Sunday Development XI with great availability every week
- Purchased two new memorial benches
- Broken records including the overall score by a Matching side, now 442 in just 40 overs
- Matty Taylor took an incredible 8 for 41 against Potter Street
- Captain Riz broke the club record for a number on bat, 164 against Little Hallingbury
- Olly Hartnell scored heavily in August and September including over 400 runs in just 3 weeks
- We were unbeaten in Saturday league matches
- Taken our cricket training to a new level
- Improved our coaching for both juniors and seniors with a batting coach (none other than Owais Shah!) and a new bowling coach in the vastly experienced Salim Akbar
- Played most Saturdays with a non-playing umpire (thank you Andrew!)
- Implemented a new online club shop for our new Gray-Nicholls playing and training kit
- Implemented a new online, cashless subs and match fees paying system called Slate.
- Played our cricket with a smile on our faces

... and much, much more.

There is so much more to look forward to, both during the winter months (indoor) and for next season. The committee are putting plans in place to further improve the facilities and to build on this year's successes.

Let's all pray that a vaccine is found for Coronavirus and we can all get back to some sort of normality, at least in time for the start of the 2021 season.

MF

A word from our "Lord"!

The dust has now settled on a cricket season many will not forget. The 2020 season was meant to be a year to look forward to as we were entering into the new Tees Herts & Essex Border League under a new club captain, Riz Akram. Unfortunately, as we all know, the season will be remembered for other reasons. Covid 19 brought sanitising and socially distancing regimes to ensure some form of competitive cricket could be played this year.

I have been amazed to see the enthusiasm and joy that the shortened season brought to many in the Club and amongst our local supporters. Credit must go out to the members and spectators for respecting the social distancing measures and the complications the now infamous bubbles brought during match days. I can only hope that next season will see a return to cricket on a more normal basis and we can get back to using our pavilion to provide our famous hospitality.

The Saturday league team, under the captaincy of Riz, remained unbeaten in the new Premier Division of HEBL to become the first (unofficial) winners of the new league.

In the knock-out competitions the First team reached the Boardman's Davis Cup final, only to lose to a young dynamic Takeley side. In The Cricketer National Village cup competition we lost to a Horndon-on-the-Hill side that reached the quarter finals. In both games we managed to throw away winning positions, rather than being totally out played. Next year, I am sure we will come back stronger with more experience, so we may well win one of these competitions.

There have been many notable contributions this year, in particular from the Taylor brothers Matthew and Jonny, whose bowling has caused oppositions all sorts of problems. Notably Matthew taking eight wickets against Potter Street & Church Langley in front of our local MP Robert Halfon. At one point we thought Fringy Holgate's



"I have much to thank Riz for this season. He has shared his experience and enthusiasm with many this year."

record of 9-13 was at stake. Robert was present to support both Matching Green CC and his local constituency cricket team, Potter Street and Church Langley, and kindly took the time to inaugurate the memorial benches to our past President Mr. William Hartnell and Vice-President Jeanette Bailles who both passed away last year.

It was great to welcome back Charlie Bass, for the shortened season, from his adventures around the globe working on ocean-going super yachts. Charlie has been a great contributor to the Club, not only to the WhatsApp group, but opening the bowling and middle order battling. I wish him well with his new adventures and hope he returns safely to the Green sometime next year.

The batting line up has been extraordinarily strong this year with many players sharing the top six batting positions. The most notable were the contributions made by our talented youngsters, Will Cutlan-Smyth and Olly Hartnell. Will single handily batted Matching to the final of the Boardman's Davis Cup and has brilliantly taken up the role as the First Team wicket-keeper. Olly, this year, has taken his opportunity to become this season's top scorer with two centuries and five fifties. Other notable hundreds came from Peter Liversidge against Stansted Hall & Elsenham and Riz Akram against Little Hallingbury. Riz's 164 helped the Club record a new highest innings total of 443 in just 40 overs. Finally, Jack Scantlebury who held the batting together with a gutsy 80 not out in The Cricketer National Village Cup game at Horndon-on-the-Hill.

I have much to thank Riz for this season. He has shared his experience and enthusiasm with many this year. He has planned and coached the first team as a squad, inclusive of both talented youngsters and established players. He has run regular Wednesday night training sessions involving fitness work, followed by detailed fielding drills and endless batting and bowling in the nets. The new regime has brought greater club unity and

success on the pitch. Such strides have been made this year, that there is a real possibility of us re-instating a second team on Saturdays next year.

The most encouraging factor has been the resurgence in the popularity of Sunday cricket, the quintessential summer past-time, for which Matching has the perfect setting for lazy Sunday afternoon entertainment, even if the weather doesn't always follow the script.

Sunday cricket has always introduced new members and assisted in the development of younger players. Most notable, this season, has been the contributions and sacrifices made by the Neville family, even if their cricketing mentor has more to offer on a tennis court than the 22 yards of hallowed turf! The other to mention is Jack Porter. The young fast bowler has impressed all he has bowled against this year, not only for the West Essex District team, but also the Fast Bowling Academy he has been attending. Jack has the potential to play at the highest level and next season he will be central to our new ball attack. Jack is also a good footballer and has recently signed a two year academy contract at Arsenal. Let's hope football doesn't get in the way of his cricket as he has much to offer.

No cricket can go ahead without umpires. My huge thanks go to Andrew Bennett who has selflessly thrown himself into the role as Matching Green's League and Sunday umpire. He's done a fantastic job, standing out in all weathers and has developed a very thick skin against dissent from anonymous senior players and his son!!

The Development squad and their training and Junior Colts coaching has been the backbone of the club development. My thanks go out to all the volunteers and helpers along with Matt Billings and Brad Oakes for their time, input and organisation of Friday night training. Hopefully, we will return to our traditional Friday night sessions next year. We've certainly missed them.

There has been one notable addition to the club's coaching line up this year; ex-England, Essex and Middlesex batsman Oasis Shah. Owais has been coaching the more talented youngsters and our first team throughout the season. His insight and coaching has assisted our young 15-17 year olds and helped take their game to a new level. Olly, as leading run-scorer this year, is testament to that. My thanks go out to Owais; always generous with his time and sharing his gems of advice through rain or shine and often until dusk. I wish Owais well this winter and we look forward to welcoming him back to the Green again next year.

This winter will prove to be difficult for many, but as a Club we will continue to offer regular social events on-line and indoor nets, even if competitive adult indoor cricket will not go ahead. The indoor nets will take place on Sunday mornings at the HECC Cricket Centre near Sawbridgeworth and are available to senior players. Please contact Riz if you'd like to attend.

In addition, Riz's close friend, Salim Akbar, will be assisting in the coaching sessions, sharing his fast bowling coaching skills. Salim has already assisted a number of our bowlers and also invited members to his Sharks Cricket Academy. I can only speak from experience that this is an incredible Academy with many talented young cricketers. Any members of the Club invited to

attend the Sharks Academy are advised to do so. My thanks go out to Salim. He also has also been instrumental, along with Olly and Max Hunt, in setting up the new club **YouTube channel matchinggreenc**. Please take the time to subscribe to the channel. There is a brilliant promotional video featuring Owais Shah and some of our members, both young and old on the channel. There is also a few entertaining videos posted

by some of our more "talented" youngsters. This is the way forward for promoting the Club; sharing videos. From next year, we hope to have match videos of all of our league home games. Whilst entertaining (we hope) these are also a great tool for coaching purposes.

I want to thank all the local charities, The Jack Petchey Foundation, the ECB (England & Wales Cricket Board), Essex County Cricket Board and Epping Forest District Council who have awarded generous grants to the club to help sustain cricket through the Summer. In particular this year, where our income from fundraising events has been hard hit due to Covid, the grants have been invaluable.

The grants have helped the club invest in new machinery which will ensure we can continue to provide the best playing facilities for our colts and senior cricketing sides.

I also want to thank my colleagues who selflessly give their time to run this club. Special thanks goes to John Kenney and Nigel Cobby along with our Committee members including Rob Leamon, Martin Ormondroyd, Riz Akram, Simon Jeffery and of course Martin Figg.

I wish everyone well, with special mention to Jason Green, and look forward to seeing you next season when I hope we will return to competitive cricket in a manner that we are more accustomed to.

SIMON HARTNELL

"...grants have helped the club invest in new machinery which will ensure we can continue to provide the best playing facilities possible"

2020 MGCC awards



Clearly, a 2020 Presentation Dinner is not possible this year due to the Covid restrictions, but there have been so many great performances this year, it would be a travesty not to celebrate them. So well done to...

Batsman of the Year – Olly Hartnell

Bowler of the Year – Matthew Taylor

Performances of the Year

– **Matthew Taylor** 8 for 41 against Potter Street

– **Riz Akram** 164 against Little Hallingbury

Sunday Player of the Year – Ollie Hutley

Junior of the Year – Olly Hartnell

Most Improved Players – there are 4 outstanding candidates which we can't choose between... **Jon Taylor** for his new ball bowling, **Charlie Bennett** for his batting and bowling and **Max Smith** again for his all round performances. We must also give a special mention to **William Cutlan-Smyth** for his exceptional wicket-keeping this season.

Champagne Moment – Matt Taylor's 8 for 41

Miracle of the Year – Jason Green's recovery

Biggest Thank you – The NHS especially at PAH Harlow



We have a great deal to **thank the NHS** for at the moment, in particular the brilliant staff at Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow. Not only have they had to deal with the dreadful Coronavirus pandemic, but we had a stark reminder in July when Jason Green was struck down with heart failure while at work. Jason's life was saved by the fantastic Ambulance crew from PAH. Thankfully he has made a full recovery and even managed to play cricket again in September.



Clubman of the Year – Riz Akram

Our Chairman has lead from the front and has spent many hours rolling, cutting, organising and planning ahead. **BUT the overwhelming contribution this year has been from Riz.**

Almost single-handed, he has relieved a lot of pressure off the committee and has totally regenerated the club. Everything from pre-season lockdown Quiz Nights, organising training and coaching, running the 1st XI, introducing new skills and ideas, helped take the player's performance to a new level... the list goes on. **Well done Riz!** Just the start of great things to come!!



Matty Taylor was exceptional with the new ball this year. A well deserved **Bowler of the Year** and **Riz's Player of the Season!**



Olly Hartnell had a truly breakthrough season scoring 2 centuries and 5 fifties in our short season. A well-worthy **Batsman AND Junior of the Year!**



Ollie Hutley made giant strides this year (in his size 13 boots!) and bowled with venomous pace on Sundays making him **Sunday Player of the Year.**

MGCC News...

Defeat in Boardman's Davies Cup

Our lads fell at the last hurdle against a competitive Takeley in the Davies Cup final. Chasing a very gettable 144-5, we fell 20 runs short. Many thanks to all the supporters that came to watch and cheer on the lads.

More work on the playing surface

When we renovated the outfield last Autumn, the rain didn't stop for months meaning some of the seed didn't germinate. To rectify that, in mid-September we had the outfield over-seeded. If you've been to the Green recently you'll see how well that new seed has taken.



At the time of writing we hope the end of season renovations will have been completed. This year we plan to 'Koro' the top surface off the square, effectively scraping a few millimeters from the surface to leave a nice flat seed bed for top dressing and more seed. Our new contractor's, Garson's, have highly recommended this to make a huge improvement for the coming seasons.

"Thank you NHS" event in 2021

A sub-committee has met to start discussing the 'Thank you NHS' event we'd like to run in 2021. We hope the day will include a 20/20 cricket match (featuring staff from PAH Harlow), fun for all the family, BBQ & bar plus live entertainment in the evening. The management at PAH are fully supportive of our plans. The present Covid situation makes plans and dates impossible to finalise, but we hope to make this a BIG COMMUNITY EVENT. Possible dates are either May/August Bank Holidays. **PLEASE WATCH OUT FOR MORE DETAILS.** If you'd like to get involved in this event, maybe as a corporate sponsor, please contact Dan Sibley on 07841 215328.

Re-instated League 2nd XI

With the renewed enthusiasm, the improvement of our older juniors and the introduction of new members, the committee have decided to enter a 2nd XI in the Herts & Essex Border League in 2021.

Successful grant applications

We've recently had success with various grant applications. The new equipment we've been able to purchase was certainly well overdue! Our huge thanks to **Epping Forest District Council**, the **England & Wales Cricket Board** and **EASST** for their assistance.

Owais Shah coaching sessions extended

The expert coaching we received from Owais was initially funded by the **Jack Petchey Foundation**. Seeing how successful the coaching was and how much it benefitted our youngsters, longtime benefactors **The Derek Shuttleworth Trust** offered us further funding so we could keep Owais at the club for a further four weeks. Our huge thanks to Paul Bard and the Trust for that.

INDOOR PRACTISE

Senior indoor training, run by Salim, will be on Sunday mornings at HECC Sport. Cost will be £10 per session. Please let Riz know if you wish to attend. At the time of writing, it seems unlikely there will be any indoor league this winter. Should that change Riz will inform everyone.

The Cricketer National Village Cup

We were very disappointed at our overall performance at Horndon on the Hill in the National Village Cup. After a brilliant start to our run chase our middle order collapsed and we lost by just 20 runs. Horndon on the Hill progressed a further two rounds where they were eventually defeated by Redbourn (Herts) by 6 wickets. Redbourn then progressed to the Final at Lords on 19 September when they narrowly lost to this year's winners Colwall (Herefordshire). Just think, with a little more luck, the Lords final isn't so much of a pipe dream! Here's to next season...

Congratulations Jack



Budding fast bowler, Jack Porter had an exceptional first year playing adult cricket and is a great future prospect for the club. He also plays football as a goalie and his hard work and dedication has paid off with a new 2-year Academy contract with Arsenal. Well done Jack! Keep working hard and hopefully a proper team will come in for you soon!

My 2020 vision

by Bryan Russell



When I held all the club records - and to make it clear, we are talking about a cardboard box of old score books and correspondence, not 'most catches in a summer' and stuff like that - I came across a piece of paper with the seating plan for the 1964 Dinner Dance, which fell out of the score book for

that year. It was interesting that there were only 24 names on it, and almost half were on the 'top table'. It was impossible to deduce whether or not the club was doing well at this time or not. They won and drew plenty and lost a few matches but that never tells the whole story. The club has always, inevitably, fluctuated over the years, and you might think that there are clues in the score books and other correspondence such as this, but we just can't tell.

In future times, when examining the last five years of this club, anyone flicking through the score books might well assume that the club was thriving. We won the Herts and Essex League in three of these seasons, an amazing feat, but in many other ways it wasn't a good time for the club.

At the end of this period, despite our strong league position, we were sometimes struggling to get 11 players for league fixtures, few people were watching the games, Sunday cricket had pretty well been disbanded and behind the scenes, the dinner dance had ceased, as well as other social gatherings while running the 'infrastructure' of the club was falling onto fewer and fewer shoulders.

In season 2020 everything changed. The league collapsed, Covid shut down cricket for three months, and despite there not being a 'must win' league fixture all summer, the practice nets have never been busier. Sunday cricket is back 'up and running', the pavilion is a proper club house where there are as many spectators as players and the next spontaneous social gathering is never very far away. As an occasional visitor there, the atmosphere is always inviting and friendly.

What's important, is that we all have to remember these good times, as there won't be any clues left in the score books.

Well done to everyone involved for making season 2020 the most enjoyable for many years.

slate
— THE MATCH FEE APP —

Less contact than contact-less!

Slate. The smart and safe way to collect weekly match fees and more.

During the 'Covid' Summer of 2020, we introduced a new way of paying membership fees and match subs. Slate, the app for iPhone and Android, relieves the captains of the responsibility of collecting match fees at the end of a game. Slate also gives advantages to members as they can now pay for subs on-line whenever they like.

Slate offers our hardworking Treasurer unparalleled reporting. He can easily keep in touch with who does and doesn't owe money. Oddy loves it!! Although there is a fee to the club to use Slate, the extra money it brings in and the time it saves is a huge bonus.

During 2020 we trialled the system with the Saturday and Sunday teams. Next year we hope to include junior fees, social membership fees and even ticket money for social events.

If you are not already signed up for Slate, please do so now!

If you have not had an invitation to join, please email either Martin Ormondroyd or Martin Figg and you'll be added to the system.

The Riz Report

Riz reflects on his first season as 1st XI captain and reveals his plans for the future.

Although the season did not start until July, I had seen enough in pre-season training to realise we had a really talented group of players. We seemed to have every base covered, with plenty in reserve from the up and coming lads from the Junior Development squad.

Pre-season training was brilliant. Maybe it was the new face at the helm; the lovely early summer weather; or just a huge desire to get outside and start playing cricket after the Covid misery; but everyone showed amazing commitment and the early training sessions were really well attended. We introduced a whole raft of the Junior Development squad to help them get to know the 1st team squad. It worked brilliantly and the lads are now fully integrated into the full squad.

Because of that commitment early in the season, and once the season eventually started, we hit the ground running (literally). A pre-league friendly victory over Takeley, and then a comprehensive victory over 2019 champions Nazeing Common, set us on our winning ways. I'm pleased to report the 1st XI remained unbeaten in league matches this year finishing top of the unofficial HEBL Premier division.

We showed great strength in batting and bowling. I would like to highlight how well Jonny and Matty Taylor bowled with the new ball. With Bassy and Greeny first and second change there was little respite for the opposition.

When a little more guile was required we could depend on Lordy and Sibbo to deliver in the spin department.

Our batsmen performed brilliantly all year. Olly Hartnell made massive strides this year and finished the season the club's top run scorer. There were two league centuries scored this season. Peter Liversidge scored 132

against Stansted Hall & Elsenham, and with Olly's 84, helped break the club's highest partnership for the third wicket; unbeaten 232. And it was with great pleasure that I scored 164 against Little Hallingbury also breaking the club's longstanding record for a number one batsman.

Despite all the runs we scored, **my 'Player of the Season' has to be Matty Taylor.** He was just incredible with the new ball. His 8 wickets for 41 against Potter Street was a sensational performance.

I must also mention Will Cutlan-Smyth who took over wicket-keeper duties and performed brilliantly. He's a naturally talented all round cricketer!

Overall we had a side playing our cricket with more confidence and in a thoroughly enjoyable atmosphere and with a smile on our faces.

The only real disappointment came in cup matches; loosing in the final of the Boardman's Davies Cup and not progressing further in the National Village Cup. That's an area I'm determined to address for next season.

I would like to thank Rob for his hard work on the square and to Andrew Bennett for taking on the role of 1st XI umpire. It such a pleasure having a regular umpire! Charlie scored as well, when he wasn't playing.

Looking forward, we must keep the momentum going. Salim has joined us and will provide vastly experienced coaching. His new ideas and video analysis are a breathe of fresh air and together, will help to improve our players.

We hope to encourage new members to further strengthen the squad and the re-introduction of our 2nd XI next year is another huge step towards more success.

Gajendra Gohel joined this season and I expect to see more of him next year. We also welcome Hassan Ali, a young left arm seamer who will fill the huge hole left by Charlie Bass who is off on his travels again.

RIZ AKRAM,
1st XI Captain



Sausage Report

Peter Liversidge reflects on Sunday cricket on The Green and his first foray into skippering.

The Sunday team has gone from strength to strength during this truncated season with some excellent individual performances and some memorable wins, there have been some other equally memorable almos...

It has been a real pleasure captaining the Sunday side watching from point, deep cover, mid wicket, deep square



Will & George opened the batting against High Roding

leg, silly mid off, deep extra cover and umpire; as the future of the club, in the form of our excellent younger players, took sides apart.

I have been equally impressed by the faultless team spirit alongside almost all the team showing a healthy contempt (in the best politest possible way) for other teams and

their 'special' players, and the overwhelming desire to play cricket no matter the weather, how much homework, square cutting/rolling needed to be done.

Some memorable moments... **Max Smith** bowling really well and scoring a match winning 30 against Netteswell & Burnt Mill; brilliant batting from **Will Cutlan-Smith** who also kept wicket like he was born to do it; **Olly Hartnell** with more runs than money owed to the swear box (just!) and bowling quickly towards the end of season; **Josh Hutley** launching a gigantic 6 after having a look at the bowling for a ball! Opening the bowling with **Jonny Taylor** who bowled brilliantly; **Lorcan Neville** was doggedly determined. Both he and JT bowling with great accuracy and backing each other up. JT seemed to find extra pace in the Sunday wicket. Perhaps it was the religious part of the 'Sunday' game that had the opposition batsmen praying for me to take him off... only to be replaced by more fearsome fast bowling from **Olly Hutley** and **Jack Porter**,

both of whom will be breaking records, wickets (and arms) for years to come! **Joe Scanlon**

bowling brilliantly whenever asked; **George Liversidge** opening the batting with Will and also sending down some tidy overs (even if his dad did drop a catch off his bowling, I won't mention that...). **Charlie Bennett's** bowling and batting has really come on this year (as has his sledging). **Joel Moscow** playing just a few games, always making runs and making us hope he's available for every game next season (fingers crossed). A special mention to the innings he, alongside Will, played setting up the win against Netteswell & Burnt Mill that giving Max the chance to score that match winning 30. **Cailan Neville's** wicket-keeping, against our fearsome fast bowlers, was also very impressive. He shows no fear whatsoever. (PS. I hope your Dad has bought you new gloves for next season after they were totally destroyed by the bowlers in our last game!)

Max Hunt's batting (!!!) and bowling, opening in our last game against Acme and hitting a great 6 clipped off his legs. And excellent support from honourable 'seasoned' members of the Sunday side; Simon J., Simon H., Andrew B., Kevin N., Sam F. and Oddy.

Thank you also must to go to everyone who umpired, scored, put out and then collected in the boundary flags, benches, deck-chairs, and fire pit (sorry about the fire pit Chairman!). All round, it's been a great season, especially as at one point it looked like the season wouldn't happen at all.

Some other 'highlights'

Olly Hartnell telling his captain, as he gave me throw downs in



Cailan and Charlie put together a fine partnership against High Roding

the nets, **'Pete, you look shit in the nets...'** just seconds before a wicket fell and I wandered, bewildered, out to bat.

The constant **incisive sledging by Charlie Bennett**, sledging that was aimed well, but mainly targeted his Matching team mates, the upside being that his brutal put downs and friendly 'advice' was enough to put off the opposition from joining in as they thought he was doing an excellent job!!

Finally, who can forget **Kevin Neville's catches, bowling or 'encouragements' to family members** of which, I think he counts us all as members of his extended cricketing

family ... well at least until he gets his 'honesty' bar bill. (Kevin, instalments are accepted, Martin has the details).

I could go on...

I'm already looking forward to next season. Seeing the new outfield play like a snooker table. Seeing the younger players take over and push us 'seasoned' players further down the order and coming on as 7th change bowler with only a single wicket to take... Remember it's only six months until the first game of next season, in the meantime, see you in the nets in a mask.

Peter

New kit for 2021



Peter Liversidge and Riz have been working hard with a new kit supplier and we're delighted to reveal our new Gray-Nicholls match and training kit. The kit can soon be ordered direct from Gray-Nicholls via the link on our website.



COMING SOON...

**Order direct from
Gray-Nicholls via
the Club Shop link
on our website.**

Liversidge boys on tour

Cassie dreamt of a lovely family holiday in a remote place, well away from everyday life. A total rest. Where better than the Isle of Skye? What she didn't bargain for were the boys making the most of the glorious 'cricket' weather! Note the neatly mown pitch and make-shift sight screens and the boundary markers. Great use of natural resources. You can take Matching Green away from the boys, but you can't take away their cricket!



Please follow the club on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and NOW our YOUTUBE channel



Owais Shah pops in to say "hello" to the future of MGCC

After spending all July and August coaching our Development squad and seniors, ex-England and Essex cricketer Owais Shah popped over to The Green on one of the last Junior Friday evening sessions to spend some time with our younger members. We'd be lying to say many of them knew who he was, but the parents got a thrill meeting Owais on their children's behalf!

Was this the youngest XI to ever play for Matching Green in a senior match...?

The majority of our team to face Springfield away on Sunday 23rd August were in their teens, average age less than 21!

And the lads didn't let us down! After scoring a magnificent 282 for 6 in just 35 overs they restricted Springfield to 158 for 7 to win by 124 runs.

Star performers were Olly Hartnell – 100 retired not out, Sam Figg – 71 retired not out and Max Smith – 4 for 16 in 6 overs.



Back row: Ollie Hutley, Josh Hutley, Max Smith, Joe Scanlon, Lorcan Neville.
Front row: Olly Hartnell, Jack Porter, Sam Figg, Andrew Bennett, Charlie Bennett, Cailan Neville.

Robert Halfon MP visits our club

Robert Halfon, our local MP, has been a regular visitor to the club since he jointly opened our new pavilion in 2013. It's always a pleasure to see him back at the club. So when his PA emailed saying he'd like to pop along to see how we were doing, especially with the Covid-19 restrictions in place, it was a no-brainer to say yes.

As everyone knows, Robert not only represents Harlow in Parliament, but he is also a resident of the town, so it was rather apt that he chose our game against Potter Street & Church Langley to visit us.

The timing was also convenient as we'd just purchased two memorial benches (in memory of William Hartnell and Jeanette Bailes). Robert was delighted to perform a short dedication and the match was stopped especially for the occasion. Janet Hartnell along with family members and Juliet Scantlebury (Jeanette's daughter) were there to hear Robert's kind words as well as some witty

comments regarding William's dislike of Maggie Thatcher (!!)

and Juliet's choice of Sunday newspaper reading!

Despite not being able to sample our usual tea offerings due to the restrictions in place, Robert still gave us three hours of his busy schedule to speak to players and spectators. He also spent some time with Abid Khan, captain from Potter Street, and promised his help with their attempts to improve the playing facilities at their ground in Church Langley.

It also came to light during the afternoon that, as Robert wasn't able to stay for dinner during the pavilion opening celebrations, he missed out on receiving one of the

celebration mugs given to each guest. Martin was keen to put that right and presented him with two (unused!) mugs. Robert, in a later email, commented ***"Thank you for a wonderful afternoon and I'm enjoying tea from my new mug!"***



l/r Juliet Scantlebury, Robert Halfon MP, Simon Hartnell, Janet Hartnell, Olly Hartnell



Back row: William Cutlan-Smyth, Andrew Bennett (Umpire), Gajendra Gohel, Matty Taylor, Dan Sibley, Jonny Taylor, Graeme Bowerman, Charlie Bass. Front row: Simon Hartnell, Robert Halfon MP, Riz Akram (Captain), Olly Hartnell, Jack Porter (12th man), Jason Green.

The view from behind the stumps

by Andrew Bennett

Although I have umpired a number of juniors games in the past, my foray into 'proper' umpiring began, during lockdown, by taking the on-line ECB course and then being asked by Riz whether I would consider umpiring for the first team this season. I suspect that was more to do with giving Riz an excuse not to pick me for any games and hence avoiding the difficulty of explaining I am actually rubbish at playing!

The first game was against arch rivals, Nazeing Common, and early in the game I need to make my first decision. Riz misses one and after a loud appeal and long deliberation I give him out, caught behind. Riz 'gives me daggers' and walks off shaking his head. I think to myself "Oh I might have got that wrong" only to be told by Riz later that he did in fact glove it. Thanks Riz!

So what I have learnt during my first season as an umpire?

1 Some players don't know the rules. For example, having given a batsman "not-out" to a loud appeal for LBW I was asked why, considering that he wasn't playing a stroke. I explained that the ball wasn't hitting the stumps only to be questioned again with "but he didn't play a stroke". I think this particular bowler believed that if the batsman didn't play a stroke then all the ball had to do was hit the pad to be given out. Other things I have been told include:

- A 'no-ball' that goes through for four runs without hitting the bat isn't signalled as no-ball, byes and four runs. It is!
- The bowlers back foot landing outside of the return crease isn't a 'no-ball'. It is!

2 Some players have an inconsistent view of 'consistency'. Having signalled 'Dead-Ball' after their batsman played no-stroke to the ball hitting his pads, the opposition 'demanded' that I also signal 'Dead-Ball' when the ball hit the pads of a MGCC batsman, despite the batsman having a big 'swing and a miss'. "But you're not being consistent" claimed the bowler. I tried in vain to explain the difference!

3 Dialogue with the players helps. Most, but not all bowlers, like to be told when they getting close to a 'front-foot' no-ball. I say most bowlers as there was one, nameless bowler who said in a frustrated tone "stop talking to me. If I overstep just call it". Which I did next ball as he sent the middle stump cartwheeling! Asking the batsman whether he hit it also helps with leg-bye decisions, although there are some batsmen who claim to have 'middled' everything unless, of course, it was an edge to the keeper!

4 Batsmen and bowlers have a view regarding LBW decisions but the person in the absolutely best position to make a decision is the non-strikers end umpire.

The non-striking batsman has a good view but also isn't in-line with the stumps. So, as a batsman/bowler, you might believe that it pitched 'outside leg' but I reckon I have a better view than you. I would reiterate this to the nameless bowler who bowled, tripped in his follow through, did a forward roll and still appealed for LBW.

5 Standing for 6 hours is actually physically demanding, particularly for somebody who has spent the majority of their life behind a desk and, especially if umpiring 'both ends', is mentally taxing. I confess there has been more than one occasion this season where I thought "blimey I am glad there was no appeal that time" as I had total zoned out and had no idea what had happened!

6 The vast majority of players, despite getting quite emotional in the heat of the moment, are decent chaps. More than once I have been given an earful or been on the receiving end of a sarcastic comment from a bowler, only for him to apologise at the end of the over. The plonker from High Roding who, when being given out LBW (by one of his team not me I hasten to add), claimed that he had 'middled' it and demanded that we rescind the appeal before storming off, claiming we were "accusing him of lying" and we were 'cheating *****', spouting a further torrent of abuse before launching his pad and bat into orbit, cannot be categorised as a 'decent chap' by any means.

7 Lordy, in his mind at least, when batting, is never out and, when bowling, every ball hitting the pads is 'plumb'.

I must say it has been a thoroughly enjoyable experience and, it definitely enables you to be totally involved in the game without playing. You get a great perspective for the game and you see the battle between bat and ball close up. I know spectators or players may think they see what is going on but there is nobody better positioned to see this than the umpires, especially the non-strikers end umpire.

So if you feel you got the rough end of any of my decisions this summer I apologise but can assure you it wasn't personal, even if you do support Arsenal. During the winter I will be syringing my ears and exercising my eyes ready for a, hopefully, longer season next year.



Welcome Salim!



We are absolutely delighted to welcome the vastly experienced cricket coach Salim Akbar to our club.

Salim hails from Gujranwala in Pakistan where cricket is the second religion (first for many!). Before moving to England, Salim represented Pakistan under 19s amongst such future stars as Shoaib Akhtar and Younus Khan! Sadly that's as far as he got representing his country and when he moved to England, club cricket in Essex quickly came calling.

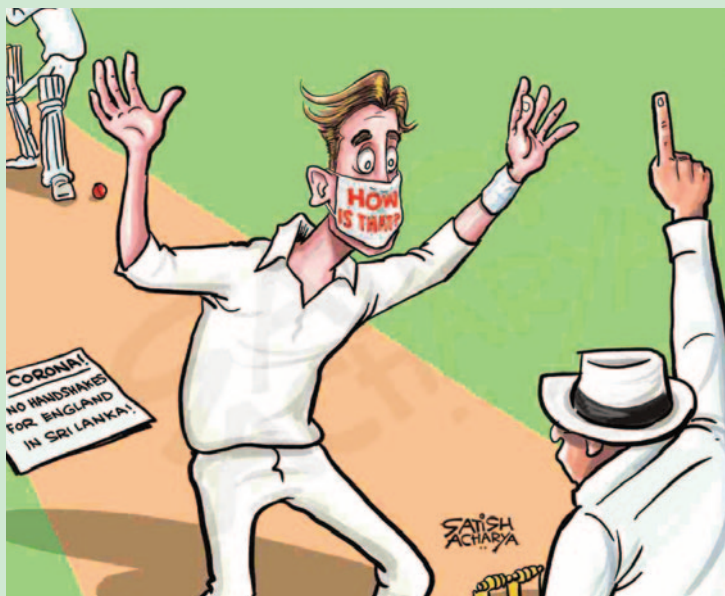
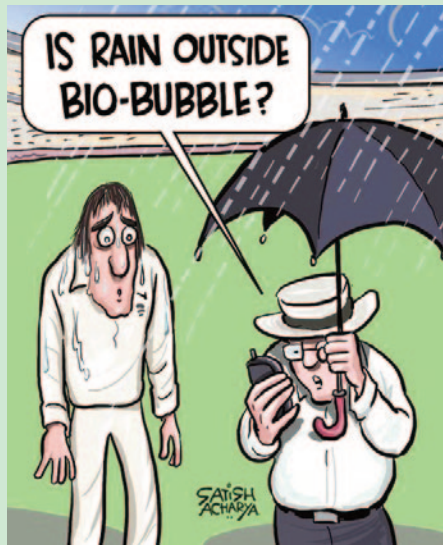
Salim has since been part of the Essex club cricket scene having played for Essex League clubs South Woodford, Loughton and Ilford. He now runs his own cricket academy, 'Sharks Cricket Academy' where the main focus is helping improve club cricketers. The Academy provides 1-2-1 coaching, video analysis and fitness and strengthening classes.

Salim has already introduced many new ideas to the training at the club. Combined with video analysis our 1st XI squad have benefitted immensely from Salim's knowledge. He will now concentrate on heading our winter training and net sessions at HECC Cricket.

Salim has also produced the brilliant promotional video which we've uploaded to our very own YouTube channel. We would highly recommend you take a look!!



Covid banter



C. Bass returns for the summer



It was great to see Charlie back at the club this season. Having been away for a few years on his private yacht travels, Charlie slotted straight back into the 1st XI and never looked like he'd been away!

Whilst back in England, Charlie took

to his studies and was delighted to secure a new job as a Ship's Bosun (evidently that means promotion!!). Good luck Charlie on your new adventure... and PLEASE don't continue to post Instagram images from exotic places all round the world!!!

Charlie left a lovely message to everyone when he once again departed our shores ...

“Good afternoon guys! Apologies I wasn't able to make it up to the game yesterday. Unfortunately I had to sort my life out before I left. 😊

I would like to say a BIG thank you to EVERYONE that has made it an absolute pleasure to play this season. With such hard and difficult times it's been a true testament to everyone's character who has been involved in the club this year and we made it work 🙌. Right from the start of the season kicking off with the Ploughboys, seeing people on the green with picnics (in their bubbles) enjoying a game of cricket with a nice refreshing beverage. We were able to keep it running through the season and the enthusiasm to make the club a real social environment for anyone to come and be a part of was fantastic. A place where people want to come and play cricket. Awesome!

Seeing new faces at the club, new supporters and seeing us push the youngsters through and making debuts into the 1st team has been bloody brilliant! Charlie taking his first 1st team wicket, Olly's superb form with the bat (yes all the throw downs have paid off 😊). Will showing us how it's done with the bat and gloves, Jack making his first

appearance (Go to bed Jack!) and putting his body on the line, showing some of the oldies how it's done and George for being the loudest person on the green with your encouragement. This is to name a few but, youngsters it's been refreshing and I've loved playing with you guys. 🙌

Andrew thank you for taking the umpiring mantle. It has been greatly appreciated. It's taken pressure off us and we have been able to concentrate on the cricket. 🙌

Massive, massive thank must go to skip, Riz you have lead from the front and it's been a pleasure 🙌. Undefeated in the league!! A great way to start the new league and we have shown how competitive teams will have to get to beat us. You have brought a real buzz to the club, the standard was set with the training and there has been a purpose to it. We have all loved it and I think we can all say we have taking things away from every session. Keep doing what your doing! 🙌

Unfortunately we haven't got over the line in a few games ... but I hope we can say we have learnt from them, it has made us stronger and we can go again next year and stake a bloody good claim to being the best bloody cricket club in all the land. 🙌

Behind the scenes Martin thank you for your efforts organising fixtures and the scoring 🙌. Jeffers for organising Sunday teams. Richard for your efforts helping us set up before games and the breakie before the final 🙌 (sorry about the footy result yesterday 😊) Juliet thank you for your efforts with the club keeping us messy buggers tidy, Sara, Louise and Vanessa for feeding us cake and scones towards the end 🙌 and all your support. 🙌

And we can't forget Leamon and Lordy without them we would not have a ground to play on. Thank you 🙌. Wickets have been great this year. We have been able to show we can score 300+ and skittle sides. I will one day learn to get forward!

Right that's enough waffling from me. Didn't realise this would be this long 🙌 I'm not sure when I will be back to play as I will be playing ships somewhere, but I will be following always. Thank you guys it's been a pleasure.

Bass out!
Peace 🙌



An A-Z of village cricket

Sometimes the jargon of cricket can be quite overwhelming for anyone new to the game. So we've put together a little village cricket dictionary to help the uninitiated get to grips with the language of the not-so-beautiful game.

Agricultural

Ugly but effective. Generally, it's when the batsman swings at a ball outside off stump and hacks it over the legside with 'all the grace of a reversing dump truck'. Not one for the purists.

Badger

Lives and breathes cricket. Wakes up every morning and checks his Play-Cricket average... it's still 10.21.

Cat

The old bloke in the team who still gets a run out every week. Every time the ball approaches he pounces on it and underarms it back to the gloves (see keeper).

Down-the-throat

The ball loops up from an ill-advised lofted drive and it's a simple catch at mid-off. Straight down the fielder's throat... still manages to drop it though.

Eleven

Number of players you have on a Friday night for your 1pm game on Saturday. Eight is the number you have on Saturday morning when one is hungover, one has to look after the kids and the other has no transport to the game. Anyone that's skippered knows about this one!

Fishing

'Wait for the bad ball.' The non-striker says trying to calm your nerves as you've viciously hit out at the last three balls on a good length outside off. You've no longer got a bat in your hands but a rod, you're fishing for the ball.

Gun

Best player on the pitch. He's Barry's best-mate's son who's just in town for the weekend, used to play for Gloucestershire U14s, bats, bowls, can keep if you need him to as well, played a season of Grade Cricket too. Unfortunately your skipper fancies himself today so gives him 5 overs to bat at the end and only bowls him 3rd change.



Howzat!

The correct way to appeal for an LBW or catch behind. Often gargled by the alcoholic at 2nd slip becoming any sort of exclamation if the ball passes the outside of the bat. The Umpire gives it not out.

Inches

Fresh from being hit back over his head for 6, the next ball is generously left well outside the stumps by their best (see Gun) bat. The bowler howls and cries 'INCHES'. Clearly a man who has a better understanding of metric rather than imperial.

Jaffa

Also known as: 'Rip-snorter', 'Bamboozeler' or 'Corker'. A ball that is completely unplayable; swings in, then out, fizzes, dips, seams and turns the wrong way. At least that's what your number 8 says as he gets another single figure score.

Keeper

Arguably the most under-valued member of the team. Wicketkeepers are constantly involved in the game, but their hard work often goes unnoticed. However, one mistake and everyone knows about it.

Loosener

The first ball of your opening bowler's spell. It flies fast, wide and to the boundary. 'Sorry mate... loosener!' He shouts to the Captain. Goes on to bowl another 3 in the over.

Minefield

The pitch has been prepared by the only man in the club willing to do it. Mad Phil. No one knows what he does for a job but he's definitely not a groundsman. A par score on the ground is 85 and hopefully someone doesn't fall into a badger set.

Nibble

Has multiple meanings...

1. The pitch is doing a bit, slight movement away from the military medium second change, movement he hasn't seen since 2006.

2. You've been trying to get in the batsman's head the whole innings, a little comment here and there, finally a little 'shut up' under his breath. He may be winning the war but you've won the battle.



Unplayable

The moon ball. Looks like it's there to be hit. You miss. You're bowled.

Village

The lowest form of the game. Missed catches, bad throws, dodgy umpiring decisions, stupid shots. Wouldn't change it for the world.

Offie

Where the captain goes during tea to grab some fags and a can of Stella after you've been bowled out for under 100 again.

Pies

You have your 5 bowling options. Perfect. Until your opening bowler injures himself fielding on the boundary and you need 3 overs from someone. You turn, begrudgingly to the pie chucker. Usually only bowls during inter-club games where he gets smashed all over the park. Exhale... let's get through this, everyone out on the boundary.

Quality

A sight seldom seen in village cricket and so is often incorrectly used to describe a leave or a long barrier.

Ringer

Comes in two forms. The Gun (as mentioned earlier) and the Novice. The Gun as we've previously mentioned can win you the game single-handedly. The Novice can lose it. Hasn't played since school and only plays because his mate begged him as 'it'll be a good laugh before the pub'.

Seed

Another form of the word jaffa but a seed (often used in a sentence as an 'absolute seed') takes wickets. Swings out and hits the top of off, wow!!

Trigger

The raising of the umpires finger to signal 'out'. Usually referring to the view that the decision was wrong. "I was triggered".

Wall

Your 60 year old opening batsman, this is how he's always played. Always good for 30 runs but my god does he bore you getting there. Time to send out an inexperienced umpire to trigger him and get the game going.

Yes-no-yes

The immortal words from the indecisive batsman as he hits it straight to gully but reckons he'll be safe to run to the non-strikers end. He leaves you stranded, staring at the stumps as a direct hit ends your day.

Zip

Mrs Brown has repeatedly told the captain that Noah won't be playing any cricket for the village until his exams are over. Everyone has heard great things about Noah, apparently he's in Essex's junior set up but no one has seen him bowl since he was 13. Finally he plays and bloody hell he puts some zip on the ball. Unfortunately he gets a girlfriend a week later and you never see him play again.



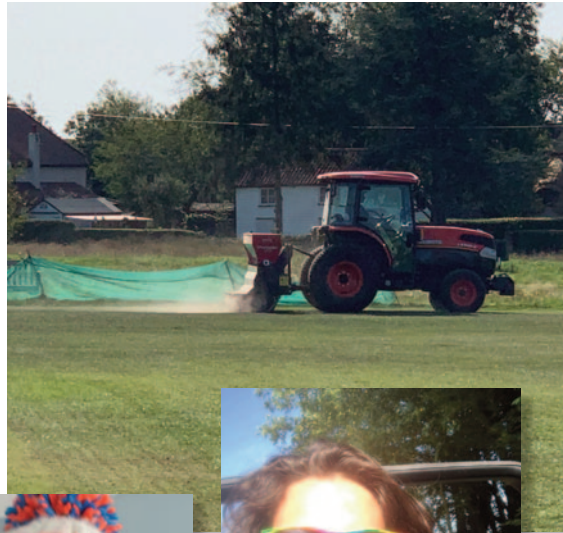
Matching Green CC - 2021 AGM

Friday 26th February 2021, 7.30pm at Matching Village Hall, Matching Tye*

*Subject to Covid restrictions being lifted. We will hold a remote meeting if restrictions are still in place.

More 2020 highlights





Club Contacts



President & Groundsman

Rob Leamon

07788 778351 rbleamon1@hotmail.co.uk

Chairman & Juniors Co-ordinator

Simon Hartnell

07711 422314 srhartnell@aol.com

Secretary and Newsletter Editor

Martin Figg

07540 636488 martin@matchinggreenncc.com

Treasurer

Martin Ormondroyd

07976 626918 martin@croucherneedham.com
47 DeBohun Court, Saffron Walden CB10 2BA

Saturday 1st XI Captain

Rizwan Akram

07904 278617 Riz@keymembersgroup.com

Social Secretary

Sara Hartnell

07703 275776 sahartnell@aol.com

House Chairman

Simon Jeffrey

07786 545399 simon@agecctv.co.uk

Club Coach

Sam Figg

07738 731609 f17ggy@icloud.com

Lead Club Welfare Officer

Steph Galley

07970 781313 stephgriffiths118@hotmail.com

Club Welfare Officers

Martin Figg & Rob Leamon

Committee members

Jack Scantlebury 07790 761546

Jason Green 07725 630088

Social media. **Max Hunt** 07532 321444

Our whole club is run by volunteers. If you can offer us any help, we'd be delighted to hear from you. It may be connected to what you do for work or you may be retired and have some time on your hands. You may have a passion for umpiring or scoring and there's always plenty to do in and around the club.

We never say no to volunteers!

MGCC WhatsApp groups

We have a number of WhatsApp groups so that members can keep in touch. If you like to be more informed and join a group please let us know.

MGCC Social Media



Follow us today!

MGCC Corporate partners



J KENNEY SERVICES
LANDSCAPE & FORESTRY CONTRACTOR



CAMBRIDGE LAKES

If you've enjoying reading this newsletter we simply ask you to do two things.

1. Pass the newsletter on to a friend or colleague for them to read.
2. If you are not already a member of our community club, please join!
You can email any of the contacts above for details. Social membership is just a minimum donation of £10 per year.

