

THATCHAM TOWN CC – CRICKET REPORT 2023

SUMMARY

Preparation for the 2023 season began with a full program of winter nets at Newbury College which were well attended.

The club were due to host the Marlborough Cup match between Berkshire 1st XI and Wiltshire but unfortunately bad weather in the lead up to the start of the season meant it was not possible to prepare a suitable pitch.

The club raised funds for the Livestream project and acquired the camera kit over the winter and (despite a minor setback due to storm damage to the sightscreen) all home league games were livestreamed via the club's YouTube channel. Highlights were available within 30 minutes of the end of the match and were screen in the club after the game.

Pradeep Banunugama was appointed 1st XI coach but disappointingly, the organized sessions were not well attended during the summer. By contrast, the 3rd XI net sessions organized by Satheesh Krishnan were well attended by the core squad.

Overall, the "club spirit" was strong throughout the summer, with the 3rd XI returning to the club on Saturdays and the bar was usually buzzing, with all enjoying watching the highlights of the home game and all teams socializing together reliving the matches.

Progression of the club's younger players into senior cricket continues with representation and important contributions coming from the juniors across all 3 teams and in particular the performance of Bobby Brown was outstanding. The second season of Sunday cricket in the Berkshire Blast proved more challenging as we struggled with availability and other clubs focused less on the development aspect.

Friday night Junior training was well attended again – thanks to Mickey Stone and his team for running a great BBQ throughout the summer – it really makes a massive difference to the success of Friday nights.

1st XI Highlights

Thames Valley Cricket League Division 4a on Wednesday October 18, 2023

	Team	P	W (T)	W (O)	D	T	L	A/C	F (+)	F (-)	Bat	Bowl	Pen	Ump Bonus	Points
1	Thatcham Town	18	5	5	1	1	3	3	0	0	17	20	0	13	321 ↕
2	Reading 2	18	3	6	2	0	4	3	0	0	29	22	0	12	291 ↕
3	Purley-on-Thames	18	4	4	0	0	7	3	0	0	29	27	0	15	280 ↕
4	Wokingham 3	18	1	7	4	0	3	3	0	0	43	22	0	14	279 ↕
5	White Waltham	18	1	4	6	1	2	4	0	0	56	26	0	14	252 ↗
6	Newbury	18	2	5	1	0	7	3	0	0	24	31	0	14	250 ↘
7	Finchampstead 3	18	3	2	3	0	7	3	0	0	47	38	0	15	240 ↘
8	Cove 2	18	3	2	2	0	8	3	0	0	38	46	0	14	238 ↕
9	Boyne Hill 2	18	1	1	3	0	10	3	0	0	70	48	0	14	200 ↕
10	Taplow	18	0	2	2	0	10	4	0	0	66	42	0	13	193 ↕

Following relegation in 2022, the 1st XI bounced back and return to Division 3a as Champions of Division 4a. The title was clinched on the penultimate week of the season, with the team putting together a very strong run in, unbeaten in the final 10 weeks of the season with 7 wins, a tie and 2 cancelled matches.

Bobby Brown topped the batting averages – scoring 596 runs at an average of 49.7 – scoring his maiden club century against Newbury as well as four 50s. Michael Klichowicz scored 421 runs at an average of 35.1 with useful contributions also coming from Jack Young scoring 363 runs at an average of 30.3 and George Wheeler scoring 339 runs at 28.3.

Paul Hemming topped the bowling averages with 18 wickets at an average of 13.7, including best bowling figures of 4-30 in the win over Finchampstead 3. Bobby Brown was the leading wicket taker with 28 wickets at an average of 14.6 with a best of 4-5. Chris Bird once again was a key member of the attack, taking 26 wickets at 19.9 and Mike Green led the new ball attack with an economy rate of 2.7 runs per over, taking 14 wickets at an average of 17.7.

It was hugely encouraging to see 5 under 19s feature in the 1st XI again this season – Odhinn and Oscar Moore, Olly Thorne, Harley Sheridan-Hawkins and of course Bobby Brown, in a break-out season leading both the batting and the bowling – a truly remarkable season for a 15 year-old.

2nd XI Highlights

Thames Valley Cricket League Division 5b on Wednesday October 18, 2023

	Team	P	W (T)	W (O)	D	T	L	A/C	F (+)	F (-)	Bat	Bowl	Pen	Ump Bonus	Points
1	Eversley 2	18	5	8	1	0	1	3	0	0	20	6	0	11	359 ↕
2	Binfield 2	18	2	6	3	0	4	3	0	0	42	27	0	12	284 ↕
3	Slough 4	18	3	5	1	0	5	4	0	0	24	19	0	10	266 ↕
4	Wargrave 3	18	3	3	2	0	6	4	0	0	43	23	0	4	239 ↑
5	Henley 3	18	3	4	0	0	8	3	0	0	25	26	0	3	238 ↑
6	Bracknell	18	4	2	2	0	5	5	0	0	18	33	0	4	234 ↓
7	Sonning 2	18	1	3	3	0	8	3	0	0	73	35	0	12	232 ↑
8	Thatcham Town 2	18	1	3	2	0	7	5	0	0	53	34	0	7	220 ↓
9	Yateley	18	1	3	2	0	8	4	0	0	49	34	0	2	204 ↕
10	Royal Ascot 2	18	2	0	2	0	10	4	0	0	65	45	0	4	192 ↕

A challenging season for the 2nd XI, losing 5 matches to rain which made it difficult to maintain any momentum. Despite finishing just above the relegation zone, it didn't feel at any stage that there was a chance that we would go down and realistically had we not lost 5 games to the weather we would probably have finished mid-table.

Chris Rochfort topped the batting averages for the second year running scoring 188 runs at an average of 37.6 with a top score of 91. Eddie Wylie was the leading run scorer with 254 runs at an average of 31.8. There were also centuries for Aran Ganesh and Simon Lewis.

Pradeep Yathiraja topped the bowling averages with 14 wickets at an average of 16.4, including a best of 5-53 against Wargrave 3. Oscar Reeves was the leading wicket taker with 16 wickets and Rhys Williams took 14 wickets and Aran Ganesh took 11 wickets.

Tommy Mather led the side well in his first year as captain. The squad was a blend of youth and experience with 6 players under 19 and 5 players over 50 representing the 2s over the season. It was also pleasing that when required to step up to the 1st XI, players were able to make the transition comfortably and contribute with either bat or ball.

3rd XI Highlights

Thames Valley Cricket League Division 8a on Wednesday October 18, 2023

Team	P	W (O)	T	L	A/C	F (+)	F (-)	Bat	Bowl	Pen	Ump Bonus	Points
1 Reading 3	18	13	0	2	3	0	0	10	7	0	0	324 ↕
2 Eversley 4	18	11	0	4	3	0	0	18	12	0	0	293 ↕
3 Cookham Dean 3	18	8	0	6	4	0	0	23	20	0	0	247 ↕
4 Royal Ascot 3	18	8	0	6	4	0	0	23	10	0	0	237 ↕
5 Fleet 2	18	7	0	8	3	0	0	30	30	0	0	235 ↗
6 Sonning 3	18	7	0	7	4	0	0	27	22	0	0	231 ↘
7 Theale & Tilehurst 3	18	6	0	8	4	0	0	36	26	0	0	222 ↕
8 Thatcham Town 3	18	6	0	8	4	0	0	27	29	0	0	216 ↕
9 Cove 3	18	4	0	10	4	0	0	30	43	0	2	191 ↕
10 Aldershot 3	18	2	0	13	3	0	0	54	48	0	2	169 ↕

For the third year running the 3rd XI secured Division 8a safety with a final Saturday win over Eversley 4. Credit goes to Satheesh Krishnan for leading the team to 4 wins in a row to finish the season and avoid relegation. As always, the 3rd XI is often impacted more than the other teams by variable availability and this season was no different with 41 players representing the 3rds over the course of the season.

Revanth Jonnagadia was the leading run scorer with 281 runs at an average of 25.6 – passing 50 twice with a highest score of 73 not out. Satheesh Krishnan topped the batting averages scoring 275 runs at 27.5. Will Harwood also made useful contributions scoring 233 runs at an average of 23.3.

Sam Dillaway topped the bowling averages with 18 wickets at an average of 11.9, including the incredible figures of 7 for 6 off 5.2 overs in the win over Sonning 3 which started the end of season winning streak. Babu Periyasami was the leading wicket-taker with 19 wickets at an average of 14.6 which added to his contribution with the bat of 179 runs and 7 catches add up to an excellent all-round performance. Rahul Mirchandani took 17 wickets at an average of 18.2 while Ryansh Anand made an impact with the ball once school was out, twice taking 3 wickets for few runs.

WEDNESDAY & SUNDAY CRICKET

DOWNS LEAGUE

POS	TEAM	P	w	l	c	a	lcn	wcn	t	Pen	NRR	Pts
1	Falkland CC, Berks - Midweek XI	10	9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1.66	28
2	East Woodhay CC - Woodhay Spartans	10	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.47	21
3	Yattendon & Frilsham CC - Midweek XI	10	4	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	-0.35	13
4	Thatcham Town CC - Midweek XI	10	4	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	-0.36	13
▼ 5	Kingston Bagpuize CC - Midweek XI	10	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	-0.24	9
▼ 6	Newbury CC - Midweek XI	10	1	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	-1.07	4

The Wednesday Midweek League team finished mid-table in Division 1 of the Downs League.

George Wheeler topped the batting averages with 233 runs at 43.6. Jack Young was the leading run scorer with 235 runs at an average of 39.2 at a strike rate of 157.0. Michael Klichowicz scored 105 in the win over Yattendon.

Rhys Williams was the leading wicket-taker with 8 wickets at an average of 26.9 with a best of 4-33. Otherwise the wickets were shared around with Bobby Bown the pick with 6 wickets at an average of 9.5 and an economy rate of 4.4.

BERKSHIRE SUNDAY CRICKET LEAGUE

POS	TEAM	P	w	l	c	a	lcn	wcn	t	Pen	Pts
1	Kidmore End CC	13	9	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	21
2	Falkland CC, Berks	13	8	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	19
3	Hurst CC	14	7	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	17
4	Wokingham CC	14	4	5	2	2	0	1	0	0	14
5	Theale and Tilehurst CC	12	5	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	12
6	Bracknell CC	13	2	8	1	0	0	2	0	0	9
7	Purley on Thames CC	14	3	5	2	1	3	0	0	0	3
8	Thatcham Town CC	13	1	8	1	0	2	1	0	0	1

The Sunday XI had a really difficult season winning only one match finishing bottom of the Berkshire Blast Sunday League.

Olly Thorne was top of the batting averages and the leading run scorer with 267 runs at a creditable average of 53.4 with a high score of 77 and 2 other 50s. Olly showed the value of using Sunday cricket for development as this form on Sundays translated into improved batting performances on a Saturday in the 2nd XI.

The leading wicket-taker was Sam Dillaway (for the second consecutive year) with 7 wickets at an average of 25.0 while Bobby Brown returned the best bowling figures of 5-15 against Theale & Tilehurst.

JUNIOR CRICKET

Numbers were pretty good throughout all age groups, but particularly in the Under 9s and Under 11s which were full to capacity.

Much fun was had across all the age groups and with the focus at the younger ages being very much on “development through participation” the win ratio was largely where I would expect it to be (at around 50%).

We have been able to provide “development through stretch” by identifying players who would benefit from playing in a higher age group. We were able to achieve this regularly across the age groups and it was pleasing to see that players were able to contribute at the higher level, and were then displaying much more confidence on returning to their own age group and able to improve their performance as a result.

The girls team continued to improve with competitive performances in the softball leagues at Under 13, with the increased coaching resources continuing to show improved outcomes.

We also ran an All Stars program which was fully subscribed and is continuing to feed players through into the under 9 age group.

Finally, we had a number of players involved in the county pathway both at full age-group level and within regional hubs. Particular mention should go to Oscar Moore who was selected for the Bunbury festival and also made his Berkshire 2nd

XI debut. Bobby Brown also performed well for Berkshire Under 16s. Both boys also had some opportunities with the Middlesex pathway.

THANK YOU

- **Coaches** – Eddie, Liam, Barty, and Chris Brown for their great work across the boys age groups. Olly Thorne, Lalit Chablani, Ravi Mohammed, Matt Taylor, Ben Denton-Powell and Andy Robinson for their help on Friday nights. Also to Olly Thorne for helping Eddie with All Stars. Finally, but by no means least to Kelvin Prescott and the Blatchleys for the brilliant work with the growing girls squad. Kelvin also stepped in to help out with the Under 15s on a number of occasions.
- **Chris Brown & the Grounds Team** – as ever brilliantly led by Andy Stephenson, continuing to provide good match and practice facilities for the seniors and juniors and to Hoggie for keeping the outfield nice and short.
- **Skippers** – Jack Young, Tommy Mather, Satheesh Krishnan, Rhys Williams and Olly Thorne for their leadership and commitment throughout the season.
- **Chris Bird** – for organizing and running the bar again throughout the summer (despite having resigned).
- **Umpires** – particularly Hugh Wylie, Iain Cottingham and Kevin Lavender.
- **Livestream** – Olly Thorne was a superstar in supporting the livestream, often turning up early to set up the camera and laptop before heading off to play away. After the game he would also return to help dismantle the kit and create the highlights package for viewing in the clubhouse. Olly also did some great work with our YouTube channel.
- **Social Media** – Ben Denton-Powell for his work keeping our subscribers up to date with news through our various social media channels.
- **Scorers** – particularly Peter Thorne for scoring for the 2nd XI and on Sundays.
- **Parents** – for ferrying their children to and from cricket matches and practice and especially to those who volunteered to help with scoring, collecting match fees etc.