



## Chairman's Report on the 2020 Season

### Introduction

If there was ever proof that you don't know what you've got until it's gone, it was the 2020 cricket season. Actually, the 2020 half season.

At last year's AGM when none of us had heard of Covid-19 or Coronavirus, we'd have laughed at the idea of a one way system around the pavilion, mocked suggestions of breaks in play to clean our hands and been appalled at the idea of not being allowed to play cricket until July. Yet all of this came to pass. It was a sad and strange feeling to walk around the Polo Fields on a mid-summer Saturday with no cricket taking place and the pavilion locked and bolted.

Fast forward to September 19<sup>th</sup>. It's hot, the sky is the brightest of blues, the fluffy clouds like a child's drawings and there's a carpet of acorns under the tree on the boundary. The 6 a side competition/President's Day is in full swing, there's cricket on both pitches, 150 people on the boundary, Georgie's serving beer and Dan, Stuart and Carlie are doing great business at the barbeque. People are smiling and enjoying the late summer festivities.

All's well at Hutton and we've survived the strangest of summers.

Actually, we've not just survived but flourished, winning three leagues, turning out up to 8 adult teams each weekend and continuing our youth development programme. We had a successful half-season when at one time it looked like we'd have no cricket at all.

### League Cricket

The normal Essex league structure was thrown out of the window and we played a nine game, limited overs programme across all five of our league teams. All divisions were named after Essex skippers.

Our new captain Alex Tredgett had a baptism of fire when the league placed our 1<sup>st</sup> XI in the premier, Gooch, division alongside Brentwood, Wanstead and Colchester. Our young team gave a good account of themselves but the win/lose format of the games was unforgiving and we lost two winnable fixtures to rain. We finished 9<sup>th</sup> of 10 teams just three points behind Shenfield.

We had more success in the league T20 competition where we reached the semi-final with wins over Billericay, Harold Wood and Old Brentwoods.

There were notable performances from Adam Holdgate who was top scorer with 271 runs at an average of 45 and a highest of 65. Adam Spooner also topped 200 runs with 213 at 27. Stephen Heywood was highest wicket taker with 9 at 33. Tom Debenham topped the averages with 8 at 26.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> team were in the division named after Hutton's own Paul Prichard and enjoyed the season winning all seven games played and finishing joint top of the league with Upminster. Danny Cocklin was hit by Covid and passed the captaincy onto James Southgate but still managed to take 17 wickets at an average of only 7 including 5 for 20 against Brentwood.



Lawrence Roots and James Southgate were highest scorers with 193 (ave 39) and 174 (ave 58) respectively.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> XI looked on course to win the Harmer division before being “ringed” by a Hornchurch opener. The team finished with 6 wins in 3<sup>rd</sup> place just 3 points from the top as Hornchurch had had 1 game fewer rained off. Henry Hodgson was our highest scorer with 223 at 32 including a century. Skipper Andy Bliss took 13 wickets at only 11 and Stuart Rasburn 10 at 17. Andy also took 4 at 4 in guest appearances for the 4<sup>th</sup> XI.

Clive Franklin stood aside from leading the 4<sup>th</sup> XI due to the virus and handed the reins to Ollie Grey in the Wilcox division which had only 8 teams. We finished with 3 wins in a commendable 4<sup>th</sup> place with Joe Hills leading the way with 222 runs at an average of 56. Chris Willoughby took 15 wickets at 13 including 5 for 21 against newcomers Goresbrook.

Both Andy Bliss and Clive Franklin are standing down as skippers so it's my pleasure to thank them for their stupendous work over the last years both on the field on Saturday and on Friday evening getting eleven players to play.

Alex Burton's first year as 5<sup>th</sup> XI skipper saw the side compete in the Pearce division where they finished 7<sup>th</sup> with 3 wins out of 7 completed games. The captain was second highest scorer with 146 at 21 behind Dan Latham with the impressive 268 runs at 67.

Dan also took 12 wickets at 25 but was eclipsed by Ivan Minter' 18 wickets at 14 runs including 5 for 30 against Brentwood.

Conner Whetstone collected some silverware as skipper of the Sunday XI who won the Central Division of the Sunday Essex Sunday League. He also made the club's highest score of the season with 172 against Harold Wood.

### **Women's Cricket**

We had a highly successful season in the Sunday 40 over league where we finished top after a nail-biting final day win over Colchester. This meant that joint captains Amy Hills and Georgie Manek collected our first ever women's league trophy. Both Amy (117 v Wanstead) and Erica Hobson (108 v Colchester) scored centuries and both passed 1,000 runs for the club.

In the League, as well as finishing top with the scores you mention, Hutton also took 5 of the top ten bowling places including 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Erica has been selected for Essex Women .

### **Other Adult Cricket**

Once the lockdown was over we were able to host the MCC in our biannual fixture. There was a tremendous 40 over game where we chased 246 runs with an unbeaten 7<sup>th</sup> stand between Connor Whetstone (50\*) and Alex Tredgett (62\*) getting us to just 2 runs short of victory. In the MCC innings Bill Prideaux took 4-36 in his 8 overs.

In August we took part in the memorial game in honour of Sam Pountney at Brentwood CC. A competitive game in bright sunshine was a fitting tribute to Sam and look forward to the will return fixture at Hutton in 2021.



In 2021 Joe Parry will again be part of the Kent CCC academy having played for Kent 2<sup>nd</sup> XI this year.

## **Youth Cricket**

Thanks to our team of coaches lead by Darren Tredgett & Cath Dalton, with managers, parents and helpers we were eventually able to run a range of youth coaching for boys and girls ranging from our All Stars programme all the way through to Under 19s. (A special thank you to Cam Tredgett for his sterling work on All Stars). We had record numbers for the women and girls' this season - over 60 active participants.

You can see the success of the pathway by the number of youth players who have played at 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI level this year.

It was these youngsters who missed out most from the curtailment of the season so we hope we will be able to get back to somewhere like normal in 2021. We'll be looking to enhance the coaching we offer for those with the ability and desire to go on to the top teams whilst at the same time continuing to offer social and recreational cricket to the youngsters.

## **Finance**

Because of the lockdown our finances look very different this year as you will see from the financial report. Our turnover is down by £20,000 from 2019. Due to prudent financial management we are showing a trading surplus of around £5,900 but this is on the back of emergency grants from Brentwood Council and the ECB totalling £13,000.

We also benefitted from the generous support of our sponsors Blueprint Properties and Neo. I would like to thank them on the club's behalf for choosing to stick with us when they could easily have put their sponsorship on hold.

We will continue to manage our reserves to ensure that we can ride out any further financial pressures in 2021. Towards this end we propose to keep subscription levels for 2021 at the levels originally put forward for 2020. Having said that, the committee has agreed that any member who paid their membership in full for 2020, if they so wished, would be entitled to claim a proportionate reduction in their 2021 membership fees. We will also look sympathetically at any individual requests for financial help in regards to subscriptions.

## **Facilities**

Our thanks go to our two groundsmen Jamie Foyster and Graham Bonney for their help and flexibility in overcoming the pandemic problems. It must have been frustrating to see the squares lying idle – not to mention the effects on their businesses.

Over the winter we will be carrying out some drainage work on the outfield and squares and hope to invest in equipment to allow us to better manage the pitch surrounds.

We have renewed our subscription to the Essex Playing Field Association so we will enter both the Polo Fields and Mountnessing in the cricket section of the Best Kept Playing Field.



## **Social Bar and Catering**

Sadly, Covid had to cancel the regular quiz and race nights as well as the youth presentations and annual dinner. However, our bar and social staff worked wonders to allow us to maximise the catering and social activities at the club within the constraints of the pandemic regulations. We held a modified, outdoor karaoke and some on-line fund-raising events. We were also able to simply enjoy each other's company at the club thanks to some fine weather for after match drinks – It's what we missed when it was taken from us.

The team also reached out to housebound members during the height of the lockdown by delivering cricket teas to members' homes and made contributions to local charities.

Thankfully, we were successfully able to stage our end of season 6 a side tournament in aid of the Orchid Charity. This year it was combined with President's Day to celebrate all that is good about Hutton. As ever, thanks go to Nichola and David Parry for staging the event.

## **In Memoriam**

Sadly, over the past year we have lost a number of members of the Hutton family.

- Lorraine Taylor
- Eileen Pont
- Brian Anfield
- Richard Pryke
- Neil Hammond
- David Gilder

We remember them with fondness and affection.

## **Thanks and Appreciation**

It has been a very strange year at Hutton as for everyone. As we planned for the resumption of cricket in July, we were not sure if people would return or may have found other things to do or decided not to risk taking part. It was so gratifying that players and social members came out in force to help us get back to normal.

Life in lockdown was not easy for many people but I know from several comments that cricket at Hutton has provided a sense of normality, a place to walk, to sit and meet friends or simply a safe space in the open air. One way or another we've kept going and gained strength from adversity.

All this is thanks to each and every member of the club who has turned out to play, to coach, to work in the kitchen or behind the bar, to mend the fences, sanitise equipment or simply to pay their subscriptions. The pandemic has brought out the best in the club and its members.

My thanks on behalf of the club to each and every one of you.

We look forward to returning to normal in 2021.

Jim Lynch  
Chairman

November 2020

