

# Review of the 2010 Season

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## 1st XI

After promotion last season, the first XI consolidated with a comfortable mid table finish and also got in on the silverware with a second triumph in the Bertie Joel Cup. The season saw new skipper John Walter taking over from Dave Wright after seven seasons where he steered the ship, but not himself into a healthy state. It was promising that the services of all the promotion winning side were retained with Elliot Richter making a lengthy return from Sydney for a second season.

The new 50/50 format started promisingly with 3 wins from 3 as all the bowlers showed up early, led by the miserly off breaks of Arshad Ali. Weber, Richter and Sarwar made early telling contributions with the bat and we were optimistic of a strong showing. However fairly conclusive defeats to Ardleigh Green and South Woodford soon reined in expectations and despite going unbeaten in 8 timed games we didn't win too many of what were some close and competitive affairs.

Successive games where scores were tied (vs. Orsett and Hadleigh) frayed the nerves, but neither was won. A run fest in the Hadleigh game left our opposition nine down and level at 351, this after a typically brisk 156 from Ali. The double was done over neighbours Hutton which is always nice. After a convincing win on the arctic opening day of the season we edged home in a tense run chase in the return derby. Ollie Bailey showed an unflappable temperament and talent in a last wicket stand with the equally unflappable but considerably less talented ex-skipper. It's hoped that the experience gained in these tight games, particularly for the number of promising young players, should stand us in good stead for 2011.

The Bertie Joel Cup run saw us progress to the final with wins over South Woodford, Woodford Wells and Wycombe House. Richter provided an exhibition at Wells with a superb unbeaten 175, allied to a brutal cameo from Langford (51 off 24 balls) and the bowling was tight throughout, led by the Salisbury brothers and some suffocating slow bowling. The final saw us return to Ealing CC where we had won the trophy previously 14 years ago and despite posting a solid total it looked like Waltham would cruise to victory, but they were tied up by the slowmen, led by Lugg (3-19) and Wright (3-36) to provide a fitting finale to John Weber's SCC career. We sadly bid farewell to Webs after 10 years fantastic service on and off the field. His runs, wickets, knowledge of the game, round buying and relentless banter will be sorely missed as he returns to Australia. The hole in the middle order will hopefully be filled by youngsters Ollie Ekers and Charlie Sutherland as they aim to step up on the massive potential they have already shown.

Priorities for 2011 include making significant game winning scores with the bat from 1-7, continued high standards in the field and disciplined bowling when then things aren't necessarily going smoothly.

## 2nd XI

In his last year as captain, PG Rider (George) achieved his ambition of a Premier League title to go with 3 other titles and 4 cup winning teams from his younger incarnation as first eleven skipper.

This year's model, aided by a particularly strong squad of players put together a remarkable 15 wins including every away game to accumulate a fantastic 310 point haul. Even on an off day we still managed to dig in for the win. Particularly when reeling at 30-4 at Wanstead or being skittled for 120 at Chingford yet still managing to get home by bowling both out for double figure scores.

Individually player of the year was the Ronseal sponsored Lee Deller who belied his years in all facets of the game. Of the other bowlers, veteran Topy Hayes nibbled and reversed his way to his usual respectable haul and Dan Langford topped the wicket taking charts with 42 wickets, including a very flattering 9-31 at Clayhall.

With the bat, Mad Dog Allen, Tom Austin and Andy Ross all made big hundreds and Bobby Wickes performed all round, making solid contributions with bat, ball, tea plate and his toy throwing.

The over excitable heartbeat of the side was the ever shy and retiring gloveman Garry Sapsford, who showed remarkable dexterity for an ageing, receding whippet. He also showed with his memorable dogged not out in a tight finish at Brentwood that he was the man for a crisis. Mind you dollying the winning runs straight through covers hand at chest height wasn't the ideal finish.

All in all a great team performance with contributions from many others, although rarely from the outgoing skipper who was mostly content to perform a marshalling role and then soak up the adulation from whoever ran into him at the bar.

## 3rd XI

Following the successful few years the 3rd XI enjoyed under out going skipper Gary Sapsford, a new captain (Matt Barrett) took over the reins hoping to emulate his predecessor and who knows, go one better! Looking at the fixture card a tough start was on the cards with opening games against Wanstead, Upminster, Brentwood and South Woodford; following a draw in the first game, a win and two successive draws followed with notable contributions with the bat from Steve Roach and Larry Tredget (which became a common theme for the season) and with the ball Joe 'Sticks' Hedden (13 wickets in 3 games) and Jimmy Lyons.

And so to our first game against current champions Chelmsford, and with a confidence buzzing through the squad an easy victory was secured chasing down 228 with 3 overs spare; this was the second game in Adam 'Nibsy' Winders' debut season for the club and what a find he turned out to be. Two more wins followed against Wells and South Woodford and then wheels came off against West Essex

where over confidence was our downfall being bowled out for 145 chasing a very achievable 169.

July saw 17 players head to Barbados with Shenfield School and a tough month was expected, so a return of 3 wins and 2 draws was a fantastic achievement; and a massive thanks has to be said to Cheesy Watts, Tappers, John Wale and Alex Saich for rolling back the years and all making notable contributions in those games (I won't mention your last game against Wanstead Tappers, but it didn't even pitch man!).

Into August and our second game against Chelmsford, who were left reeling after a devastating opening spell from Nibsy and Mike Naylor saw them rolled for 120; a slight wobble in the chase was rescued by a solid 50 from Larry Tredget and another deserved victory. With four games left we were top and the title looked a real possibility, and then the V festival rolled into Essex and the Emo's and grungers disappeared to sit in a field for the weekend. This coincided with only our 2nd negative result of the season, a losing draw at GP&R which in the end sealed our fate. We needed 40 points from our last 2 games, so losing the toss and being asked to bowl against West Essex didn't help, nevertheless we ran home easy winners and our fate was in the hands of 2 coin tosses on the final weekend of the season. We won ours and batted first, a brilliant century from Roachie help set a total that Harold Wood were unable to reach.

Unfortunately things didn't go our way at Wanstead, and Chelmsford took the title with us both finishing level on points only losing the league on games won. There were many match winning performances with the bat and ball, I won't mention individuals but a huge thank you to all the players who made themselves available this year, the attitude and dedication you showed got us so close; roll on next year and the title we will again work hard to win.

## 4th XI

For the 4th XI it was a new era as they entered into the league for the first time. Having played friendly matches for the previous two seasons, joining the league was a big step and one that was looked forward to with great anticipation. The captain for the first half of the season was Luke Neal, however when a job opportunity arose in Canada the captaincy was taken over by Oliver Ives for the remainder of the season, who led from the front, ending up with twice as many wickets as anyone else. There were many ups and downs and some very close matches, none more so than against Old Southendians. With a seemingly impossible target of around 200 left from 20 overs a draw looked on the cards had it not been for a superb partnership between Luke Neal (121 not out) and Rory Williams (73 not out) meant we won with an over to spare. Despite being a superb outfit throughout the year and only losing one game out of 18, we narrowly missed out on promotion to Belhus, who finished top by only 3 points.

The season got off to a disappointing start when the first match at Old Southendians was abandoned after just 10 balls due to rain. However with every game that was played the team grew in confidence, which was especially pleasing

to see as the average age rarely topped 18. It was also great to see that it was often the younger players who had stand-out performances.

One player of note, who was exceptional throughout the season, especially considering he is only 14, was George Pratt. Not only did he impress the bat, but also with the ball often being the man to break a long standing partnership. Another young player of note was Oliver Castell who impressed with his energetic attitude towards games, most probably coming from his even more energetic father, David. Oliver impressed with the ball during the season and would often pick up wickets through deceptive pace and bounce.

As much as the youngsters were responsible for a successful first season, a number of the senior players shone as well. Luke Neal, was by far the most impressive batsmen of the season. Batting at five. he did more than his fair share of run scoring to help post or chase down a good total. In just six innings he amassed a total of 377 runs, ending not out on four of those occasions. For Luke's superb batting effort he received 4th XI batsmen of the season.

Another senior player who impressed for Shenfield was Australian overseas Brendan 'Jonty' Rhodes. Brendan joined the side 3 games into the season and had an immediate impact both on and off the field and was a great character to have around. Despite not being the most agile player Brendan was almost always superb in the field, especially when fielding in close. He amassed 326 runs in 11 innings including two fifties and an average in excess of 40. (Apologies to the big man if the stats aren't correct to several decimal points). A font of stats he was a real clubman, scoring for the 1sts whenever required in cup games and giving anyone who needed to know, the exact league permutations throughout the seasons run in.

Last, but by no means least, is the man they call the ginger prince, Steven Cunnew. Steven occupied 1st, and to be fair, 2nd slip for the majority of the season and again despite not being the most agile fielder he would more often than not pull out a blinding catch to help heap pressure on the opponents. Steven also provided great support in the middle order. As well as this he was also an integral part of the bowling attack and picked up an impressive 11 wickets from 45 overs. Steven would have been awarded fielder of the season had he not informed the captain he didn't want the award.

Overall the 4th XI enjoyed a very successful first season in the league and despite just missing out on promotion, there are many great points we can take into next season to ensure that we continue to improve and become and successful as possible.

[SNEL team and player statistics](#) are available on the Play-Cricket website.

## Colts Section

The Colts section once again is an immense source of pride to the club, with in 2010, a total of 217 paid up members being coached, playing and generally enjoying cricket. Head Coach Gareth Fisher, ably assisted by numerous internal and external level 2 coaches as well as level 1 coaching assistants continued to develop the squads with a notable improvement in ability of individuals and depth of playing strength. Sadly I have to repeat once more that one of the biggest headaches in youth cricket remains the actions of some clubs, who commit to the district league age groups, but who then singularly fail to fulfil their obligations for a variety of insignificant reasons.

The numerous teams competed well in competitions at a range of age groups, fielding sides in all available leagues and cups. The u16 side made it to the Matchplay Semi-Final for the first time, but although they will feel disappointed with their performance on that day, they should be congratulated on a super achievement. All the other age group sides were extremely competitive winning no less than four of the six available league competitions, no mean feat when you consider how many clubs there are in our district with rich pedigree. The u15 and u13 cup runs were unsuccessful as can often be the case in one off cup formats.

All the sides continue to build themselves something of a reputation by not only playing their full allocation of league fixtures, but by also playing as many friendlies as possible involving all the boys in the age group, playing in exactly the right spirit. The older boys were often providing manpower for the senior sides, a factor that will continue to aid the development of the club's successful 4th X1 and the establishment of a 5th X1 in the season ahead. The u9s were one of the leading sides in the now popular tournament scene, and the eager u7s will be well prepared to continue to support this initiative in 2011.

Pitch availability remains a pressing issue and although the club were unable to persuade the local authority to accede to their request for increased usage of our second square, we remain hopeful of a change to their view in the future. The social support from everyone involved with the Colts remains a massive plus for the club, on match days, training nights and at functions, long may it continue.