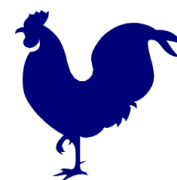


Review of the 2015 Season



1st XI

After relegation from the Premier League in 2014, the 1st team were looking to bounce straight back in the summer of 2015. After losing the opening batting pair of last year, Simon Keen returning to his greenhouse in Sydney and Tom Philippe to the Brentwood 2nd team, Jamie Walton and Ollie Ekers again formed an opening partnership which almost saw them clinch the Premier League title in 2013. With the addition of imposing South African all-rounder Byron Wyngard and a crop of youngsters coming through the ranks, optimism was high around the real SCG.



Back Row: J Kliber (Capt), G Sapsford, R Abson-Bennett, B Wyngard, J Walton, M Salisbury
Front Row: S Sarwar, T Ballington, H Mahmood, T Austin, O Ekers

The start of the season did not go to plan, drawing the first 4 games, having the opposition 9 down in two of them and to add to the frustration losing the bowling services of Wyngard due to a back spasm in a cup match (too much skypping with Tracey eh my bru). Skipper Jack Kliber also picked up a hand injury which plagued him throughout the season.

Hainault and Clayhall away saw the first league win of the season, largely thanks to an electric opening spell from Matthew Salisbury and backed up by the top order who all contributed to knocking off the required 238 with 4 wickets remaining. The team however, were now playing catch up on the league leaders. The victory was followed by 4 wins on the bounce over local rivals Hutton, Southend on Sea, Hadleigh and Thundersley and Woodford Wells, during which

Arshad Ali excelled with the ball, his metronomic line and length resulted in him being the first league bowler to 25 wickets. With the bat, Ollie Ekers dominated from the front, racking up a string of big scores, Wyngard also brought up his maiden SCC century bludgeoning 134 against Woodford Wells. Begrudgingly, the highlight of these games was skipper Kliber's performance in the Southend on Sea game, not only did he set a new club record with Ekers for the 6th wicket after peeling off his maiden league ton, he also managed to hoodwink the umpires into setting the opposition an additional 40 runs in a rain affected game.

Despite the loss of key players towards the end of the season (Ali & Kliber) Shenfield continued their assault on promotion to the Premier League under the captaincy of Jamie Walton. Big wins again over Hutton, Hainault and title rivals Southend saw the 1st team close in on the second promotion spot they were chasing. The top order again impressed with the bat, big opening partnerships from Walton and Ekers set a platform for Wyngard and young Harris Mahmood who impressed with his free scoring and power hitting. Young Tom Ballington also showed a maturity beyond his years with his batting, bowling and fielding when called upon, and is sure to have a big future. The promotion push however, was still out of their hands and would be dependent on results elsewhere going their way.

Going into the last game of the season, Shenfield needed to win batting first against Woodford Wells to ensure maximum points and subsequent promotion. Declaring on 245-4 thanks to a sparkling century from Mahmood, they then bowled Wells out for 205 with 3 overs remaining, sparking jubilant scenes both on and off the field.

The team's strength in depth proved pivotal in this promotion season, as well as significant contributions from big players in important games. The 1st team have nothing to fear as they return to the Premier Division and the Shenfield boys will no doubt be making all the noise come May 2016.

2nd XI

The 2015 season for the 2nd XI proved to be very similar to that of 2014, a bit of a nightmare really. A side which on paper was pretty strong again failed to deliver on the park, only this year avoiding relegation proved to be a step too far. In a season where players were lost to the 1st XI for periods and many players were unavailable being away at university it proved difficult to get a settled side leading to only 2 wins, 2 draws and a tie in 18 games played.

Relegation aside there were some huge positives to take from the 2015 season. Haris Mahmood proved to be too good to play 2nd XI cricket, representing the 1st XI all season and Tom Ballington spent most of the season with him. Both lads took to 1st team cricket without so much as a blink and both will surely prove to be excellent additions to Jack Kliber's squad for 2016. The breakthrough of Rishi-Roy Mukherjee and the signing of Harsh Kumar will most certainly prove useful in the coming season.

Inconsistency would be the best word to describe performances, sometimes with the bat and often with the ball. All too often we left ourselves 30-40 runs short when setting targets for the opposition and sometimes an inability to bowl on one side of the wicket meant we leaked runs and gave the skipper a difficult time in setting his field. Both areas will need real improvement in 2016. Again, not all was bad as there were some good individual performances throughout the season. With the bat 'old man' Burgess proved consistent again scoring 694 league runs at 69.4.

Martin Allen also contributed heavily with the bat, 381 runs at 42.33. Other useful contributions came from John Walter, Harsh Kumar, Tom Ballington and William Appleton. With the ball Adam Winder was top wicket taker, 13 at 33.77, Rishi-Roy Mukherjee picking up 11 at 35.64 and Ollie Castell and Martin Allen chipping in with double figures.

Captain of the second half of the season James Burgess will continue in the role for 2016. With a following wind and some new signings for the 1st XI the side for the approaching season again looks strong but we have said that before. In a year where promotion back to the Premier Division is a must, it is vital that players take some responsibility for their performances.

3rd XI

Overall the 2015 season was a success for Shenfield's 3rd XI. They managed to remain competitive at the premier league level while ushering in a new group of players ably supported by the club stalwarts.

The season started with a win as Shenfield chased a modest total away to Buckhurst Hill mostly due to 83* from Jack Orwell who was the only batsman on the day to find the middle of the bat with any ease or regularity.

In the next six weeks Shenfield suffered five defeats and earned one draw with discipline with the bat and ball under question. This lack of form had Shenfield well and truly in the relegation dog fight at the half way point.

In the second half of the season there were two standout games that ultimately decided Shenfield's fate, the first of these being the home fixture against Hainault and Clayhall. This game started with a less than flattering performance with the ball where the visitors declared on 314 in the 44th over. After a solid start from the openers Shenfield lost two quick wickets which bought captain Matt Simmons to the crease at 50-2. Assisted by Teddy Geddis (39) Simmons took to the H&C bowlers and played aggressively (though lackadaisically) and cleared the ropes with regularity over the short leg-side boundary. Simmons did the majority of the damage eventually being dismissed for 165 after striking 12 4's and 12 6's but leaving the Shenfield tail to accumulate the final 50 runs. This led to an exciting finish and further questions asked about Simmons' cardiovascular endurance. Fortunately the exhausted skipper was bailed out by a quick-fire 34* by Riaz Rasool who finished the game with a towering 6 over the mid-wicket boundary. 3 weeks later Shenfield hosted Upminster in another crunch game. Shenfield bowled Upminster out for 202 with outstanding figures for Ollie Ives who took 5-50 and was backed up well by James Borman who took three wickets of his own. After a shaky start, innings of 74* from Borman and a 20 ball 44* from fan favourite Tony Bukhari led to a season saving win. In the last month of the season Shenfield scored over 200 in four of the games which ultimately was enough to keep Shenfield in the Premier League.

Special mention to:

Tony Bukhari who was the workhorse with the ball in the 2015 season bowling 162 overs and taking 22 wickets at an average of 30 as well as proving himself destructive with the bat scoring key runs at the end of the innings on more than one occasion.

James Borman who in the second half of the season added key enthusiasm and team spirit in addition to his 315 runs at an average of 45 playing in only eight games. He helped secure what was at times an inconsistent middle order.

Jack Newton and Teddy Geddis . Have a year of third team experience under their belts and have developed their skills to become fixtures in the Shenfield 3rd team.

Matt Simmons. The Shenfield skipper was two runs away from leading the league in runs scored in his first and final year as captain. Despite an expensive bowling economy going at over a run a ball He made up for it with the bat scoring 642 runs at an average of nearly 43. His seasons return included three centuries but as he is reminded by his teammates he also achieved three ducks.

Shenfield will look to continue to blend youth and experience under a new captain in 2016 and build on their survival campaign in 2015 to become a top-tier team in that division.

4th XI

The 4th XI continues to be a breeding ground for our vast numbers of colts cricketers. Ably led by Ali Naqvi and assisted by Owen Southcott (and numerous family members), the side won 5 games and gave opportunities to 38 players both young and old. Owen Southcott led the batting with over 500 league runs and when he wasn't required / available for the 3rd XI, Tony Bukhari added to his 22 3rd team scalps with another 24 to give him an impressive 46 wickets for the year including 5 five wicket hauls.