

Welcome to the December 2008 newsletter from Ashley CC. Although the first game of the 2009 season is 5 months away there are lots of things going on at the club and behind the scenes.

Firstly, thanks to everyone who has replied to the club in response to requests for help in recent newsletters.

Fundraisers

The club has 2 fundraisers that are being organised by Ian Horn and Steve Coleman. The bonus ball is all set to start shortly but Ian has a few numbers left to sell, if you would like to help us make the most of this scheme please email Ian on jnnhorn@aol.com.

For the first time we are running a sports prediction quiz, organised by Steve Coleman with some help from Ross McKinstry. Final details are yet to be sorted but for a fiver you get to predict the outcome of 40 or 50 events between Jan 2009 and June 2009; the entrance monies will be split equally between the club and the 3 or 4 entrants with most correct answers. Please drop Steve a line if you would like to enter: steveandspanna@hotmail.com

We would like as many people as possible to be made aware of this quiz so please feel free to pass the form on to your family and friends. The cost of entering both competitions can be done via internet banking; please speak to Ian or Steve for further details.

It has been mooted that we organise a Sportsmans (or Sportspersons) Dinner in an effort to raise funds. One possible venue for this could be Bowdon Rugby Club in Timperley. Ideally we'd like to form a small committee who would sell the event, if you have experience of organising a dinner please get in touch with the usual people. We will have a number of signed shirts that could be auctioned on the night.

We are also looking to organise a sponsored walk in the New Year with any money raised being split between the club and a local charity. It maybe a circular walk starting and finishing at Ashley, or we might arrange a country walk out in the Dales and organise for people to stay over and re-hydrate in a suitable pub. Please get in touch if you would like some more details.

Committee Meeting

The new committee meet last week at the Old Hall and a copy of the minutes will be available soon from the secretary if anyone wants a copy. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 12th January 2009 also at the Old Hall, if anyone has anything they would like to bring to the committees attention please get in touch.

Fixtures for 2009

The 1st and 2nd XI fixtures are on the league website (www.mbccl.co.uk) The Sunday league fixtures have been prepared but aren't listed online yet. The 3rd XI remain in the 3rd Division West and start the season with a trip to Stretton on 10th May with the 4ths at home that day to Bollington. The 3rd XI cup draw has yet to be made.

Junior fixtures are still to be organised but should be out in the New Year.

Averages for 2008

Meller Braggins league averages for 2008 are also online at the above site. The 1st XI has 4 batsmen and 1 bowler listed and the side registered the highest score in the division whilst the 2nd XI had 2 batsmen and 4 bowlers who qualified. The records still need averages from 1 or 2 clubs before they are complete.

Juniors

We failed to organise a junior presentation this year and we must ensure we properly recognise all our young players next year and organise one at the club, possibly in late July or early August, and maybe incorporate Dads v Lads match if we can.

We would also like to present them with individual and team trophies. Ideally we would like to have trophies donated to the club and they can be named in memory of someone or simply in the name of a current member, supporter or company sponsor; we have access to trophies at reasonable prices thanks to Alex Eaton's Mum, Jo and we can arrange for them to be suitably engraved.

At the moment we have a trophy for most improved Under 13 player donated to the club by Ian Mobley in memory of his father Brian, but we would like to offer a similar trophy to the Under 9, Under 11, Under 15 and Under 18 teams. Ideally each age group should have a trophy for best or most improved player and then a trophy for best batsman/bowler/fielder etc.

If you would like to help the club with this please contact one of the junior managers or coaches.

We need to recruit more Under 9 players for 2009; at the moment we haven't entered the team into a league but will ensure they play plenty of local friendly games. Please drop the club a line if you know of any players under the age of 9 on September 1st 2008 that might like to play. Many thanks to John Thompson who has kindly agreed to publicise our junior section within the Bowdon rugby club.

Equipment/Grants/Sponsorship

Thanks to grant from the ECB we have been able to buy a Super Soppa that will help get water of the square and outfield on match days.

We are always looking for new sponsors, if anyone with has any connections to the shops/businesses in Hale village and thinks we might approach them for help please contact the clubs officers; we are looking at producing an A3 or A4 fixture poster which would incorporate details of all our sponsors. Thanks to Chris Pendlebury and County Print we are able to get this printed for free. Is anyone willing to oversee this project?

Tours

We are looking at organising 2 tours for the coming season:

We hope to travel to North Devon for 2 or 3 matches in late July 2009, possible opponents include: Bideford, North Devon, Barnstaple, Hatherleigh, Lynton & Lynmouth, Filleigh, Chulmleigh, Westleigh, Shebbear, Chittlehampton and Ilfracombe.

So far we have been offered a game by North Devon on Tuesday 21st July. This is ex-Test match umpire David Shepherd's old club and they play in the village of Instow, which is just to the North of Bideford and they have a spectacular ground overlooking the River Torridge and a pavilion with a thatch-roof.

The tour is open to everyone, senior & junior players, parents, ex-players, supporters and spectators and we will stay in Westward Ho!, Bude, Illfracombe or Bideford.

Estimated costs are £40 a night for B&B accommodation and £10 match fee to cover hire of pitch and teas. As usual there will be opportunities to play bowls and there are plenty of golf courses in the area, both championship length and pitch and putt. There are several superb beaches within a short drive and there are plenty of CAMRA recommended pubs.

In just over a year's time England will be touring South Africa and we hope to have enough players and supporters travelling to the Cape Town test to play a match against a local team, possibly Camps Bay CC. The test match will probably start on January 2nd 2010.

Any interested tourists please get in touch with Brian Birtles.

Players

After playing without an overseas player last season we have recruited a young Australian player from Victoria called Ash Bradshaw. We are keen to help him develop some contacts for possible employment before he arrives, he is a suitably qualified chef and he would love the chance to progress his career over in the UK. Ash also has an EU passport. If you have any suggestions as to where Ash might send his CV please let Ian Barber know.

We are close to arranging for another player to join us; Patrick Gada is originally from Zimbabwe but is now a UK resident. We have had several offers of help in obtaining work for Patrick but we would appreciate others. Patrick has an extensive coaching CV and we hope that both players will be able to help with coaching at junior nets during the coming season.

In order to bolster our attack we are keen to sign a young quick bowler from a local team and there are one or two batsmen that we are talking to as well; hopefully these will all be signed up by the time indoor nets start.

Scorers

All the junior teams need scorers for next season, if you would like to help but feel you need to know a bit more about the work involved here are some links to some helpful websites:

<http://www.ycb-yca.org.uk/pdfs/ScorersInformation.pdf>

http://www.ycb-yca.org.uk/a_new_scorers_quiz_.html

There are various courses in operation for beginners and they are only an hour or so in length. We would like to provide all our senior teams with a scorer, good rates of pay can be offered to those interested, perhaps younger players looking to boost their University fund would like to get involved?

Lancashire Cricket Club

There is a sale of Lancashire's 2008 one-day and Twenty20 shirts at the club shop in the cricket centre; they have some smaller sizes available for as little as £5. You can order online at <http://www.lancashireccc.kukrisports.com> but hurry as they are selling out rather quickly, make sure you scroll down the screen to see the junior sizes they have; they will be introducing new style shirts early next year.

Quiz

The Wisden Cricket magazine for December has two quizzes and both of them offer an interesting prize.

Some older players will remember the Gray-Nicholls Scoop bat, famously used by David Gower. There are 3 questions that answered correctly could see you winning one of these bats custom made to your specification. Please don't use my answers without doing your own research first!

I think the answer to question 1 is 1978, Question 2 is John Morris and to the last question is the West Indies.

The 2nd Competition offers a book with photos from the last 100 years of cricket. Again there are 3 questions and my answers are as follows:

1. Robin Smith
2. 62
3. 175

You can email your answers to competitions@wisdencricketer.com with the subject line "Scoop competition" for the first quiz and "100 years competition" for the second. You should include "no mailing" on your entry if you don't want your details passed on. Closing date for both is 22nd December.

Visit www.thewisdencricketer.com for all terms and conditions and further details.