



OLD WHITGIFTIANS CRICKET CLUB

THE CLUBHOUSE, CROHAM MANOR ROAD, SOUTH CROYDON, SURREY CR2 7BG

www.owcricket.com

Chairman's Report to the 2021 AGM

Dear Members,

The 2021 season was yet another incredibly successful season for OWCC on the field of play for both juniors and adults. It truly was an amazing effort from everyone involved - from youth players to match managers to adult captains, well done and thank you.

To see the 2nd XI start the season without confidence or conviction (4 straight league defeats and rock-bottom of the league table) to then see them needing to win two out of their final three games of the season to secure promotion to division one was quite unbelievable. The squad put in a splendid effort in those final three games and secured a remarkable promotion with an away-day victory versus Camberley. Congratulations to Arun and the entire squad on such an achievement. The 3rd XI also had a fantastic season winning 11 games out of 18 to see the team finish 2nd and narrowly miss out on promotion by 3 points. In a division where only one team is promoted, this is very tough. Well done to Balaji for yet another fine season as Captain and to the 3rd XI squad. I am sure they will go one better next season.

2021 saw the 4th XI enter the league for the first time. Whilst only winning 3 games all season, the team spirit was excellent and several other matches had very close finishes, most notably losing by 1 wicket to Wallington. Being in the league gave the team guaranteed fixtures each week, and unlike most recent seasons, there was no trouble getting a side out. Again, thank you to Stuart for marshalling his band of merry men. The 4th XI certainly has plenty of knowledge and experience and we will push to unearth some dynamism in the field for the 2022 season!

Frustratingly, it was a case of déjà vu for the 1st XI. The team again challenged at the top end of the league table, despite missing a few key players at various times of the season. There were some dominant and remarkable performances – we will never forget the thriller away at Old Rutlishians CC, where we successfully chased 180 having been 35-6, getting the winning runs off the last ball. However, despite these achievements, the team finished “third in a two-horse race” (Tottenham fans will sympathise) having occupied the top two places for 15 out of the 18 matchday weekends. Again, we missed out on promotion.

The Sunday 2s had a successful 2021 season, winning most of their games. They played magnificently within the friendly and competitive spirit of the game and once again, was a great environment for our younger players to gain valuable experience playing adult cricket.

We celebrated the depth of personnel to select from last season and this continued in 2021, which was really pleasing to see. Growing our adult membership and participation is always a priority for us and being able to field four teams on a Saturday, with two teams on a Sunday, with a regular surplus of players will always be our aim.

The season for OWCC colts was outstanding:

OWCC U8s - League Champions
OWCC U10s - League Champions
OWCC U11s - League Champions
OWCC U13s - League Champions

Other age groups had fantastic seasons also with the U9s finishing 3rd, U12s finishing 4th and U14s battling to 7th. The U12s also went on an impressive cup run, narrowly losing by 5 runs in the County Cup final versus Horsley & Send CC. Thanks to Shirish Patel as Colts Chairman and thank you to all age-group managers for giving up your time to manage the many fixtures that took place last season. You'd be hard pushed to find a more successful junior section. The future looks bright!

Having a player pathway from junior to adult cricket is crucial for the future. Having young players like Ben Karpal, Myran Patel, Aaryan Kohli and Mudassir Mian (all U17s) make their 1st XI debuts in 2021 and be integral players for the 2nd XI, proves that we have a successful pathway so far. We must not rest on our laurels.

Thanks to Head Groundsman Daniel Ratling and his Whitgift ground staff for their brilliant work and their flexibility and willingness to assist in getting as many matches 'on' as possible. As always, thanks to Jonathan Higgins for his work in charge of the grounds and to Suzanne Piscina. Thank you to all our sponsors last season for their support, including The Education Group as new lead sponsor, and a personal thanks to our committee members.

I look forward to seeing and working with you all next season.

Adam Clarke