

Mid Week Captain: Owen Sheppard - 2022 Season Report

Indoor Season 2021-2022

The Mid-Week XI (as it's now called) actually started its season as the "Collingbourne Cavaliers" in the Wellington Indoor League. For many of the players this was a first ever run out in indoor cricket but despite winning the first game (against the Collingbourne Centurions I may add) that would unfortunately prove to be their only win of the indoor season. However, the indoor league served its purpose as it presented many of the upcoming youth players to the senior players. Not only that, but it showed those youth players that they were ready for the next step.

Outdoor Season 2022

The team started where it left off from the summer of 2021, as the Collingbourne Development XI. The principle of this team was the same as before, an opportunity to bring the younger members of the club, both past and present youth, up and introduce them to senior cricket whilst playing alongside an equal number of senior players. The funny thing is, the 2021 season and the indoor season had actually done the job, as many of these same players found themselves turning out for both the Weekend Friendly side and in some case the Saturday league side. However, it's fair to say that by running the mid-week team in this way yet again, it has enhanced and aided the club in entering a new 2nd XI into the Hampshire Cricket League for the 2023 season.

Mid-week XI Fixtures

The overarching numbers: 14 fixtures played (2 on the same day sometimes), 3 won, 10 lost, 1 abandoned

Highlights:

- 21 for Liam Reed v Avon Valley
- 9 U16's playing against Over Wallop in which Connor Reed scored 23
- 2 wickets for Brian Silverwood, 33* for Rob Macy and 22 for Andy Pelling v Thruxton
- The Midweek XI consisting of 9 U16s beating the Friendly XI with 3 balls to go
- Harry Browne (39*) and Owen Sheppard (26*) in a last over victory over Wilcot
- Oliver Knowlson making highest senior score (so far) of 21* v Avon Valley. Plus 26* from Hitch.
- Putting two teams out on the same day against Over Wallop and East Anton. 2 Wickets each for Ollie Nuttall and Connor plus 25* for Hitch.
- Excellent fielding against Leg Rovers and a nice 45 opening partnership between Liam and Hitch
- 2 wickets for James Gordon and a 48 run last wicket partnership between Owen Sheppard and Henry Knowlson v Over Wallop
- 2 wickets each for Alfred Malley and Jim Sperry plus 30 each for Hitch and Patrick Tomlinson v Poulshot
- 2 wickets each for Hitch and Alfred plus 50 run opening stand between Dave Malley and Ollie Nuttall v Hungerford
- The Midweek XI beating the Friendly XI in the Pink Weekend "100" fixture

Overview and additional

Despite the lack of victories there were some brilliant games played. The 3 wins were close games with other close defeats to Over Wallop, Avon Valley and Hungerford. Congratulations to all who played, we saw a lot of firsts this season with first senior wickets, highest individual scores and most runs in a season. Long may these continue.

With current youth players of Bobby Barnard, Henry Knowlson, Tom Hibberd (who kept most games by the way) and Dom Colquehern supported by the now more senior youngsters of Alfred Malley, Ollie Knowlson, Ollie Nuttall and the Reed boys it meant that the senior players were almost superfluous. Yet having their support, experience and guidance was key to helping these young players come through and when they get the chance to play with 1st team players like Karl Gingell, Tom Pike, Aaron Hitchmough and Ash McGuire they see that the gulf between them is not that far. The balance of respect and competition is perfect and long may it continue.

Thank You's

You cannot do a report without the final thank you's. Thank you to Jim and his team of Grounds People for preparing the wickets, without those we wouldn't be able to play. Thank you to the Committee and the club for allowing us to do this experiment for the past 2 years, I think it has paid off. Thank you to everyone who played and took part, we look forward to another successful season in 2023.

2023

First of all, we have the indoor to contend with. I'm looking for the Cavaliers to be more competitive this season as they'll be more experienced and a year older. Secondly, we're looking for most of the players that have come through the Mid-week format to step up to the new Hampshire League 2nd XI and look forward to seeing how they progress there. Thirdly, the 2023 season will see the Mid-week XI team become exactly that. The focus will no longer be on what we call "Development" players as all players will be seen as "Senior" players, no matter their age or experience, and will be selected on merit and availability along with everyone else. However, alongside a Mid-week XI we will also be running a number of specific Development games, targeting for those younger players against teams who are doing the same as a way to help us and them bring youth players through the respective clubs with the view to supplying their more senior sides in the future. From my personal point of view, I shall be putting myself forward to run the Development XI again in 2023 however I shall be stepping down as the Mid-week XI captain so someone else can lead it. The Mid-week team has always been a good place for a young and future Saturday 1st XI Captain to learn their trade and I expect this trend to continue.