

Findon 3rd XI 2015

Played 16, won 6, drew 1, lost 8, abandoned 1 (finished 7th out of 9 in WSICL div 4).

It is fair to say that much of the season was hard work after a promising start, and we finished in the relegation zone (the bottom 4). As it turned out, we retained div 4 status due to other changes to league set-up, which I believe is a good thing. As usual for the 3rd XI, we saw the emergence of a new generation of Findon players, many of whom put in great performances in less than helpful 'game situations'. And just think, we nearly got promoted last year...

The season started with an easy win, as we fielded a strong side against a weak St Matthias - Andy Boxall's remarkable innings of 180 included eight 6s, and we declared on 267-2 in just 39 overs. St Matthias lasted just 16.5 overs and were all out for 64.

After the team selection riches of the first game of the season, famous golfer Keiron Judges was a last minute call-up for the next game at home to Partridge Green, but it did us no harm, as we won again. Keiron was no doubt surprised to find himself opening the bowling and finished with a highly respectable 15-3-38-1, while Lamby took 6-32 as PG posted 131-8. We got home 2 wickets down, with J-Lo unbeaten on 71.

We lost away to Crawley Eagles, beaten by 3 wickets after we made 165 ao, before at West Chilton another match-winning knock from J-Lo (91), ably supported by Tinman and Coops, meant we chased down their 206-8. That made it 3 wins out of four, and things were looking rosy.

However, it got much harder in the next game, and generally remained that way for the rest of the season. Ram made 219-9, with 2 wickets each for James Henman, Jabe Rogers, Alex Caughlin and Matt Wratting, but we then got skittled for 70.

We then conceded 279-4 against Lancing Manor, and could only manage 229-7 in 47 overs in reply, largely due to a swift 72 from James Oakden (making a welcome return). We then were away at Worthing, and after posting a decent 202 (more runs from J-Lo), we lost by 4 wickets after we failed to control their opener who made a very rapid 125.

Runs flowed against us too in the next game as division leaders and eventual champions Barns Green hit 297-6 in 44 overs. Higgy (76) and J-Lo (49) got us to decent position before we collapsed spectacularly from 200-4 to 204 ao. Yes, look it up.

We then got beaten by St Matthias (we made only 97) and Partridge Green, sides we beat comfortably at the start of the season. At PG we at least made a decent total of 224-8, with Higgy 61, Snoopy 48, James Harrison 27 and Iain Caughlin a handy 22*, before they cruised home by 8 wickets.

We then had the curious case of Crawley Eagles deciding to bat out a draw (!) after we made 226-6 (more runs from J-Lo, 40 from Henman) - they finished on 176-7, although in reality they stopped up when they lost their fifth wicket at 89, a scenario I had not considered possible. Harvey 'long-run' Keffert's storming last over performance (1-0-10-2) got us an extra bowling point.

We got a much needed win against West Chilt' as good bowling from Whittington, Grayston, Childs, Wratting and Iain Caughlin restricted them to 185-8. We got home by 2 wickets (more runs from J-Lo). A loss to Ram by 4 wickets was followed by a win at Lancing Manor by 2 wickets, with Grayston having a good game (9-2-25-4 and 23*) in the latter.

With 2 games left we had a chance of avoiding the relegation zone if we won against Worthing, but having put in great performance with the ball and bowled them out for 141, we again failed with the bat, making only 62 ao. This left the final game, away at Barns Green, as quite literally a damp squib. It started rainy, they made 201-7 (with Alex Copeland taking 5-71) before it rained some more and we went home.

Thanks are due to lots of people who made it all happen in 2015 - Carrig Connelly, nominally vice captain, who actually skippered 5 times due to my frequent unavailability, did a great job (oh, and batted anywhere between 1 and 11 and kept wicket). Thanks also to Jamie (J-Lo) Lewis for being vice-vice skipper and Mark Byerley for being vice-vice-vice skipper.

Paul Judges phoned everyone, everywhere to get them on the field and umpired a lot, plus we had a great team of scorers - Karen Whittington, Neal Grayston, Sheila Chapman, Gary Haines and Dave Young.

Thanks all,

PH