

Wanstead & Snaresbrook CC

2014 Season Review

2014 was a frustrating season for the club, but it was still a very successful one. Having won the 1st XI Premier Division in 2012 and 2013, the 1st XI finished runners-up to worthy winners, Chingford CC. The 1st XI had a very successful season in limited overs' competitions, winning the Dukes Essex T20 Competition and then progressing to the Area Finals of the National NatWest T20 Competition, where the team achieved fine victories against Henley CC and Swardeston CC, before losing a low-scoring game against Peterborough CC in the Regional Final. The 1st XI also won the Dukes Essex League Cup, but it was then discovered that, in the final, both sides had inadvertently played ineligible players, so the League Committee decided to declare the final void. The team very much relied on the strength of its bowling as only one batsman, the ever-reliable, John Chambers scored over 400 league runs. The bowling unit of Joe Ellis-Grewal (66 wickets), Usman Sahar (60 wickets), Zain Shahzad (45 wickets) and Mohammed Fayyaz Khan (44 wickets) were superb in all competitions. Again Arfan Akram led the team superbly and after ten years of captaining the side, Arfan has decided to step down. The club thanks Arfan for the success he has brought over these years and in making the club one of the top clubs not only in Essex but in the whole country. Thanks must also go to Henry Chambers for his scoring and support.

The 2nd XI also ended up having a frustrating season, finishing runners-up in 2nd XI Premier Division for the second consecutive season. The batting was led by captain Joe Palmer Jnr (362 runs) and Mahesh Velani (335) as well as the highly promising teenagers Feroze Khushi (350 runs) and Waseem Quereshi (248 runs). A highlight of the season was an explosive knock of 133 runs by Mahesh Velani in the 7 wicket victory over Chingford CC. The bowling was led by Mehad Khan (30 wickets) and Jack Lord (26 wickets) together with spinner Jahansher Akbar (19 wickets) and Sachin Vaja (16 wickets).

The 3rd XI had a slow start to the season due to some poor weather and a much changed side from the previous year when we won the 3rd XI Premier Division title. However, after only winning two games in the first half of the season the team found its stride and won 8 of the last 9 games. At the end of the season the team finished third only two points behind second place so a great result in a rollercoaster year; many congratulations to Chelmsford for winning the title. Vice-captain Karan Singh (330 runs) led the way with the bat and he was very well supported by youngsters playing their first 3rd XI season with Bilal Patel (339 runs) and Aryan Gupta (158 runs). Muhammad Atif took 28 wickets and Walid Sherzai 24 to lead the bowlers and they were well supported by youngsters Rahib Hoque and Nabeel Aziz. Special mention to youngster Jayden Rising who, having been told to play for a draw, hit 94* from number 8 to win the game us against Hainault & Clayhall 3rd XI; we look forward to more fireworks next season!

Wanstead 4th XI had another highly creditable season, finishing 4th in the 3rd XI Division One, ably led by Danny Mead in his first season as captain. It was an ever-changing side with 31 players being used throughout the season. Early season victories were based on an exciting bowling attack of spinners with youngster Aman Ali three times taking 5 wickets in an innings. He finished the season as top wicket-taker with 35 wickets. The batting was led by youngster Bilal Patel scoring 259 runs in 8 innings. Not surprisingly he was quickly snapped up by the 3rd XI. The majority of the runs were scored by the twin strikers of Mo Arish and Baz Raja who scored over 600 runs between them. Both players have an interesting method of trying to score all their runs in 4s and 6s. Baz hit the biggest 6 ever seen at Harold Wood Park. Sahil Prabhakar bowled beautifully as the season progressed taking

20 wickets and the hard graft was done by the ever-reliable Dev Patel and Joel Morris Ley. The improving juniors of Nabeel Aziz, Fahim Aziz and Sifth Ali all made valuable contributions throughout the season.

Wanstead's fifth XI consolidated their position in the 3rd XI Division Three after winning the 4th XI Premier Division the year before. Simon Osborn's side recovered from a disappointing, and rain-affected, start to the season to achieve a more than respectable sixth place finish. South African opener Michael Griesel (385 runs) and Jonathan Mudhoo (344 runs) led the way with the bat while Sriram Pathmarajah averaged 51 in the eight games he was available. However, the team's real stars were once again the bowlers as Peter Apps (32 wickets), Asif Khan (19 wickets) and the fast improving Finlay Chesney-Brown all made major contributions at important times in the campaign. As ever the 5th XI were able to blood in a number of younger players throughout the season, with Faheem Aziz and Manvir Gakhal in particular showing huge potential for the future. The team's thanks once again go to Pauline Osborn for scoring.

Another solid year for the 6th XI saw them finish mid-table in 4th XI Division One. However, more importantly as the development team at Wanstead set-up, the 6th XI drew on the skills of over 30 players during the season, of which half were juniors or new members to the club. Just as rewarding was to see young people who had been 6th XI team regulars in 2013, making the transition to success in higher teams in the club during the season. This progression of young Wanstead cricketers in a supportive environment provided by a core of older experienced players was the key to the excellent 6th XI team spirit over the season.

The club's juniors had another good season, with more than 220 youngsters playing in excess of 200 matches. Our U16's beat the eventual winners of the MatchPlay trophy in the Group stages but then lost in the semi-final of the competition. The U15's had another nearly year, losing in the semi-finals of both the Peters Cup and MECB Cox & Kings trophy. Our U13's also lost their semi-final in the David Bradford Cup. The under 11's were the Club's sole junior title holders winning the Nasser Hussain Cup but followed the example of our older juniors in that they lost in the semi-final of the Haydn Davies Cup and finished second in the MECB mid-week League, for the third consecutive season. Thanks must go to all the coaches but particularly to Trevor Hebden and Len Enoch.

The ladies started off their outdoor season by winning the inaugural Women's 6-aside Cricket Tournament held at La Manga CC in Spain. Following this the ladies had an unpredictable season with 7 wins, 1 draw and 5 losses and eventually came 5th in the league, with some great performances particularly by new ladies that joined this year. The ladies also took part in and won an exhibition match at the London Sixes men's competition in August to showcase women's cricket and a full women's tournament will be introduced next year. An enjoyable season in the end with some good highs and positive cricket being played by all the ladies.

The girls' teams had a fine season. The U11 girls won the Lady Taverners County soft ball Tournament while the U13s were runners up. For the first time we entered the Lady Taverners T20 national hardball knockout tournament in both the U15 and U13 age groups. The U15's lost in the second round while the U13's got through to the quarter finals where they missed out on a place in the regional semi-finals by narrowly losing to North London CC. We also entered a team in the county Girls U16's MatchPlay competition where we won 2 and lost 2. In addition 9 of the girls have played in the ladies team in the NLWCL.