



Hurley Cricket Club



Hurleycc.co.uk

## Christmas Greetings

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU  
ALL.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The committee is continually frustrated at the lack of support from club members to clear leaves, attend AGM, Club Supper or volunteer with the bar, colts or socials. Common, we are better than this if you want us to maintain our superb facilities and move forward as a club then please, just once a season add something other than turn up to play.

The close season is a time for reflection and looking forward to 2019, but only if we don't sleep walk into another season without building on the last, targeting potential players, occasional players and past players to come and join in. Our 'captain of banter', Greg has volunteered to put on a social, so please support us.

-o-

If you want this newsletter to continue please share your thoughts and pictures. How can I get all that Whatsapp inventive into this little format.

[mikeridge2906@gmail.com](mailto:mikeridge2906@gmail.com)

Go on, give me some feedback! It's so depressing only getting copy from MW and Veggie



Dates for your diary

Socials:

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Greetings	1
Dates for your Diary	1
Machu Pichu challenge	1
AGM & Work Party	2
Club supper	2
Well done Veggie	3
Cherub	3
What did you do this winter	3
Around the Ground	4
The Club Debate	4-6
Easyfundraising	6



### MACHU PICHU CHALLENGE

MW wins this month's challenge. He took this on Lanzarote, I think those cacti are taking the piss a bit given Mike's recent challenge. Any more out there?

#Get a cap!

Veg went to Vietnam and didn't take a cap!

Fallen leaves - 3<sup>rd</sup> November

## *AGM & Work Party*

Much good work was done on the ground in preparation for the winter. Leaves were burnt, sight-screens put away and the plastic on the covers removed. Clearly some work on the two trees on the boundary will need surgery. With no Val due to family commitments, Mal (Mal/Val poetic) took on the kitchen duties with Ursula to deliver burgers to the workers.

The AGM followed with numbers down to 13 committed members. Phil as Chair gave an overview of the season, the challenging second half of the season for 1XI but runners-up for 2XI. The big worry is to maintain our colts section beyond 2019. Mike R presented the accounts with a worrying loss of £4,390 for the year but big investments in the facilities made. Predictably there were no

challengers for the committee posts so they all rolled over another year, although Jeff stood down from the bar but no one came forward to take it on. Josh Cole stood up at the tender age of 16 to take on 1XI skipper, Steve Taylor voted in 2XI skipper in his absence and Mo agreed to carry on with Sundays.

Positively the membership held up well in an environment where many village clubs are failing, but this is not a reason for complacency. We did pass a motion to increase membership from £70 to £80 and concessions from £35 to £40. This is the first increase in 7 years. Match fees remain the same.

Thanks to the committed few, as ever disappointing that more don't appreciate the importance of AGM. It is slightly ironic that making a request to AGM for more support for the club is preaching to the converted assembled.

Interestingly, Pat has been Fixture Secretary for 23 years and Humbug has been Treasurer for a meagre 20 years in two stints. Phil has been Chair for 13 years. Where are all the new club volunteers?

## **CLUB SUPPER 2018 – Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November, The George**

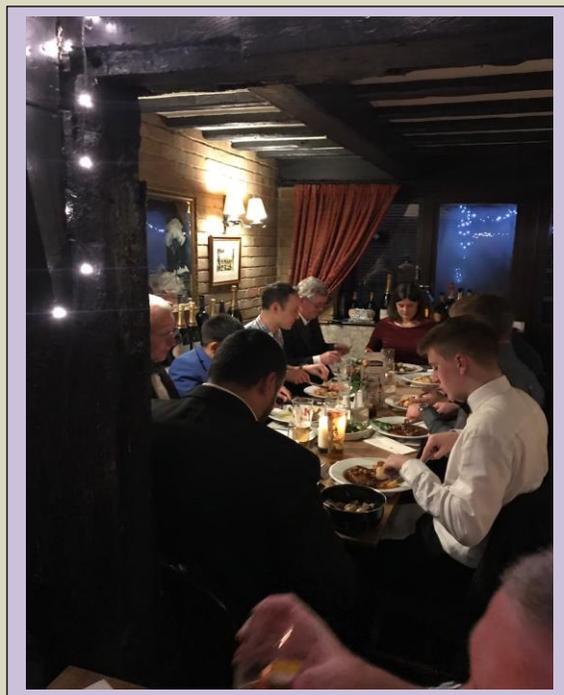
We suspect that this was the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner, but it may be the last as numbers dropped by 25% on the year before. However, you have to admire Naeem coming from Prague, Joe from St Andrews and Mike Taylor from Birmingham, well done guys. We missed quite a few club stalwarts, where were you? We welcomed back 3 ex-players in Mike T, Dave Atkins and Dave Forrest, thanks for your support.

Speeches were merciful absent, not that I could hear much over the general hub-bub, but Mike W presented the awards and President Pat added context. Rita's fiendish quiz this year was on phobias, Lord Clive was a clear winner. I don't know what the phobia for Cricket Clubs is but a few that have briefly passed through our portals must have it.

Naeem won 1XI batting and bowling despite missing the last month of the season, 2XI batting went to Abdullah, bowling to Scott. Non-league batting was Josh, who edged out Henry in the last game and bowling to Ajmal. Clubman was Mike W and Players player was the ever-popular Mo. Fielder and Most Improved was scooped up by Greg who sent an acceptance video sat on the NY Subway in a gruesome close up of a dishevelled hairy face.

Sadly, with such a disappointing support for this event, we shall have to consider whether we move it to a buffet in the clubhouse, or a telephone box. They say the definition of madness is to do the same thing over and expect a different result.

DA and I considered all the venues we have tried, village hall, East Arms, Temple, Hawthorn Hill, Sonning and Castle Royal Golf. There was also the Bird in Hand, Thames Hotel and Thames Riverboat shuffle as well as the George.

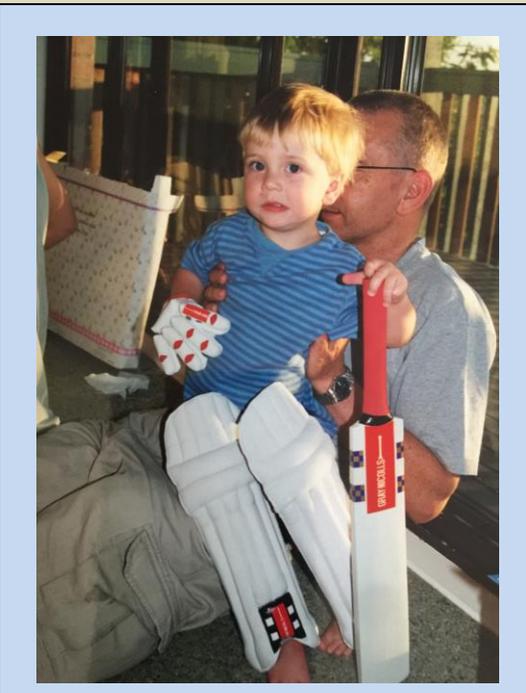
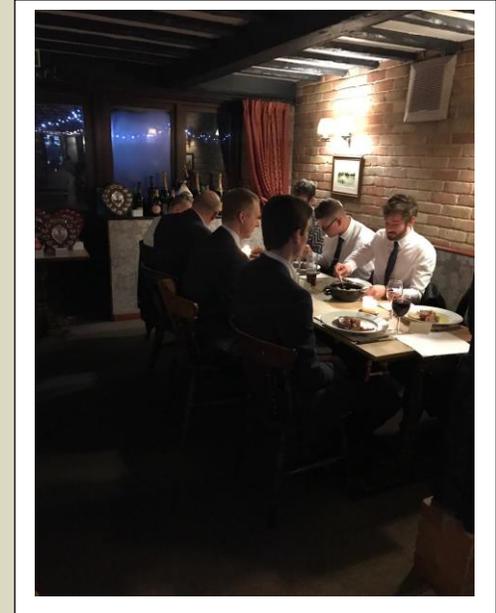


WELL DONE VEGGIE



CLUB SUPPER

Joe and Henry enjoy Yasir's duck award at Club Supper. Josh and Scott get tucked in.



**CAPTION COMPETITION**  
Who is this aged 2, clearly he knew what he wanted for Christmas

**SERIOUS CRICKET**

Why not get kitted out for the 2019 season in club logo? **SERIOUS CRICKET** has lots of club wear. It does make a statement to the opposition fielding a team in club colours. The club receives income from all purchases. So far we have raised £170.

TAKE YOUR CAP ON HOLIDAY AND WHATSAPP A PICTURE.



<https://seriouscricket.co.uk/teamwear/stores/hurley-cricket-club>

WHAT DO YOU DO DURING THE WINTER?

**Abdullah** is getting frustrated at not having anything to Whatsapp.

**Josh** has a new job, just hope he can tear himself away from a screen all day.

**Veg** has gone to Vietnam to look at paddy fields and rusting B-52 bombers

**Naeem** is learning the difference between Czech, check mate and check trousers.

**Mal** is budgeting for University 'living' expenses for Joe.

**Val** will be devising another fiendish recipe for banana cake

Any more?

## AROUND THE GROUND

On Joe's pre-university information form he has been asked his gender, Male, Female or considered 'gender neutral'. It got me thinking how much simpler it would be to be gender neutral. Non of those irritating binary decisions: red or white wine, stand or sit for a pee, Strictly or the football, Bridget Jones or Die Hard and should I bat for the home side or bat for the other side.

Got to love Naeem, Prague to Holyport for the club supper and Joe from St Andrews. Sadly, the most disappointing turn out I can remember and another 'red light' for our club. Where were you?

I have difficulty with the clocks going back, just imagine how Mo feels. He turned up for committee and hour late. Now, either he

thought he had set his watch back, or he had set his clocks back 2 hours, I think.

If Mo has time-keeping challenges then spare a thought for Abdullah who turned up to the 2pm AGM at 3.30 just as everyone was packing up.

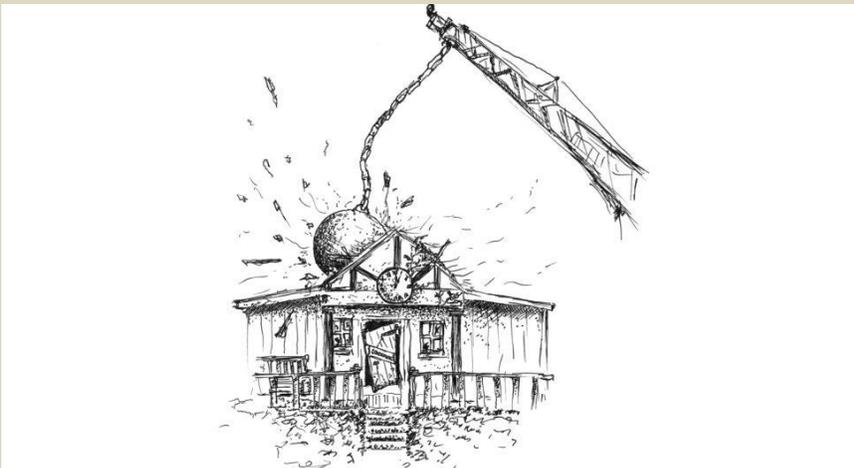
Rita would like to spread the ashes of their dog 'Hurley' under the English Plane tree which is only fair as he often watered it.

Well done Abdullah Ali Rahman for smashing the 2018 League Division 3 batting award with over 600 runs.

### OBITUARY

Sadly, Roger Craggs passed away. A tall genial bowler (1976-84), 101 matches, 138 wickets and 2XI bowling award 1982.

## The Club Debate – The Walking Dead: Are there too many cricket clubs?



Small clubs are disappearing, especially in towns and cities," says Gary Stanley, a trustee of the Sussex Cricket Foundation which is responsible for recreational cricket in the county. "In Sussex, in the west you have a lot of big towns – Brighton, Worthing, Crawley, Horsham – but in the east it's very village-orientated – apart from Eastbourne there's no real big towns. If you've got a village with one club it's probably going to survive, whereas

in towns you have a couple of big clubs and one or two small clubs, and it's those small clubs that tend to disappear."

***Club cricket is shrinking, but that doesn't mean it's entering the dark ages***

Redolent of a scene from horror saga *The Walking Dead*, Stanley accepts clubs must feed off the carcasses in barren land. "My own club, Belgrave Adelaide CC in Brighton, has merged three times in 20 years. We've picked up the bones of other clubs. It's not a pleasant thing to have to do, but these clubs are disappearing, and you need to pick up the odd player to survive.

"In certain parts of the country we have more cricket clubs than we can justify," argues Simon Prodger, managing director of the National Cricket Conference. "Rural cricket is under pressure too. You drive around the country and see some beautiful village grounds that often aren't being used on a Sunday. Cricket could disappear out of the shires, and our heritage in its greatest representation might not exist in two decades time – or it will find itself on a much lower scale."

Cricket has more rival leisure pursuits than ever, and they're often more appealing to time-poor millennials. "Trends suggest there are fewer people playing but also people are playing less of the time," says Bob Baxter, chairman of the Middlesex County Cricket League. "Instead of playing 18 league games a season, they're playing 12 or 13. The worrying trend is that people aren't willing to put the time into playing every weekend. Nowadays you're doing well to even get first-team players playing two-thirds of the season.

Looking to the future, there's a feeling that large clubs will get bigger and the smaller ones will continue to fade away. But could that be a good thing? "Yes," says Gary Stanley, who as well as his role with Sussex Cricket

Foundation is chairman of a small town-based club. It boils down to what matters more to you – the people at the club or the name behind it.

"We've merged three times in 20 years for very different reasons. The trouble is there are a lot of old cricket clubs that see their name as the most important thing, so they won't even think about merging and losing or changing their name. I understand the reticence behind losing their history, but it boils down to what matters more to you – the people at the club or the name behind it.

"Some big clubs have been around so long that they'd almost rather disappear than compromise or join another club en-masse. You end up with a club dying long after it's been buried. My club has been around since just after the Second World War and when we merged in 1997 we changed our name, and a lot of people didn't like it. We said: 'Do you want the club to continue, or do you want us to lurch for another year or two until it dies anyway?'"

***Many clubs are losing their battle for survival***

Prodger also believes the shrinking of club cricket needn't be a bad thing. "There are some very successful clubs that have survived by becoming big and are managing to provide cricket for their membership," he says. "Blackheath have many sides on a Saturday. But why would I want to play for Blackheath 10th XI when I can play for Pratt's Bottom seconds? Some very successful clubs are moving forward, developing coaches and providing essential programmes for junior and women's cricket. I don't think it's necessarily a negative if the game were to shrink a bit but I'd hate participation to shrink a lot more."

if your membership is not consistent enough to guarantee you putting X sides out on a Saturday, then trying to do it becomes a hugely exhausting task that wears captains and volunteers out very quickly.

The main issue for club cricket nationwide is volunteers, because they're the lifeblood.

"I'd like to think, especially in the lower XIs, that leagues will become more amenable to players having dual registrations, so they can play for more than one local club. Watford Town CC and Abbots Langley CC, for example, are a mile apart. If we're two short of making up a fifth team, and they've got three or four players over but not enough to make a full XI, then rather than nine people losing the opportunity to play, let's club together."

The hole in the bucket is the alarming drop-off of 16-17-year-olds. Baxter also points to the general cost of running a cricket club, and while there are local and government grants available, someone needs to take ownership. For Stanley, a club's survival chances are almost exclusively dictated by its volunteer pool, which blurs the classification of a 'big' club.

"There's a direct correlation between how a club does and the amount of volunteers it's got," he says. "The main issue for club cricket nationwide is volunteers, because they're the lifeblood. It's almost irrelevant how you're doing on the pitch; many clubs rely on one or two blokes and if they were to disappear, that club would die straight away. Conversely, you could be having a poor season on the pitch but if that volunteer pool is there you have every chance of a comeback. Volunteers equal success. That's why small clubs are disappearing apart from the small clubs with volunteers – they're the ones getting bigger because they're picking up players from clubs who are disappearing.

"You will see small clubs continuing to slowly disappear and the better run clubs will be the ones who continue. But if that will happen anyway then you must consider how you keep cricketers in the game, so they're not lost to it. It's not about the number of clubs, it's the number of players that really counts."

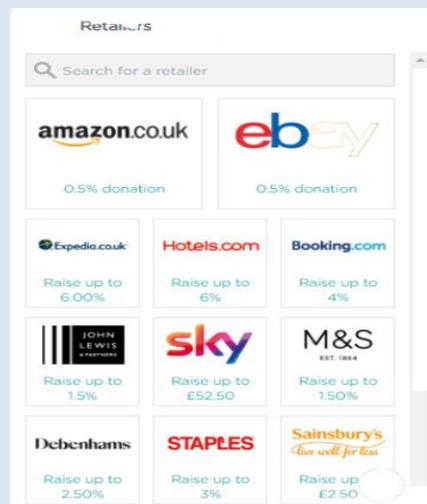
Club cricket is not entering an apocalyptic state, but it does need its own mob of gutsy sheriffs to steer the game into a new dawn – perhaps, initially, smaller in both number of clubs and overs bowled – and fend off outside competition. Change can be frightening, but if we consider it a prerequisite for the preservation and enhancement of our game, rather than a direct challenge to it, club cricket can prosper. If we can be liberated from misplaced nostalgia and prejudice, it needn't be a horror show.

@WisdenCricket.

Easyfundraising  
Help the club build on our facilities

Well done Abdullah on League Division 3 batting award.

It's so easy to sign up to Easyfundraising, a %age of your purchase goes to Hurley CC. sign up at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk> so far we have raised £1,491 with 58 supporters. MW leads the donors with £380.



Contributors this issue:  
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