

# Kemsing Cricket Club Annual Report 2024

Well! What a season that was!!

The Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> XI was rocked by the news that the Woods would be moving to sunny Sheppey after the 2023 season, thus leaving a forest-size hole in the top of the batting line up!! Luckily the sustainable nature of our Club pathway meant that there were some budding tyros pining to fill those spaces... (Sorry!).

Because of the incredibly wet Winter and Spring, the standard of wickets at all grounds throughout the season was less than ideal, meaning that runs were at a premium and good bowling was essential if you were going to defend a low score, or chase a gettable target!

The good news was that, on the whole, we did what we had to! With 5 youngsters in the team for the majority of the season, we managed to get promoted to Division 2 nearly 20 years after being relegated from that division! There were some fabulous individual performances by players young and old, but the overriding take-away from the season was the amazing team spirit and the sheer enjoyment of playing in the team!

It is possible that Skipper, James Walkling, may have had something to do with all the above, but he will be far too modest to admit such a thing! 🏏 I know he enjoyed it all, even if he did not perform as he would have liked, but that gave everyone else a chance! Although there was one "Son of Elmer" bowling performance...

Every player was in the team on merit, even James, not just to make up the numbers. The lads all played out of their skins, winning games with batting, bowling and fielding performances that often took our breath away... And at my age that can be dangerous!!

So, Will, Matt, Oli, Oli, Rory, Elliott, Hugo and Sam: Well done!!

In fact, so well did one of the boys perform, that he was voted as the Young Player of the Year for KCVL Divisions 3 & 4. Yes, you've guessed it... Master Al-Rais! Good stuff, Oli! He rounded off a pretty good season 😊 by scoring his maiden 100 in a Sunday game! 🤩 🏏

I am not going to quote loads of stats, because you know where they are, if you want to look.

The Sunday team had an enjoyable season, giving a game to 41 players, which is some achievement. Of those, only 6 didn't get a bat, and 8 didn't get a bowl. Well done to Mark and Jake for their efforts in giving so many people a decent Sunday afternoon's cricket. Social cricket gives opportunities for all players to learn about the game, find some form and just enjoy themselves, without worrying too much about the result, making it ideal for youngsters starting in adult cricket and those players who cannot play regularly, or who might not be able to play on Saturdays.

The Colts had another good season, overall. The U11 teams might feel they could have had a better season, but they were playing at a higher standard than in previous years and will be better players for the challenge.

The U13As came 3<sup>rd</sup> in their Premiership league season, which is something to be proud of, bearing in mind the opposition, and the Bs were in the top half of their local league.

The U15s came a close 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Championship, which was a really good effort.

The U9s did well. The A team won their group and qualified for the Kent Finals. Unfortunately, the day was cancelled due to wet weather. We also entered the Tunbridge Wells tournament, where we finished 4<sup>th</sup>.

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The Women's Softball season went well, with the Belles finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in their league and enjoying some success in the new T20 competition. They also finished a creditable 3<sup>rd</sup> in the new Kent indoor league over the Winter. Much fun was had, and plenty of rehydration opportunities taken!

Off the field, it was a busy time for the Committee, trying to garner some funds to pay for the new nets, after the Parish Council finally came up with an acceptable lease. With some generous donations (Thank you very much!) and some more grants, the money was eventually raised. And by the time you read this, the most important thing to happen at this Club for many years will be almost complete, if not already finished!

At the risk of causing embarrassment, I think I have to give Merrick Howie a serious mention for some fabulous work in finding more funding streams and also convincing some amazing sponsors, out of nowhere, to support us for the next three years!!

Finally, on behalf of everyone, a massive Thank You to all those who have contributed to the progression of this excellent Cricket Club during 2024: Our brilliant Sponsors – Korkers (we love their sausages!), Harding Motors, Little Street and The Bell (we love their chips! And beer/cider!!), Scorers, Umpires, Coaches, Parents, Supporters, Committee Members, and Players!

Bearing in mind I am typing this at the end of February, as usual, I know I will have forgotten loads of stuff and some people. If I have, I apologise, but hopefully the gist of it, above, will be good enough for you...

Roger Shaddock

28<sup>th</sup> February 2025

