

## RESUME OF THE 2017 SEASON

Mr Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

2017 was a difficult year for the club on the pitch culminating in relegation for both teams. Despite the withdrawal of the third XI from the SNCL to a mid-week league there was still a lack of availability of players & therefore a lack of consistency. Of the two main disciplines, batting was the biggest weakness & lacked strength in depth; a focus for next season. Off the pitch, the club received continued support from residents & friends. Popular fund raising events such as the Burns night, Christmas float collection, golf society weekend & the cultural tour of London have all become annual fixtures in the 'fund raising' calendar & are well supported all providing additional funds. The youth section continued its growth & popularity with the introduction of 'All Stars' cricket; a successful ECB initiative. Darbs & his team have excelled in increasing youth participation & it is a joy to see every inch of the village green awash with young cricketers each Sunday morning. Once again, there was additional professional coaching from Niall O'Brien (Ireland) for the 5th consecutive season, something that could not be achieved without the support of residents & friends of the club & something for the club to be immensely proud of. The presentation evening was held courtesy of our sponsors, the Red Lion, with food & awards. Chloe Keen was awarded the clubman trophy; the first time it has been awarded to a female player for her outstanding contribution as a player & coach.

### FIRST ELEVEN

Matt Wethey continued as captain for a 2<sup>nd</sup> season. The season began with a close game at Byfield with the team making a gallant chase of 218-4 that they posted, falling just 29 short with a half century from Joe Walker. Syresham were restricted to 153 thanks to 3 wicket hauls for Julian Walker & Ben Patterson, but we collapsed to 50 all out in reply. Charlton gifted a win as they failed to raise a side. At Woodford we were saved by the rain. Marston made easy work of chasing 97 all out. A close game at home to MK Air saw Ben Patterson (6-19) restrict them to 119. We fell 28 short. The following week saw a repeat performance restricting Afro Caribbean to the same total but we fell 39 short in reply. At Thornborough Ben Patterson continued his form (3-33) restricting the home side to 113, but we fell 2 runs short with Martin Ayres (24) proving to be the only rear guard. Wroxton destroyed our bowling attack with 288-9 & in reply Matt Wethey (42) was the only fight back in the 150 run deficit. Martin Ayres (34) & Adam Budd (22) swept aside the 98 scored by Byfield as old hand Julian Walker took 4-8 & Olly Patterson 3-5. An unbeaten 79 from Simon Walker in a 219-9 reply was 175 runs short of a colossal score posted by Syresham at their ground. Charlton also went big with 270-6 which was 105 too many, despite a knock from Ben Patterson (56). The rain intervened for a second time in the season when Woodford visited with another knock from young Patterson (82) in a 119 total, but the match was abandoned. Another poor total of 74 was swept aside by Marston in a 6 wicket win. MK Air won at their ground by 4 wickets, chasing 147-5 (Neil Bellingham 39) but a stunning performance from Charlie Thomas (6-12) blew Afro away for 96 the following week with Ben Patterson (52 not out) making light work for a 6 wicket win. Joe Walker took 4-63 as Thornborough posted 250-6, but it was 126 too many despite a knock of 41 from the all rounder Walker. Wroxton having already won the league gave away a walkover win in the last fixture.

<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Abandoned</i>	<i>N/R/Tie</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>PTS</i>	<i>POSITION</i>	<i>NET RUN RATE</i>
18	4	0	2	12	156	9th (relegated)	3.48

### SECOND ELEVEN

Sam Holden took on the captaincy for the first time, injecting plenty of enthusiasm & effort. The season started with a low scoring 64 all out against Radway who lost 2 wickets in reply. Willoughby lost 5 wickets chasing a total of 103 & we could not chase down a total of 264-7 posted by Croughton. The match was abandoned at Bodicote by rain. Greens Norton won by 9 wickets chasing 57 all out. Dunchurch were restricted to 131 at their ground but our reply of 77 fell short. A close game at Silverstone saw Simon Walker hit 68 of 128 & Sam Holden then took 4-42 which wasn't quite enough as they won by a wicket. Byfield snuck a lucky win despite only posting 63, but we fell 3 runs short! Simon Walker hit a formidable 81 supported by Jeremy Backon (28) posting 163-9 in the only win of the season as Castlethorpe struggled to get close thanks to a 5 wicket haul from Neil Bellingham; an 89 run victory! Radway made the boys chase leather as they posted 237-6 despite another 4 wicket haul for captain Holden & Callum Jones (29) put up the only resistance in the 160 run loss. At Willoughby, Kieron Thomas took 3-30 as they posted 182-8; which was too many with 120 in reply. Simon Walker hit 46 at Croughton in a 113 total which was swept aside with 6 wickets in hand. We failed to raise a side for the Bodicote, Silversone & Byfield fixtures with 10 points deducted each time! Keiron Thomas took 5-22 & Callum Humphries 3-15, dismissing Greens Norton for just 99 but we fell for 65 in reply. Billy Mellor-Brook took 4-15 restricting Dunchurch to 91 but we also fell 18 short. Chris Finister & old boy Walker took 3 wickets a piece at Castlethorpe (181 all out) but our reply was just 109 in the last game.

<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Abandoned</i>	<i>N/R/Tie</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>PTS</i>	<i>POSITION</i>	<i>NET RUN RATE</i>
18	1	1	0	16	43	10th	3.26

### BUCKS MID – WEEK LEAGUE

2017 saw the club enter the Bucks Mid Week League for the first time, a small league consisting of 8 other local teams (Brackley, Hinton, Fringford, Buckingham, Maids Moreton, Preston Bisset Gawcott & Marsh Gibbon). The game's format was 12x8 ball overs allowing the game to be played at a more frenetic pace with a bit more risk & freedom added to the normal playing styles of many players. Most games produced scores in excess of 100 runs in each innings as teams went on the attack, rekindling some players desire to hit big & run quickly. Notable performances coming from Neil Bellingham hitting 50+ scores in two out of three games he played & Callum Jones hitting big from the first ball of every game. Bowling & fielding was consistent with everyone taking their fair share of wickets & catches; a good all round team performance. The primary aim for entering the mid week league was to have fun & bring together the first & second team players, along with the up & coming juniors, giving them all the opportunity to play cricket together and further develop the club.

<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Abandoned</i>	<i>N/R/Tie</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>PTS</i>	<i>POSITION</i>	<i>NET RUN RATE</i>
8	2	1	0	5	10	7th	n / a

### JUNIOR SECTION

Directed by Richard Darby, the junior section continues to prosper, with a growing membership. This past season there have been Under 13 matches on Wednesday evenings & Under 15 matches on Monday evenings. We also took part in the ECB "All Stars" initiative, aimed at introducing 5 – 9 year olds to cricket. This was a huge success, with Evenley becoming the biggest centre in the county, taking on 45 children for eight consecutive Sunday mornings. This would not have been possible without Chloe Keen & Callum Jones stepping up to run the sessions as Activators. The junior members have also taken part in indoor winter nets & Sunday morning coaching, which has been broken up into specific groups. Richard would like to thank his assistants; Julian Walker, Miles Brooke, Chris Finister, Phil Thomas, Spencer Burnham & Steve Thorburn, plus several supportive parents, especially scoring at matches. We are also grateful to the older teenagers who turn out on Sunday mornings to help out. The variety in the coaching has provided something for everyone & we are pleased to continue our association with Niall O'Brien, Ireland international, whose mid-week evening sessions are a highlight of the season for many of the older players.