



**THE BEST WESTERN
SHRUBBERY HOTEL
SOMERSET CRICKET LEAGUE**

Honorary Secretary's Report 2011

**Prepared by Ray Hancock
November 2011**



THE BEST WESTERN SHRUBBERY HOTEL

SOMERSET CRICKET LEAGUE

Honorary Secretary's Report 2011

The Somerset Cricket League enjoyed yet another very successful season in 2011 when the new single linear divisional structure was used for the first time. The 1st and 2nd XI competitions were disbanded and the divisions comprised a mixture of teams that ranged from 1st to 4th XIs. This change was one of the landmark adjustments to the SCL structure since its inception in 1972 and was a major factor in providing even more competitive cricket than that experienced in the past. I believe that the members of the SCL both welcomed the new structure and found it more competitive and enjoyable. However, it did pose some organisational and financial problems with a revised fixture matrix and additional expense for new named divisional trophies.

Staplegrave Cricket Club won the J C Bail Trophy, which is awarded to the winners of Division 1, with 555 points - the highest points aggregate of all 12 divisions. Consequently, this team secured the Sunday Independent Cup and will play in the Somerset Division of WEPL next year. Staplegrave 1st XI was 56 points clear of North Petherton at the end of the season and remarkably had no games cancelled throughout the summer. Middlezoy took the Brian Stockhill Trophy for the winners of Division 2. This club has had an amazing three year period having won Division 4 in 2009; Division 3 in 210; Division 2 this year, they will now play in the top flight of the SCL in 2012. North Curry in Division 3 won the Bryan Lobb trophy with a comfortable margin of 39 points over second placed Huish & Langport. The 4th Division, which comprised teams from the 'old' 1st Division of the 2nd XI Competition, was won by Westlands 2nd XI by a modest 15 point difference over second placed Bridgwater A. Fitzhead were relegated in 2010 but rebounded immediately from Division 5 when the club had a narrow 6 point advantage over West Somerset rivals Kilve. In Division 6, which comprised only 9 teams due to the late withdrawal of Sampford Arundel prior to the season commencing, Broadway & Horton had a huge 83 point margin over East Coker.

Division 7, which like Division 4 comprised teams from the 'old' 2nd XI competition, was won with the closest margin of all in 2011 when Bishops Lydeard 2nd XI just nudged

Butleigh 2nd XI into second place by 5 points to take the trophy. Another team that bounced straight back in 2011 was Temple Cloud 2nd XI who were relegated last year and won Division 8 this year by 41 points from second placed Winscombe 2nd XI. Wedmore 2nd XI became the third team to return immediately having been relegated the previous year when the club won Division 9N with a 45 point margin over Kilmington & Stourton. Burnham 2nd XI recorded 546 points in the season to become the second highest points scorer this year and beat Watchet by 26 points. In Division 10 NW, Banwell & Churchill 2nd XI recorded the lowest number of points to win a division, yet still had a comfortable 17 points margin over Weston super Mare 4th XI. Westlands 3rd XI, which had entered the SCL for the first time in 2011, went through the season unbeaten and were the only team to do so. They also amassed the massive winning margin of 143 points over Cranmore 3rd XI in Division 10 SE.

Westlands Cricket Club won the Ladbrokes Trophy for the 'Club of the Year' due to divisional wins by the club's 2nd and 3rd XIs. The Don Crouch Trophy, which is awarded for sportsmanship based on the scores recorded by the opponents, was shared by Wedmore 'A'; Wells 1st XI and Weston super Mare 4th XI. These three clubs did not drop a single sportsmanship point throughout the season and had the remarkable average of 100%. The AVCO Trust Young Player of the Year was won by 16 year old Sam Gillatt of Kilmington & Stourton, while the Glastonbury Mowers Cup for the All Rounder was won by Dan Sizer of Staplegrove for his batting, bowling and captaincy. Team of the Month prizes were won by Temple Cloud 2nd XI in May; Weston super Mare 3rd XI in June; Broadway & Horton in July and Butleigh 2nd XI in August.

The individual performances for the season have been accurately catalogued in the various statistical pages on the website and those interested in this aspect of the game should consult the website (www.somerset-cricket.org.uk) for this detailed information.

At the end of the 2011 season, the League inevitably lost a few teams, but also gained some new ones. Midsomer Norton 2nd XI spent only a single season in Division 3 as their 1st XI proved to be far too strong for those in the Somerset Division of WEPL. Their departure to the 3rd tier of WEPL was counter balanced by the return of Uphill Castle 2nd XI, a team that will play in Division 3 next year. Wells Wanderers found difficulty in fielding a team in the last quarter of the season and the club reluctantly resigned at the end of it. On the positive side, Leigh on Mendip and Curry Rivel 2nd XIs will both return to the SCL next season, while Kilve 2nd XI will return to the WSCL and Bridgwater Sports CC has lost its 2nd XI.

The loss of a few teams, both before the season started and at the end of it, caused the Committee to re-appraise the structure of the SCL and reduce the number of divisions from 12 to 11. The Committee also determined that the regionalisation should still encompass four divisions and hence Division 8 was put into the 'regionalised mix.' As a result, some clubs felt that they had not been promoted. In the case of Division 10 teams

this was an understandable conception as they still found themselves in the lowest division.

The Management Committee has decided to invoke a number of new initiatives for next season. The first of these includes responding to the ECB mandatory statement on the appointment by every club of a Club Welfare Officer who has received training and a certificate of attendance on a SPC course. This will require every club management committee to take responsibility for the appointment of a person who will need to attend training and certification, or already be in possession of a SPC certificate indicating that they have received training by attending a Safeguarding & Protecting Children Course during the last three years. The exact details of the welfare officers' training and certification will be required on the Club Details Sheets. Initially, courses to meet the demand for welfare officers to be trained will be organised by the SCB and notified to all clubs in the SCL. The SCL Management Committee in consultation with the SCB will set a time limit for this certification. These additional rules will ensure that cricket in the SCL is a safer place for young people to enjoy the sport. The second initiative that the Committee has taken concerns a rule addition to deal with the treatment of abusive comments, and the like, on social websites and our own Match Report Section on the League's website. It is hoped that this additional rule will help the Committee strengthen its stance on abusive situations in the game (and outside of the match itself). The Committee is committed to addressing all reported issues of abuse in cricket (on and off the field) and has already demonstrated this commitment by some severe bans in the 2011 season.

A number of cancellations, not due to weather/ground conditions, took place in season. This was particularly noticeable towards the end of the season when holidays and soccer caused depleted teams to fail to fulfil their league fixtures. These cancellations denied many players a game of cricket and also impinged on the financial stability of some clubs. Clubs should make every effort to meet their league commitments and attempt to anticipate situations when numbers are likely to be restricted.

The League's Dinner and Presentation Evening at the Shrubbery Hotel was once again a very successful and enjoyable event. It was again pleasing to note that all clubs that won divisional trophies were represented. 180 members, partners and guests sat down to a fine meal provided by our sponsor and host Stuart Shepherd. John Wilford, the SCB's newly appointed Cricket Development Manager at the County Ground, presented the trophies and spoke about his vision for the future and he welcomed clubs to contact him if they required help.

Many clubs again took up the public liability insurance and many West Somerset Cricket League clubs again joined the scheme in 2011. The large buying power kept the cost at £20 per team and it is hoped that this will remain the same for next year. Cricket balls were also purchased for all clubs and the same supplier will again be engaged for next year. The cost of the ball will remain at £8. Club order forms will be issued with the

AGM documents and clubs will be expected to place their orders by the time of the AGM.

The Committee made the decision, for one year only, to allow clubs to re-arrange any fixture up to and including the Saturday after the official closing date of the season, ie. in 2012 any match can still be re-arranged up to Saturday September 8th – (teams in Division 9SE can also re-arrange up to September 15th). The decision was made as a result of a number of grounds being unavailable at the beginning of June due to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The situation is likely to be exacerbated by the commitments of some players and clubs on this special bank holiday weekend next year and as a result the Committee took the view that it should make it possible for those who wished to be involved with the celebrations to be able to do so.

The Results Service in the SCL has continued to improve and some changes in inputting statistical data have made the website more friendly and informative. John Squirrel, the website manager, David Derrick, the Committee's lead member, together with Amanda Counsell and Toby Strong, two other results monitors have supported clubs in all aspects of the reportage while ensuring that data is processed on time. Some other members of the Committee have again been prominent in work for the League. Ian Stolworthy successfully negotiated a new, and vastly improved production of the Handbook; Derek Hicks worked tirelessly in providing umpires for the 1st Division matches; Toby Strang continued to update the Grounds Facilities Survey; Ian Latchem worked meticulously on checking the paper results sheets of over 1,000 games throughout the season where unbelievably he identified over 50 examples of incorrect points that could easily have impacted on promotion and relegation issues; while Tom Packman carried out the financial aspects of the League in his characteristically efficient manner. Finally, but by no means the least, Malcolm Fox the Chairman has kept a watching brief over all of the League's activities throughout the season.

Ray Hancock,
Hon. Secretary SCL,
November 2011.