

GMCC Senior Cricket Report 2023

This report expresses the views and opinions of Chris Greenslade, the current GMCC Club Captain, and may not display the view of any other member in the current membership. The report was written to relay an overall perspective of the state of senior club cricket prior to the upcoming annual general meeting.

Overview

It would be remiss of me to firstly thank all four (Joey Greenslade, Nick Aston, Eusha Fawad & Duncan Greenslade) of the current captains for their commitment to the cause this year, as well as Matt Rushton who offered great support to both myself and the captains throughout. Objectively one can only view this year's successes throughout the club and say that we are in a fantastic place. We appear to be improving across the board and it's great to see the results being achieved throughout. That, of course, is not possible without the work of the entire membership so thanks, as always, for your unwavering commitment and desire to play for and help GMCC further install itself as the best club in Norfolk. Additionally, we must not forget all the work that goes on behind the scenes. A huge thank you to Mike and Grenville for creating pitches that are admired by teams throughout the county; Shafty for stepping into shoes seemingly impossible to fill and steering the ship through a difficult transition; and all the many other volunteers throughout the club at every level who continue to allow GMCC to be the club we all love.

We come to an interesting time for the senior portion of the club as the first team move into senior cricket for only the second time in the club's history. Lest we forget our first appearance which saw us only remain for one season before suffering relegation. With that comes a different challenge - earlier start times, leg side wides, 50 over games and not least...more challenging opposition; some of which pay players, host overseas players and have experience of much higher levels of cricket. A challenge but one I feel as a club we are much better prepared for due to the overwhelming strength of the club throughout every level, senior and junior.

First Team

The goal at the beginning of the year was to achieve promotion and that was achieved on the last day of the season where we only needed 6 points to achieve both promotion and the champions trophy. As a team, it was obvious that we had one of the stronger sides in the league and probably have done for the last 2-3 seasons however have been unable to string together the consistency throughout to achieve promotion. We managed to build on the back of last season's strong finish in 3rd position winning 7 of the last 9 games, only losing to the two teams who were eventually promoted. With Joey Greenslade in his second year of captaincy he seemed to have really developed his ability to motivate performances out of players at crucial points and saw us ultimately winning 12 of our 17 (one cancelled) games and edging out second place Lowestoft by 4 points. An exceptional season long performance from player of the season Dominic Evans scoring over 500 runs and taking 29 wickets really was the driving force with good supporting performances from top run scorer Chris Greenslade and second top wicket taker Joey Greenslade. On a distinctly positive note it was great to see a flurry of junior talent really staking claims for positions in the first team

with the standout being Corey Rushton. Overall I think the first team moves forward in a really positive position and, with the addition of a few necessary recruits, have a very good chance of competing with the oncoming challenge of the new season. I also would like to thank Joey Greenslade for his successful years as captain as he steps down and hope to see him continue to compete at his best for years to come.

Second Team

With the second team on the verge of relegation last year, only saved by a few technicalities, it was fantastic to see a thriving group of players come together and show the talent they all really have. It came as no surprise to both myself, the captains and the executive committee to see the results flood in and ultimately the accomplishment of promotion. A fantastic achievement for Nick Aston in his second year of captaincy who has developed greatly within the role, a view greatly echoed throughout the club. The second team exhibited a large number of players across the season, junior and senior, which was no doubt party to their great success. Standout performances from Martyn Cook, Sam Mann, Sam Davey, Kyle Weston and Matt Rushton all contributed greatly throughout the year and undoubtedly formed a solid core of players. Additionally it was great to see a number of junior breakthroughs into the side including Niamh Rushton, James Alcock who also featured in the first XI, and George Woodcock, who also featured for the first XI, suggesting the future is bright. With recruitment demands high and the quality of the juniors coming through the setup I expect the side to be particularly strong in the upcoming year. The achievement of promotion for the second team this season can not be understated as it provides a good framework for promotion of players through the teams and ensures the jump from first to second team cricket isn't unachievable for those moving through.

Third team

First of all, I would like to thank Eusha Fawad for his service and wish him the best at his next club. Eusha has worked hard for the club both in a playing and captaincy capacity for a number of years and, it goes without saying, will be missed. We must also say farewell to Fawad, Adeel and Immad who also have been key figures in the third team for a number of years and will be duly missed.

With promotion the season prior it was always going to be a challenge for the third team as they moved into division 1 of the Norfolk Cricket League...and that it was. With only 3 wins from 17 played matches, the step up was perhaps one too far for the side as they finished second from bottom, 56 points off the side above. This year was a challenge with lots of movement between teams and availability causing many issues regarding selection making it difficult for the side to generate any momentum. Selection of the third team is often one of the most challenging as it is the first senior side with a performance related goal, often meaning people don't get as much as a game where they would like. Not only that but those who do perform well often don't stay in the side for long as they find themselves accelerated into the first or second XI; often creating a reliance on individual performance each week rather than a collective performance that comes with playing with one another. Whilst this will also be a problem, we are endeavouring to find a process that assists with these issues to create a better flow of players through the set-up and a better playing experience for all. With

the side moving back into division 2 we see this as a great opportunity to rebuild the side, employ more of the melton tradition and create an enjoyable environment for all.

Fourth team

The fourth team went above and beyond this year by achieving promotion as the best runner up across the county. A fantastic achievement for all involved. The goal of the fourth team is to ensure everyone gets a game so for us to achieve promotion without a performance based goal, in my opinion, shows the breadth of the strength of the membership at the moment. As usual we fielded a vast number of players, both senior and junior, who all at different stages contributed to the success of the side. Special thanks goes out to Duncan Greenslade who led the team out in his 12th year of involvement (captain and team manager) with the side. In review of this year it's been great to hear so many positive stories of people's experiences of playing in the side and hopefully that will continue as Duncan stands for his 13th year this coming season.

Summary

As previously mentioned, an incredibly successful year throughout the club and we hope to kick on again next year. From a captaincy perspective we have some fantastic candidates for the open roles who we feel will help us build upon last year's successes'. Behind the scenes we have booked in the Winter nets which include 5 sessions across January, February and March and we are booking in pre-season friendlies for April. If anyone would like any input on how we move forward towards the coming season then please let me know.