

Aldermaston Village Cricket Club 2015 Season

2015 was a season of two halves, separated by an unscheduled mid-season break, or 'July' as it's more commonly known. Before weather and cancellations arrived, we played on nine consecutive Sundays (including the Wasing XI) match), and emerged from our first eight full matches of the season with five wins and three defeats, three of the wins coming on the bounce at the start of the season in early May. The first of those was against Bradfield at home, who after benefiting from a large number of dropped catches (mainly off Ed's bowling) in the final game of 2014, and winning as a result, were oddly reluctant to make any effort to chase down their target of 155, and played more like they were batting for a draw. The most impressive win of the three was the following week at Cold Ash. Bucklebury had cancelled and a replacement fixture hastily arranged against a side we hadn't played for a large number of years, but a solid but unspectacular total of 152 in 40 overs, on a chilly and cloudy afternoon didn't bode well for continuing our winning start. However, the bowling and fielding performance we produced, aided at times by some fairly ordinary calling, running and shot selection was one of the best we had produced for a long time, and with the help of some scoreboard pressure and 4 for 15 from Ed, we won by 9 runs.

We returned to Wasing Park the week after and easily overcame a below par Ashford Hill by 6 wickets to make it three out of three. Kevin Rapley claimed 3 for 7 in 7 overs as the visitors laboured to a score of just 95, which we passed with plenty of overs and six wickets in hand.

Our luck ran out at Woodcote the following week, when our score of 122 was never really going to be enough, although Vince made an unbeaten 46, his highest score yet for the club. Woodcote passed the target with 8 wickets in hand.

At Mortimer the following week, the weather improved, but we went from an abundance of players to choose from to only eight. We were boosted up to ten by Mortimer finding us two additional players, and we bowled and fielded pretty well all things considered, having the home side in trouble at 91 for 5 at one stage. A sixth wicket stand of 71 pushed our likely target beyond manageable proportions as, inevitably, gaps in the field were exploited and things became a little ragged. We did at least restrict the home side's scoring in the final five overs or so, as Mike Palfrey claimed 3 for 22, including a stumping by Rod Howell, playing his first game for us for a couple of years. Chasing a target of 191 was going to require a big partnership at some stage, and we got one with Garry joining Ed and adding 93 for the second wicket. Mortimer were looking rattled and didn't really know where to put their fielders, but Ed was caught on the boundary for 67 with the score a 113. Garry followed one run later and the required run rate climbed steeply as Mortimer put the brakes on our scoring. In the end we were well short, and lost by 39.

At Englefield the following week, the home side posted an imposing 164, and we lost an early wicket when Craig was bowled. But Ed (87 not out) and Garry (59 not out) combined again and this time could not be parted, and we won by 8 wickets (only 10 players in our team that day) with 41 balls left.

At Goring on Thames, on 21st June, we were again down on numbers – but so were Goring, so this was a nine-a-side match. Not much went right though and we were bowled out for just 82. We removed two Goring batsmen, but in the end the home side won comfortably, and we still have never beaten Goring On Thames.

We were back up to a full compliment with players to spare to play Theale & Tilehurst on 28 June, and with Mark Woodley and Josh Howell claiming three wickets each, Josh playing his first match for us for a few years, we bowled the visitors out for 73. With the loss of an early wicket, I was having traumatic flashbacks to two years ago when we won by one wicket when we needed only 50 to win, but Ed (31 not out) and Garry (29 not out) had no such worries, and we won by 9 wickets inside 15 overs.

Then there was July. Pangbourne cancelled, we had no match scheduled for 12 July, then Whitchurch On Thames also cancelled and the rain arrived to cause the match against Reading Lawyers to be called off. So

we had a complete month without a game and so were a bit out of sorts for the match at Purley On Thames, on one of the hottest days of the summer so far. Again we only had ten players, and with George Wheeler scoring 136 not out for the home side, hitting ten fours and also clearing the boundary ten times, we were

left to chase a mammoth 231 in 35 overs. However, Purley also had only ten, and with Bunny and guest player Norman Howe adding 164 for the first wicket, we were well in the hunt. It was only going to take a couple of quick wickets to tip the balance and so it proved, and although Bunny went on to score 133, we still needed 33 in the last 4 overs when he was out, which proved a bit too much for new batsmen coming in, and we lost in the end by 19 runs.

The following week we made the return trip to Ashford Hill, and found them to be a bit more competitive this time. It started quite well for us with a slip catch by Billy Whizz that would match up well with the Ben Stokes catch in the Edgebaston Test match off Stuart Broad, but with Henshaw making 111 for the home side, we were set a stiff target of 207 in 40 overs. We were still just about in the hunt at 102 for 4 in the 23rd over, but things fell away after that and we lost by 42 runs, although still with just about enough overs left to possibly have won if we still had had a few wickets in hand.

Our home matches against Pangbourne and Mortimer were both called off, Pangbourne due to the visitors lack of players and Mortimer due to some horrible weather, so our next match was at Woolhampton, where we arrived on 30th August to the astonishing news that the pavilion at Douii Abbey has still not fallen down! It was one of those afternoons when nothing went to hand and we failed to take a wicket in 35 overs as the home side posted 199, Goodhew reaching his hundred just before the end. A century opening stand of 108 between Bunny (33) and Ed gave us a shot, and Ed went on to bring up his hundred and later passed 400 runs for the season. We needed eight from the final over, and Ed got a single from the first ball, but Billy Whizz was unable to connect cleanly with the next two, which were dots. The next ball was dispatched towards the boundary at mid-wicket, and initially three runs were taken, and a fourth was taken on an over-throw, leaving three to get off two balls. A sharp single off the fifth ball gave Ed the strike back for the final ball, from which two were needed to win, or one to tie, and unfortunately the ball babbled out on the off-side and Billy Whizz was run out running to the strikers end, giving the home side a one-run win, and leaving Ed unbeaten on 116 in a losing cause.

The game against Sulhamstead was called off an hour and a half before it was due to start, so our next opposition were Kingsclere at Wasing Park. Again we were struggling for numbers but three guest players from Tadley Hobos brought us up to nine. The visitors got off to a rollicking start, bringing up their 50 in the 8th over, with no wickets lost, but they continued to 119 for 2 in the 19th over before Khan removed Kreysa to spark a rapid collapse, to 138 all out. Garry Masters finished with 3 for 9. A potentially tricky run chase awaited after tea, in chilly and overcast conditions, but an opening stand between Bunny (45) and Amer (61) of 114 in 104 balls took us to within reach of the target, and in the end we scored the winning runs from the first ball of the 24th over, for the loss of two wickets.

We had another depleted side at Bradfield the following week, but did have Charlie and Ben Sinton to bring us up to ten players. An opening stand of 60 between Bunny and Phil gave us a good start, but we needed to rebuild after Phil was out and Garry followed next ball. Charlie went in at four and made his intentions clear from the start, his second scoring shot was a six, and he went on to make 81 in 54 minutes adding 123 in 81 balls with Bunny, hitting nine fours and three sixes. He was out in a slightly bizarre manner, stumped off a wide bowled by John Bargent, A late flurry of runs gave us a big score of 230 for 4. Bradfield needed a good start, and Wood hit the first ball for four, but off the fifth, his opening partner was LBW to Kevin Rapley, who then bowled Tongue with the next ball. When Farnando was caught by Charlie off Garry Masters they were 16 for 3. Bradfield's third wicket pair of Wood and Stansfield briefly threatened to make a game of it, but from 67 for 3 they collapsed to 89 for 7, and were finally all out for 119, Ben Sinton taking the final wicket,

after earlier having to leave the field after being hit above the eye by a ball which bobbled awkwardly when straight driven by Wood. Charlie Sinton finished with 3 for 6, and our winning margin was 111.

With our final scheduled match at home to Purley On Thames called off the following week, the match at Bradfield was our thirteenth, and final match of the season, which we finished with a record of seven wins and six losses.

Statistically, there were a number of highlights in 2015, including three century opening stands in four matches towards the end of the season, plus another one of 60, and 123 for the third wicket at Bradfield. There were a number of other partnerships above 50, including 93 between Garry and Ed at Mortimer.

Catches were shared around with the most taken by Bunny (6), while Garry claimed 3 and Ed and Mark two each. There was an unusual abundance of wicket-keeping dismissals, especially before our 'mid-season break'. Wicket-keeping duties were shared around, often during the same match, but Craig took the most dismissals (6) in six matches he started as 'keeper and Rod claimed two catches and a stumping in his three games.

Of the bowlers, Garry was the leading wicket taker, with 15 wickets, Kevin Rapley took 12, Mark Whitelock 11 and Ed Pettit-Mills, 9. No-one took five in an innings, Ed's 4 for 15 at Cold Ash were the best figures.

Bunny's 133 in a losing cause at Purley was the best individual score of the season, and our first hundred for a couple of years. Ed also made a hundred in a losing cause, 116 not out at Woolhampton, and managed a total of 402 runs for the season. Thanks to four unbeaten innings out of eight, this meant that his average for the season was a Bradman-esque 100.50.



ALDERMASTON VILLAGE CRICKET CLUB

2015 HONOURS BOARD

100s -	Ben Hardy 133	Vs Purley On Thames (A)
	Ed Pettit-Mills 116*	Vs Woolhampton(A)
50s -	Ed Pettit-Mills 87*	Vs Englefield(A)
	Ben Hardy 83	Vs Bradfield(A)
	Charlie Sinton 81	Vs Bradfield(A)
	Ed Pettit-Mills 71*	Vs Bradfield(H)
	Ed Pettit-Mills 67	Vs Mortimer(A)
	I Amer 61	Vs Kingsclere(H)
	Garry Masters 59*	Vs Englefield(A)

100 Partnerships

164	– Ben Hardy (133) & Norman Howe (47)	Vs Purley On Thames (A)
114	– Ben Hardy (45) & Intiaz Amer (61)	Vs Kingsclere (H)
108	– Ed Pettit-Mills (116*) & Ben Hardy (33)	Vs Woolhampton (A)

Leading Wicket Takers

15	– Garry Masters	12	– Kevin Rapley
11	– Mark Whitelock	9	– Ed Pettit-Mills

4 Wkt Inns – Ed Pettit-Mills 4 for 15 vs Cold Ash (A)

Fielding Catches

6	- Ben Hardy
4	- Garry Masters
3	- Ed Pettit-Mills & Mark Woodley
2	- Jerry Dobson & Mark Whitelock

Wicket-Keeping Dismissals

6 catches	– Craig Woodley
2 catches, 1 stumping	– Rod Howell
1 catch	– Ben Hardy

Fixtures & Results - 2015 Season

Date	Opponent	Venue	Result	Type
May				
3	Wasing Farmers	Home (12.30pm)	Won	30 o/s
10	Bradfield	Home (1.00 pm)	Won By 76 Runs	35 o/s
17	Cold Ash	Away (2.00 pm)	Won By 9 Runs	35 o/s
24	Ashford Hill	Home (2.00 pm)	Won By 7 Wickets	35 o/s
31	Woodcote	Away (2.00 pm)	Lost By 8 Wickets	35 o/s
June				
7	Mortimer	Away (2.00 pm)	Lost By 39 Runs <small>(10 players)</small>	35 o/s
14	Englefield	Away (2.00 pm)	Won By 8 Wickets <small>(10 players)</small>	35 o/s
21	Goring On Thames	Away (2.00 pm)	Lost BY 6 Wickets <small>(9 players per side)</small>	35 o/s
28	Theale & Tilehurst	Home (2.00 pm)	Won By 9 Wickets	35 o/s
July				
5	Pangbourne	Home (2.00 pm)	Cancelled	
12	<i>No Match</i>			
19	Whitchurch On Thames	Home (2.00 pm)	Cancelled	
26	Reading Lawyers	Home (2.00 pm)	Cancelled (Weather)	
August				
2	Purley On Thames	Away (2.00 pm)	Lost By 19 Runs <small>(10 players)</small>	35 o/s
9	Ashford Hill	Home (2.00 pm)	Lost By 42 Runs	40 o/s
16	Pangbourne	Home (2.00 pm)	Cancelled	
23	Mortimer	Home (2.00 pm)	Cancelled	
30	Woolhampton	Home (1.30 pm)	Lost By 1 Run	
September				
6	Sulhamstead	Home (1.00 pm)	Cancelled	
13	Kingsclere	Home (1.00 pm)	Won By 6 Wickets <small>(9 players)</small>	35 o/ s
20	Bradfield	Away (12.30 pm)	Won By 111 Runs <small>(10 players)</small>	35 o/ s
27	Purley On Thames	Home (12.30 pm)	Cancelled	

