

A View from the Scorebox

Tuesday, 27 September 2011

Where do I start after a season we have had. Well first of all I would like to thank everybody connected to the club for all their support and efforts in what has been a truly superb season for the club.

Just to remind you (if you need reminding) what we have achieved this season. The 1st Team finished Runners up in the league, won the Wood Cup and the 20/20 cup they were also winners of The Oldham Courage Trophy (last 6 games) also we had the leading Professional in runs and averages and the leading Amateur wicket taker and to top it off the 2nd team won the 2nd Division Championship on a nail biting last day of the season.

What would be your favourite moment of the season be, would it be the Semi Final win in the 20/20 competition against Royton when the team came back from the dead or maybe the Wood Cup Final win also against Royton with a superb all round team effort. Michael Smiths 150 in the Wood Cup Semi Final against Clifton or his 104 off only 54 balls in the 20/20 Quarter Final again against Clifton or maybe one of many more highlights we have had this season.

For me it would have to be the reception the players got when they arrived back at the club after winning the Wood Cup. What a fantastic sight that was and what a night we all had celebrating the victory.

Quite a few high points this season and not too many low points with the fact we had a Professional for all of the season, where as you might remember we had to play with 14 different ones last season and what a difference that has made with Smithy finished top of the batting averages with 1,615 runs at an average of 70.21 and if you add on the 359 runs he made in the 20/20 at an average of 71.80 to help us win the competition for the first time ever he scored a total of 1,974 runs which is quite an achievement. Smithy also took 24 catches this year some of them absolutely stunning and proved how valuable a top class Professional is to the team and the club overall.

There was also a few firsts this season

with Mark Buckley picking up his first 5 for in the 1st team against Walsden with figures of 6/55 and also received the MOM award in the Wood Cup Final and Reece Jones reached his maiden 1st team fifty. It came at a very crucial time against Clifton in the Wood Cup Semi Final where he scored 63 in a stand of 139 with Smithy to help take us to a massive 275.

Scott Stanworth finished top of the clubs amateur batting with a total of 756 runs at an average of 35.00 with the highlight being his 103no against Heywood and he also took 20 catches and 23 stumpings during the season .

Grant Jones scored 597 runs at an average of 21.32 with a top score of 70 and took 13 catches during the season.

Captain Ste Davey scored 570 runs at an average of 19.00 with a top score of 80 as well as taking 11 catches. Ste of course took great delight in holding aloft both the Wood Cup and 20/20 trophies in which both games he remarkable took the last wickets of the game to help secure both Trophies.

Reece Jones scored 328 runs at an average of 18.22 with the knock of 63 in the Semi final being his top score and also 12 catches and he hopefully proved to his self that he is definitely a 1st teamer.

Danny Core scored 289 runs at an average of 18.06 with a top score of 51 and also took 6 catches. Danny took his best ever 1st team total of 47 wickets at an average of 16.21 with his best figures being 7/37 against Crompton to prove what a valuable all round member of the team he is.

Martin Roberts scored 344 runs at an average of 17.20 with a top score of 89 against Milnrow which helped win the game after we had been 2 for 3. Martin also more than proved his worth with 13 catches.

George Walker scored 284 runs at an average of 12.34 with a top score of 46 and also took 4 catches. George did not bowl as much this season due to a back problem but what an asset he is to the team in the field.

Mark Buckley scored 170 runs at an average of 14.16 and took 4 catches . Mark also 33 wickets at an average of 24.30

Dale Highton took 106 wickets at an average of 16.68 to win the Clifford Pickup Trophy as leading wicket taker in the league a remarkable achievement to put his name along side Middleton legends such as Roger Clarkson, Paul Rocca and Lee Wolstenholme. Dale took a season best of 8/56 against Clifton and took 5 wickets or more 8 times during the season. Dale also took 17 wickets at an average of 8.52 to finish with a total of 123 wickets for the season as well as taking 6 catches.

Zaffer Zaman a new addition to the team who had a fine first season taking 36 wickets at an average of 26.61 his best being 5/51 against Monton and taking 2 catches to be amore than useful addition to the team.

Michael Smith our Professional as said previously scored almost 2,000 runs for the club in all competitions, scoring a total of 5 hundreds the best being 150. What he has done for the team is unbelievable changing attitudes to a winning mentality and helping the club to probably their best season ever. He has being a superb foil for Captain Ste Davey and brought a lot of confidence to the team.

What an absolutely superb season for the club and as said earlier great credit to everbody involved at the club and fantastic reward to all concerned.

We will look forward to next season hopefully we can challenge Norden for the title which is obviously our next aim. I am quite sure Smithy wont let the boys rest on their laurels and I am sure you all appreciate what he as done for the club this year and hope he as a great season back home before he rejoins us next season.

Rod Highton