

## **2nd XI Report 2025**

2025 looked as if it was going to be a challenging year for the 2nds given the absence of seven regulars from the previous year and a more competitive mix of opponents. That said, it provided opportunities for youngsters to test themselves and develop and it was hoped that the older guard could contribute enough to avoid finishing in the bottom two.

The season started well with two wins against the newly promoted Broadstone 2nd XI in the first four weeks given the anomaly in the fixture generating schedule for both the 1st and 2nd XIs. The second of those games witnessed an excellent match winning innings from U17 Ben Walsh who quickly turned his first half century in adult cricket into his first century in adult cricket. Heavy defeats against Wimborne 2nds and the Royal Challengers however, were a reminder of the reasonably stiff task we faced although there were promising signs of better things to come given the two U14 opening bowlers, Harry Swan and Ibrahim Wafadar who were the quickest opening pair in the league. We just needed runs, as is often the case!

Those runs didn't really arrive until early in the second half of the season in the return game against Wimborne. A reasonably good start provided by the experienced Alex Allum and Nick Williams was brilliantly built upon by a partnership between Dan Griffiths and the newcomer Sam Crichard, who had already displayed glimpses of plentiful all-round talent in the early season. Sam took 5 wickets as well in a tight game but the day and the Performance of the Year badge, belonged to Dan with his maiden century that was reached on the last ball of the innings. The victory against Wimborne was the start of a surprising four match winning streak against Portland, Corfe Mullen and Witchampton which saw the eventual Player of the Year, 14 year old Harry Swan, grow in confidence with bat and ball. He finished the season batting at number five, having started at number ten, and took 18 wickets in total with a best of 4-42. I hope to see him continue to develop in the next few years.

Other youngsters that deserve a mention after some notable performances are Ollie Thorne, Jonathan Ramsey, Elliot Holland, Leo Hunt and Harry Reed-Hume, all of which showed definite promise and now need to focus on consistency. Of the stalwarts, Nick Williams, Robin Lutman and Joey Wilson were the standouts. Nick and Robin did the hard work at the top of the order and may be disappointed not to have scored more from a number of solid starts. Joey offered his usual miserly control and experience with the ball and often taking wickets at important times despite the increasing number of growing pains. Of the 'I wish they had played more' crowd, in addition to Sam Crichard, Shazaan Hussain, Alex Carville, Kev Wrigley and Dan Malan (who despite not playing regularly, has a remarkable appearance to win ratio!) all have a lot of ability that we hope to see a lot more of in 2025, as the standard of competition will increase again.

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As always, at the end of another enjoyable year, there are a number of people I would like to thank in addition to Joey Wilson, who captained the side and often attended selection meetings in my absence, and those that played. Off the field, Andy Milner, Jon Swan, Nick Whitton and Graeme Ramsay all supported us with scorebook duties and John MacDiarmid and Jo Pilley continued to support the club with their excellent officiating. Marian Miller came to the rescue as always when teas and cakes were required. Two people who deserve special thanks are Paddy Cornick, who played his first ever game of cricket to ensure we had 11 in a game we managed to win, and Paul Reynolds, who drove to Weymouth at a moment's notice to help us chase leather, after the 1st XI recalled Scott Bellamy following an injury in their warm up.

Cricket clubs cannot function successfully without the kind of voluntary support given by everyone mentioned and I am very grateful to you all.

David Miller

2nd XI Captain