

## SECRETARY'S REPORT 2021

Well what a season! Promotion for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI, 2<sup>nd</sup> XI and the Women's 1<sup>st</sup> XI!. Congratulations and Well Done all. The 3rds and 4ths finished just below the promotion places as well and the Club was able to put out 5XIs for much of the season. It was a full season at last (despite some COVID restrictions which affected the Juniors and the bar – more on this below).

The season started with a new approach to the net sessions proposed by Head Coach Pies (Richard Jerome) and I have no doubt that this change, and the corresponding changes in attitude to performance conveyed by Pies were a major factor in our success. We were fortunate to receive an anonymous donation and win an ECB grant which enabled us to support Pies for the whole season. Another important factor was the progress of our Juniors into the senior teams.

I appreciate that most of you receive the excellent weekly Newsletters, so there is not much for me to add to these but I will take some highlights which are worth repeating, and also to report on some of the less glamorous work carried on by the Executive Committee. Congratulations to Joe Regan, Steve Perrin, Amy Price and Adam Murphy on their maiden centuries for the Club. Amy's was the first by a Woman for the Club, and she also won the Herts "Coach of the Year" award. The other batting records of note were Manny's 6000 run milestone and 4000 runs for Adam Hounslow. Congratulations also to Andy Walker and Andy Saunders who reached the 300 and 200 wicket milestones respectively for the Club. Hugo Thomas was made a Life Member.

The season saw the first St Albans Premier League T20 (actually T10), 66 players were involved and catering from Tavah provided. It was a great success. As a result of an ECB sponsored project, we also had major events to promote Women's Cricket, organised by Cerys Jones, Cookie, Michael Jones and others and we had the first Summer Camps for many years run by Amy Price and Billy May. The Fairground Friday events were also a success.

We adopted a rather cautious approach to the Junior season, limiting our intake because of the COVID restrictions. It turned out that this was probably a mistake as other Clubs appeared to not have the same restrictions. Possibly also because of our limited operations last year, our Juniors did not perform as well as they should compared to other Clubs, and most finished in the bottom half of their Leagues (except the u9s and Girls u15s). Because of this, (and my age!), I decided to stand down as Junior sub-Committee Chair and Nick Berry agreed to take over. I am pleased I did this as he has already taken many initiatives with schools and All Stars which I wouldn't have done. This augurs well for a better results.

Financially the Club is in reasonable shape, as we broke even for the year. There was a reduction in bar income mainly down to COVID restrictions on Fridays. The Friday evening sessions which were a feature of our cricket season before COVID were limited as we restricted the bar operation to a bottle bar serving just under the verandah. Thanks to Cookie and Nic Wong for operating this bar most weeks (as well as volunteering for everything else), but hopefully we can restore the previous Friday atmosphere by bringing back the barbecue and opening the downstairs bar next year

There has been considerable progress in the Clarence Park pavilion situation. The Council allocated some money for work, with a view to increasing the future use of the pavilion. This

has included an update of the electrics, a new fire alarm system, and damp proofing in the corridor. There has also been a commitment to sort out our licence and make it longer term, which should give us access to other funding. John Webber has led these initiatives from the Club and has been liaising with the Council in this process.

This year our sponsors were Tavah, and this was a great success with many players sampling the wares of the restaurant on Hatfield Road.

The game would be very difficult without the officials to support it. We were fortunate in having Claire Odges as 1<sup>st</sup> XI scorer. Barry Atkinson our 2ndXI umpire and a lifelong member of the Club was indisposed and unfortunately unable to umpire many matches this season, and thanks are due to Gordon Murray, Ian McKinlay and Neil Telkman for stepping in and doing this job (lost points might have cost us promotion so it was important).

Another development to report is the deployment of a solar panel to power the scoreboard which saves carting the batteries across the field and charging them. Thanks to Fergie for helping me install this.

For the AGM we are proposing some changes to our constitution for two main reasons. Firstly it was somewhat out of date given our current organisation, and secondly to add a Women's sub-Committee to reflect the growth of Women's cricket and give them representation on the Executive Committee.

One effect of COVID (perhaps unnoticed) is that the sub-Committees weren't populated as well as they should be and were mainly operated by their chairs. In particular we should thank John Webber for acting as membership secretary as well as being co-chairman. The membership Secretary job is still vacant and volunteers for sub-committees are always welcome.

Looking forward to next season, problems with the increased price of electricity will hit us hard as we still pay to heat the pavilion in the winter months, so changes in the licence and ability to have more use in the winter are a priority for us. The condition and safety of the nets is also a major consideration, together with the resurrection of the on-pitch net activity. We could also see some changes in the changing room area and the bar. Hopefully good results will come.

John Rudlin  
Hon Secretary