

## Chairman report to 2023 General Meeting.

We have had another interesting and rewarding season. The weather was challenging and for the first time the rain procedures were rigorously tested. Clubs have had to be resilient and ensure that procedures are in place. Over the close season some in the lower tiers will need to ensure that their ability to cover for wet interludes is fit for purpose. The Management committee has set up a group to explore the possible integration of PlayCricket into our results reporting.

I have been pleased that our umpire coverage continues to improve. My thanks to David Quinn for all of his hard work and to the clubs who are finding more club umpires to assist us in the smooth running of the game. Most clubs in Tiers 5/6 have umpires although thought needs to be given about when the named individual is not available. In Tier 5 only 8% of appointments were not listed. The Management committee is committed to non-playing umpires throughout. To this end I would encourage clubs to continue their efforts to find willing volunteers, and remember that your current umpires do not have a youth serum. Notice is given to Tier 5 that in season 2025 the umpire point will be replaced by a penalty. Although Panel Umpires are preferred Club Umpires will continue to be acceptable (please speak to David Quinn about this). Any club umpires who would like to try a few panel appointments should contact David Quinn. It is intended that this will roll out to other tiers in subsequent years.

There are still a handful of games that have no umpires. As I have stated previously the way forward may be to find some individuals who will assist as club umpires at home as a starting point. Looking for a small group of volunteers rather than a single person to fill the umpiring commitments usually bears more fruit.

A thanks goes to the umpires as only one report was not completed and allowed us a picture of matches played. All Captain reports were done but Clubs are reminded that the Umpire marks are used as part of CPD so it is important that a mark below 15 has a comment attached.

Obviously clubs are required to ensure that their officials are DBS checked and have completed a course. Ian Royle is currently devising Cherwell friendly courses so can be contacted if you have suitable candidates. Level 1 is online and links to courses are available via the website. Also Panel Umpires need to have up to date ACO membership. The provision of a competent scorer helps the smooth running of the game. The requirement for two scorers now applies to Tier1/4. In Tier 5 all clubs have computer access and we would hope that all games are scored on computer. Some feel that the other scorer should use a book in case of technical issues ~ certainly two books/computers should be used. We would like to extend computer access to Tier 6 and below. If existing users are not using their laptop it can be re-purposed and clubs without should speak to Gary if they wish to use other computers. The more scorecards that can be downloaded the easier it becomes to administer the league.

Now that the new structure is firmly in place it is time to monitor where we are and rectify shortcomings. In the Admin\Rules and regulations section of the website is the ground standards document. A great deal of work has gone into this document so that you can see what is expected. Clubs in Tiers 5/8 are telling me they are aspirational and this document is a blueprint for them to achieve it. Please take some time over the winter to check that you are meeting the standards for your

tier and your aspiration. Do you have an umpire room? Is it clean and accessible? Have you a designated scoring point sheltered from the weather? Is there a power supply for laptop scoring? Is there a working clock? There are many such questions aimed to improve the environment for the game. The size of the structure needs your help to ensure we can improve. A management sub-committee is looking to trail a more detailed umpires report in Tiers 1/2 next season for rollout in subsequent seasons.

I was pleased that we were able to continue with the Cup competitions which the OCA have run in the past. With the new bases it is even possible to lift the Airey and Telegraph Cups now. We are currently reviewing the registration requirements to encourage more involvement and reduce the number of concessions. Some interest was expressed in a Tier 1/2 involvement in Cups ~ something that I know David Quinn is keen to support. To this end Barrie Pudwell is working on a relaunch of the Pullinger Cup T20 competition.

We did raise with forums that in 2024 we are celebrating 50 years of the Cherwell League. We intend to hold a Dinner and would encourage all clubs to support it. Richard Raine is co-ordinating this and spearheading the relaunch of Divisional trophies which has been on hold since COVID and amalgamation. I am hopeful that the pennants will continue. We hope to source new stumps and are looking at other merchandising options. The TVCL Rep game is at home next year and will be another cornerstone of the season. In the 40<sup>th</sup> celebrations there were league representative sides who played at interested clubs. Please let us know if this appeals to your club for 2024.

Richard has also taken on the development of Social Media. He is more than happy to hear from others wishing to be involved. In the absence of suitable press coverage of our activities you may feel that you could coordinate a weekly summary of your Tier which can be accessed by interested parties and linked to club media feeds. Please discuss this with him if you have an interest here.

I would like to thank the Management Committee for their work on your behalf. They volunteer to ensure that we have an aspirational league. The objective of the Management Committee in this is to help member clubs to focus on issues which will generate improvement. I trust that clubs can understand this when communicating to our volunteers. I am pleased that most of the Management Committee is willing to continue. My thanks go to Mike Lowe for his work on the Representative Games this season. There are still vacancies and it would be useful to have a volunteer from Tier 1/2 to assist with the developments mentioned above. This does not exclude the involvement of others and if anyone feels they have something to offer to enhance our league they should e-mail Ian Murdoch in the first instance.

I look forward to an interesting and challenging 2024. We have come a long way but there is still much to do. I hope we can continue to work together to achieve our aim ~ an aspirational league, with an atmosphere which is challenging and competitive whilst remaining an enjoyable recreation, allowing all teams to achieve their potential.

Brian Standish

Chair ~ Cherwell Cricket League