



APRIL, 2018 NEWSLETTER

Hawk Green seeking to join League in 2019

DERBYSHIRE & Cheshire League club Hawk Green have applied to join the Vivio Cheshire County League at the end of the 2018 season.

With a fine ground at Rhode Field, Upper Hibbert Lane, situated a couple of miles from Marple, Hawk Green made a formal application to switch leagues via the Cheshire Clubs Cricket Committee.

The development was subsequently discussed between the officers of the County and Cheshire Leagues and, considering the strength of the club and its impressive facilities, it was agreed to advocate that Hawk Green be admitted to the County League for the 2019 season, to play in Division Two.

If a proposal that they should be admitted, to be made by Didsbury and seconded by Tattenhall, is ratified at the League management meeting at Warrington on Wednesday, April 11, only the bottom club in Division 2 will be relegated from the County League and only the champion club promoted from the UK Fast League at the end of the 2018 campaign.

Hawk Green 2nd XI would then also be promoted to play in the County League's Second Division.

Reporting to the League's March Cricket Committee, chairman David Humpage said: "Hawk Green are the current Derbyshire and Cheshire League champions and have good playing strength throughout the club, and they possess a ground which easily passes muster. While some people in the UK Fast League felt Hawk Green should start at the bottom of the pyramid and work their way up, it was the general consensus that Hawk Green were of sufficient calibre to merit a place in the County League in 12 months' time".

The matter will be reported in full to the League management committee's April meeting at Warrington.

Founded in 1909

Founded in 1909, Hawk Green immediately joined the High Peak League in which they were regularly successful. They moved to their present ground in 1956 and have since added a splendid modern pavilion.

They have played in the Derbyshire & Cheshire League since 1967 and are the current 1st and 2nd XI champions. They have regularly entered the Cheshire Shield, winning the competition in 2016 and losing Northwich in last season's final.

The club have had decent runs in the National Village championship and in 2015 reached the last eight before losing to eventual winners Woodhouse Grange

DAVID GOWER TO SPEAK AT LEAGUE DINNER

FORMER England captain David Gower is to be the principal guest speaker at the League's ground-breaking Presentation Dinner under canvas at Toft on Friday, October 5.

The one-time Leicestershire and Hampshire batsman played in 117 Tests for England scoring 18 centuries between 1978 and 1992. Now aged 61, he is a leading Sky television pundit.

The League are planning to make the end of season event more informal with a fresh format. They are also aiming to reduce the price from the £30 charged in recent seasons at Mere.

EARLY APRIL NEWSLETTER: p2

Only 39 clubs enter Cheshire Cup & Shield

THERE has been a record low entry of 39 clubs for the **Cheshire Cup and Shield** in 2018, only 22 from the County League signing up to play in the two competitions.

Organiser Peter Hayes comments: "As last season, a couple applied after the draw was made, including Cheadle.. the only Premier League club not to feature. After the poor response in 2017 when 46 entered, we invited clubs to let us know how we could improve the two competitions, but only three responded and no major changes have been made, apart from the introduction of the Duckworth-Lewis method of resolving games in which rain intervenes".

He added: "It would appear to me that the proliferation of Cheshire county fixtures especially those on Sundays which take away all the best players, is killing the Cheshire Cup".

The Duckworth/Lewis method of overs-reckoning in the event of rain is explained in guidelines drawn up and James Emmerson which he has entered into general circulation.

The 23 clubs in the Cheshire Cup – which regularly used to attract more than 100 clubs - include 18 from the County League. Holders Chester Boughton Hall enjoy a first round bye on Sunday, April 22 before hosting Widnes or Timperley in round two. There will be seven first round games played on the first Sunday of the season.

The Shield has attracted an entry of 16 clubs, including four from the County League, with holders Northwich hosting Lindow in round one on Sunday, May 20.

CHESHIRE CUP DRAW: round 1 on April 22

Bramhall v Alvanley

Hyde bye

Marple v Didsbury

New Brighton bye

Neston bye

Bollington v Hawk Green

Wallasey bye

Grappenhall v Elworth

Chester Boughton Hall (holders) bye

Widnes v Timperley

Port Sunlight bye

Nantwich bye

Toft v Macclesfield

Oulton Park bye

Alderley Edge v Upton

Oxton bye

Round 2 is on Sunday, May 27; round 3 on Sunday, July 25; semi-finals on Sunday, August 12; final on Sunday, September 9

CHESHIRE SHIELD DRAW: round 1 on Sunday, May 20

Cheadle Hulme v Ashley

Disley v Hale Barns

Northwich (holders) v Lindow

Prestbury v Stockport Trinity

Sandbach v Romiley

Stockport Georgians v Caldby

Ashton on Mersey v Mossley

Parkfield Liscard v Woodford.

Round 2: Sunday, June 3; semi-finals: Sunday, June 24; final on Sunday, July 29

.....11 clubs pulled out in 2017

IT was reported at the Cheshire Cricket Clubs Committee AGM at Hale Barns on February 26 that 11 clubs had withdrawn from the Cup and Shield competitions last season, forfeiting their £50 deposits at a total of £550. Expenditure on the two competitions was £1,082.

Income from affiliation fees was £7,290 boosting total income to £7840, giving a profit of £2108. Year end balance was £13,738.

Officers elected: chairman David Humpage; secretary John Petch; treasurer Stuart Anderson; competition secretary Peter Hayes; West and East Area reps Jim Rafferty and Mike Hasprey.

EARLY APRIL NEWSLETTER: p 3

Clubs to get free stumps AND balls

ON top of the free 18 cricket balls allocated to all County League 1st XI clubs this season, they are also to be presented with a set of stumps and bails inscribed with the title of sponsors Vivio. This is by agreement with the supplies Reader's.

Clubs will be asked to ensure that these stumps are used in all 1st XI fixtures.

Stumps packages will hopefully be available for collection, along with the balls, handbooks and team cards, at the pre-season League management meeting at Warrington on Wednesday, April 11, from 7.30 p.m.

Forties Finals Day @ Warrington

OVER Forties Finals Day this season will be on Sunday, September 2 at Warrington, from 12 noon.

Warm thanks are due to Warrington for putting their two grounds at the disposal of the league.

Plaudits also to Neston and Toft who offered the use of their facilities.

Founder members Hyde have returned to make up a 33-club format and will operate in the South East Division.

Fixtures begin on Wednesday, May 2. A full list of these fixtures is available on the league website (see details on back page of *Newsletter*).

34 TEAMS IN 2nd XI T20

A TOTAL of 34 teams will play in the **2nd XI Joseph Holt Brewery T20** competition in 2018.

Sale and Tattenhall return after being excluded in 2017, while Cheadle Hulme and Widnes, who both conceded games last season, are ruled out, reports Competition secretary Brian Boys.

Until the semi-finals, all games will be on a regional basis. Panel umpires will be appointed for all games.

The full **corrected** draw is as follows:

Preliminary round: Tuesday, May 8:

Bramhall v Stockport Georgians;

Nantwich v Davenham.

First round: Tuesday, May 22:

Oxton v Neston 3;

Grappenhall v Chester Boughton Hall;

Warrington v Upton;

Alvanley v Neston 2;

Tuesday, May 29:

Nantwich or Davenham v Northwich;

Congleton v Toft;

Tattenhall v Oulton Park;

Bowdon v Timperley;

Bramhall or Stockport Georgians v Cheadle.

Romiley v Heaton Mersey;

Didsbury v Hyde;

Marple v Stockport.

Back to Tuesday, May 22:

Urmston v Sale;

Bollington v Macclesfield;

Brooklands v Alderley Edge;

Ashton on Mersey v Lindow.

Round 2 games are on Tuesdays, June 5 and 12 and **round 3** on Tuesday, June 26.

The full set out draw and further competition details are available on the league website.

Dario Seale is available

BARBADOS-based fast bowler Dario Seale, who last season took 52 wickets at 15.29 for First Division club Bollington, would like to return to play in the County League in 2018

Dario, 25 who hails from St. Michael's, is available by e-mail on dario52@live.com/ His telephone is 1 246 842 1410.

Late news from around the clubs

BRAMHALL

AT BRAMHALL where Kevin Webb has succeeded Richard Cragg as president, Steve Driscoll continues in the chair, with Andy Reynolds secretary. Long-serving treasurer Iain Tittle hands over to Phil Duffy. Captains: 1st XI Nick Cantello; 2nd XI Tom Drury; 3rd XIs Dave Shoesmith and Dave Robinson.

CHESTER BOUGHTON HALL

ALL senior officers at CHESTER continue, with Brian Gresty adding the chairmanship to the presidency. New 1st XI captain is former Glamorgan all-rounder Will Owen, with Dan Riley leading the twos, Steve Trene the 3rd XI A and Ian Thistlewood the 3rd XI B team. Chris Fleet remains Club Captain.

Chester plan to register Lancashire all-rounder Jordan Clark as a county contracted player. Clark last season played for Alderley Edge, but has previously appeared for CBH.

HALE BARNS

NEWLY promoted HALE BARNS have Ade Mahon as chairman and Dave Kitchen as secretary, while long-serving John Petch becomes president for a three-year term.

MOBBERLEY

IT'S as you were at MOBBERLEY, with Rick Mountney continuing as chairman, Tom Boyle secretary, Josh Northover as 1st XI captain. David Potts leads the Over Forties.

NANTWICH

STEADY as you go also at NANTWICH with Wayne Morgan continuing in the chair, while Laura Hadzik becomes secretary. Team captains: 1st XI Ray Doyle; 2nd XI Andy Newton; 3rd XI Jake Pearson.

RUNCORN

THE League's newest club RUNCORN have David Barlow in the chair with Stewart Conway secretary. 1st XI captain is James Wells.

SALE

SALE welcome back Chris Canning and Ty Lawrence from Timperley, while record-breaking leg-spinner Rick Halkon is available again after an absence. An overseas player is not being engaged.

Jamie Broadbent has been elected chairman, succeeding Paul Battersby, who stands down after five years to develop the junior section. Keith Wellings leads the 1st XI; Jamel Banzafar the seconds; Abbas Rizvi the thirds, and Iain Harrop the newly-formed fourths as well as the Over Forties.

STOCKPORT

PLAYING in Division One for the first time, STOCKPORT have re-elected ySteve Allwright as chairman with Mark Green secretary. Sam Edwards captains the 1st XI.

TATTENHALL

REMAINING chairman at TATTENHALL is Alex Sandland, with Brian Jarrard adding the secretarial duties to those as groundsman.

1st XI captain is to be Glen Coppack; 2nd XI Matt Spann; 3rd XI Steve White; Over Forties John Hope.

EARLY-APRIL NEWSLETTER: p5

Club news cont ...

TIMPERLEY

STAR signing at TIMPERLEY is Lancashire's talented batsman Brooke Guest from Sale.

Nathan Brown takes over from Craig Grindley as 1st XI captain, while Rob Matthews leads the twos and Jurgees Hasan the threes. Mark Maddocks is to run the Over Forties.

Bob Page remains chairman, with Chris Page becoming secretary and David Twiney treasurer.

UPTON

CHAIRMAN Jez Lamb reports that 10 players have joined UPTON during the winter, strengthening the club at all levels. He welcomes back all-rounder Ross Dixon, last season's Chester Boughton Hall skipper, who returns after a long absence. Ross made his 1st XI debut at Upton aged 12 in 2004 and went on to become one of the club's best young players.

URMSTON

URMSTON welcome back Craig Grindley from Timperley.

Rob Arnold remains chairman, with Nigel Maxfield secretary and Jackie Arnold treasurer.

Captains – 1st XI Callum Turner; 2nd XI Balaal Hanif; 3rd XI Tom Lockett; Suhdai XI Ian Williams; Over Forties Rob Tootell.

WIDNES

THERE are few changes at WIDNES. Principal officers are: chairman Andy Atkin; secretary Rupert Faulkner; treasurer Andy Woods; 1st XI captain Tom Evans; 2nd XI captain Tim Wearden.

NEW LAWS NEED TO BE VIEWED

THERE will be no pre-season Behaviour Forums to follow up the successful meetings a year ago which called on clubs to improve their on-field discipline, especially those in which panel umpires were not standing.

However, Deputy chairman Brian Boys has issued a notice to all clubs pointing out that the MCC have completed a major revision of the Laws involving a significant number of key changes, especially those related to player discipline and to unfair and dangerous play.

He reports that the ECB have produced some excellent material on-line on this subject and on player behaviour which needs to be viewed by chairmen, secretaries and league reps, plus captains and players.

Mr. Boys thoroughly recommends that this information from ECB, which comes in three individual items of material, should be seen by all the above, but especially team captains. They can all be covered in a maximum of 50 minutes.

Full details of how the Laws and other information can be viewed on-line are attached to the notice.

37 clubs in *Liverpool Echo* cup draw

COUNTY League clubs Oxton and Chester Boughton Hall will meet in the preliminary round of the **Liverpool Echo T20** tournament which has attracted a 37-strong entry. Figuring in the first round draw are Neston and Upton.

PAIRINGS

Preliminary round (to be completed by June 3): Ainsdale v Northern; Maghull v Burscough; Skelmersdale v Rainford; **Oxton v Chester Boughton Hall**

First round (by June 24): Liverpool v Sefton Park; Bootle v Old Xaverians; Fleetwood Hesketh v Churchtown; Ainsdale or Northern v Southport Trinity; Formby v New Victoria; Southport v Hightown; Rainhill v Sutton; Aughton v Ormskirk; Maghull or Burscough v Skem or Rainford; St. Helens Town v Newton le Willows; **Upton v New Brighton**; Parkfield Liscard v Birkenhead Park; Caldby v **Neston**; Port Sunlight v **Oxton or Chester Boughton Hall**.

The second round has to be played by June 24; quarter-finals by July 25; semi-finals by July 29; the final by August 19.

○ Because of bad winter and early spring weather, the start of the Liverpool Competition season has been postponed from Saturday, April 14 to Saturday, April 21.

LATEST OBITUARIES

Cricket historian Gerald Hudd

WELL-known cricket historian Gerald Hudd has died, aged 76.

Gerald was born in Monmouthshire in 1942 and moved to Gloucester later that year with his family where he spent his early years. He became a supporter of the Gloucester and Worcester county cricket teams.

His working life was spent in prison administration until he took early retirement in 1996.

By then he had moved to live at Warrington with his job in 1966, becoming a member of the Lancashire county club in 1972, becoming a life member in 1997.

Gerald wrote a number of books in the Association of Cricket Statisticians series on Famous Cricketers detailing the lives of Reg Simpson, Johnny Wardle, Jim Laker and Tom Goddard. He also wrote *Test Cricket History at Old Trafford from 1884 to 1998* and *John Jackson – the Nottinghamshire Foghorn*.

More locally, he wrote *Grappenhall Cricket Club – the first 125 years from 1881 to 2006*, with John Bygate providing the foreword.

Premier Leagues founder Frank Kemp

A TOP-class cricket administrator who was instrumental in setting up the chain of Premier Cricket Leagues in the UK in the late 1990s, died on Friday, March 16.

Frank travelled up from his HQ at Lord's to attend several County League management meetings in 1997 and 1998 prior to formation of that level of cricket in Cheshire in 1999, when the first champions were Macclesfield.

Mr. Kemp was a former player and a current member at the Teddington club in Middlesex for more than 30 years.

Former ECB Recreation Cricket chairman John Pickup paid this tribute: "Frank's legacy to the game was his prime role in setting up the Premier Leagues over a period of 10 years. It seemed to be an exacting task at the time, but it was one he achieved with persistence, tact and efficiency. A true servant of the game".

Cheadle Hulme stalwart Michael Fish

THE death occurred on Good Friday, March 30 of Cheadle Hulme stalwart Mike Fish.

Mike was taken ill while in the shower, when great efforts were made to revive him with CPR and a defibrillator, but to no avail.

A former 2nd and 3rd XI captain at Grove Park, Mike is survived by his wife, Doreen and sons Nick and Dan, who both play for Cheadle Hulme, and Robert. His brother Paul is also a well-known cricket personality having played for Winnington Park for many years.

Lifetime friend and club colleague Ian Brown said: "Mike was a terrific guy, always cheerful, who did an enormous amount for Cheadle Hulme. It's a great loss. Like myself a dedicated Manchester City fan, he will no doubt be looking down from above at Saturday's important derby match at The Etihad".

Nigel Muirhead plans Paris

Marathon fund-raiser

TOFT chairman Nigel Muirhead is in training to run in the Paris Marathon on Sunday, April 8 and invites support for twin causes.

He says: "I never thought I would do this type of run again after somehow getting through the London Marathon in 2007, but needs must and I am now asking for support for the British Heart Foundation and Toft Cricket Club".

Nigel's father died in 2003, aged 66, hence the BHF link, while his club have embarked on a massive programme to raise £500k for a new pavilion.

"Any support, however small, will be appreciated and the fund is to remain open until April 30", says the Toft livewire.

Details of how to contribute to his cause can be found on:

[Nigel Muirhead is fundraising for Toft Cricket Club](#)

OUR LAST TOUR TO INDIA IN 2006

AFTER following England cricket abroad every winter except one since 1994, Wyn and I decided that the 28-day trip to India in March, 2006 would be our last.

Wonderful times though we had enjoyed round and about the cricket fields of the World in 12 countries, long external and internal flights, multiple coach trips, lengthy days and late evenings take their toll – and, anyway all good things come to an end.

I had been to India before - without my better half, in 2001 - but we returned as a twosome this time as I was keen to show her the many delights offered by the sub-Continent.

We again signed up with the Gulliver's organisation for the three-match Test series, to be played at Nagpur, Mohali and Mumbai starting in early March and were well rewarded with some fine cricket, England emerging with an honourable 1-1 draw.

The flight out to Mumbai from the despised Heathrow took in a lengthy stop at Dubai, where we toured the enticing airport shops without being tempted to buy. Onto India and a night in Mumbai, before taking a flight next morning to Nagpur in the central province of Maharashtra. Nagpur is an untidy, heavily-populated city with very little merit it seemed to us, apart from some fine colonial-era buildings.

The First Test was an interesting, drawn game, notable for England debuts by Alistair Cook, hotfoot from an Under 21s tour in the Windies, Monty Panesar and Ian Blackwell. The scores were: England 393 (Paul Collingwood 136 - a maiden Test ton) and 297-3 declared (Cook 104 not out); India 323 (man of match Matthew Hoggard 5-57) and 260-6 (Wasim Jaffer 100).

We stayed at the Pride Hotel, a stone's throw from the airport and a three-mile coach trip from the ground which was on its last legs and about to be replaced by a more modern stadium on the outskirts of the city. The teams and umpires were in residence at our hotel and we were able to offer a warm handshake of congratulation on his maiden ton to young Mr. Cook. "Thank you both so much, I hope it will be followed by many more", replied this very likeable young man, prophetically as it transpired.

We flew from Nagpur to New Delhi where we enjoyed a few days sight-seeing round the densely over-populated, fascinating capital, still with rich memories of the British Raj. Author and cricket statistician Douglas Miller was in our Imperial Hotel and kept us busy with some of the most difficult quizzes I had ever failed to crack. His favourite player was the late Ken Barrington and I told him I had had the pleasure of playing against a Surrey Club & Ground team at Epsom 55 years earlier captained by Barrington, which also contained Denis Cox – who later played for Crewe LMR and Cheshire and died prematurely - wicket keeper Roy Swetman, Richard Pratt and Millwall footballer Jimmy Jones.

Next day we took a coach to Agra to visit the Taj Mahal: a never-to-be-forgotten experience. To strike a mundane note, the ladies' toilets were apparently in a wretched condition, which severely affected their subsequent enjoyment of the wonderful 17th century edifice which the world scrambles to see. Fortunately, the ladies did agree to have their pictures taken with us.

Up in the Punjab

Back to the capital, before next morning setting off by coach to Chandigarh in the Punjab, when travelling by train would have cut the exhausting journey from eight to four hours. When we arrived we were greeted by our new guide, former England batsman David Steele whom I had met when he officiated at Nantwich's 150th anniversary celebrations in 1998. David had got Bishan Bedi to talk to us in the lobby later that evening, but we so tired that we were unable to pay full attention before staggering off to bed.

I had been before to the Mohali ground, 10 miles from our hotel, and knew where there was an excellent public dining area which proved extremely visitable. England's form dived on a picturesque ground where our hosts were sitting in coats and mufflers in 'cold' autumn weather of 75 degrees while we lapped up the lovely sunshine. Scores: England 300 (skipper Fred Flintoff 70, Anil Kumble 5-76) and 181; India 338 and 244-1 (Mahendra Sewag a superb 76), winning by nine wickets to go 1-0 up in the series.

Next day we had a good look round Le Corbusier's remarkably well-planned, modern city, which offers distant glimpses of the white-peaked Himalayas. In the evening we went to a restaurant where the television was showing what proved to be the most sensational ODI of all time between South Africa and Oz at Jo'burg. The scores were Oz 434-5; SA 238-9 winning off the last ball. Hardly had time to eat.

Next morning, we took a train to Rathambore for a full day at the famous Tiger Safari, which used to be a royal hunting ground and is the home to tigers, leopards and marsh crocs. It was three hours before we spotted a now very rare tiger - a wonderful animal it was worth the wait. We just loved these safaris and were so sorry this was to be our last.

EARLY-APRIL NEWSLETTER: p8

India tour contd...

Next morning, it was back by train to Mumbai where we were taken to the splendid Intercontinental Hotel which proved to be a brisk 20 minutes walk to the Wankhede Stadium, where the Third Test began next day. On the first morning at the ground, we met that excellent man Chester's Phil Thomas, who had just arrived with a huge contingent of Brits hoping for a decent result. We were sorely disappointed with the stadium and were not surprised to learn that the BICC were to spend the equivalent of £10m upgrading it within the next 18 months.

England got on top on the first day and stayed there. They scored 400 (Andrew Strauss 128, Owais Shah a gritty 88 after replacing the ill Alistair Cook) and 191; India 279 (Jimmy Anderson 4-76) and 100 all out. Surprise choice Shaun Udall came in at the last moment and took a remarkable 4-14 off 9.2 overs of genuine off-spin. Which helped win the game comfortably and square the series 1-1.

That reminds me that I approached Shaun Udall when Berkshire played Cheshire at Nantwich a couple of years later and asked him if that stint at the Wankhede was the stand-out performance of his first class career. "In terms of impact it was most certainly was and I only played because Liam Plunkett was ill", he replied. "It was a terrible tour for 'Delhi Belly' and injury and several players flew home early. Fred Flintoff did superbly well in his first captaincy".

The Barmy Army

This was our last day in the company of the ever-growing Barmy Army, a group of fanatics we had first met - and briefly joined - back in 1995 after that famous victory at Adelaide. We shall never forget doing the conga all the way back from the ground to our hotel in the city. However, the Army can become too much at times with their boorish anthems and aggressive attitude and while the England players enjoy the vocal support they provide, they usually ignored the official tour parties, which were larger in numbers and just as supportive in their own way.

We attended a quiz at the swish Brabourne Stadium with Lancastrians Jackie Bond and Jack Simmons captaining teams of tourists from rival groups in an hilarious manner. Wyn spotted the magnificent inter-state Ranji Trophy and had her picture taken holding it.

Next day we were given an extensive tour of the city, which contains - rather than houses - 22 million people, many of them living in abject poverty. There were scenes which upset many in our party, including most of the women, including my dear wife, who retains unhappy memories of India and its food, to this day.

I don't share these views as I think the sub Continent is a unique country with many areas well worth visiting with wonderful, friendly people who do their best to be good hosts. India is just so different to anything we know in the Western World.

We are often asked which was our favourite tour. We went on 13 trips to 11 cricketing countries in 13 years from 1994 - 2006 - everywhere except Bangladesh and Pakistan and enjoyed them all to different degrees. We were most fascinated by New Zealand, a refreshingly old-fashioned and truly delightful country with good organisation and the very purest fresh air. Also Zimbabwe which, while badly governed at the time, offered many memorable and novel places of interest for visitors and is, to this day, trying so hard to make it in the cricket fraternity. Unfavourites? Trinidad and the Jamaican capital Kingston.

On the last morning in India, so heavy was the city traffic that it took our coach three hours to complete the 15 miles airport drive. Then off home on an eight-hour flight, to pick up the long-suffering cats and enjoy pleasant Easter weather as the 2006 season approached.

The 2006 season? ... Oulton Park will remember that one. It was when Roy Ramsbottom's men recorded a Premier League and Cheshire Cup double and went onto complete a hat-trick of doubles in 2007, a record which stands to this day.

UMPIRES' MEETING

THE pre-season meeting of the League Umpires & Scorers Association is to be held at Timperley CC on Wednesday, April 18 starting at 8 p.m.

EARLY-APRIL NEWSLETTER: p9

Final League Newsletter

THIS will be my final full *Newsletter* as I am standing down after 43 years' work in order to fulfil a lesser role and enable the League to better reflect the modern age by presenting their news in a different format.

UK Fast Cheshire League secretary Brian Birtles, a member at Ashley with excellent administrative knowledge, plans to produce a *Newsletter* covering the activities of both major leagues in Cheshire.

He says: "Rather than give full set out scores and tables etc. as in the past, I shall look to publish links to these details on the play.cricket website, unless there is match report sent to me by a club after a particularly interesting game."

Brian goes on: "I have a long mailing list of UKFast contacts and I thank you for sending me details of the many people, including the press and officers etc., to whom you address your weekly *Newsletter*. I shall attempt to keep them covered".

Brian's first output will give the two leagues' opening fixtures on Saturday, April 21 with a full list of appointed umpires.

I shall continue to send out a *Newsletter* covering the activities of the Over Forties section which pitches wickets on Wednesday, May 2. Meanwhile, if anyone wishes to contact me on any subject, they can continue to do so using the usual e-mail address.

At their March meeting the League Cricket Committee decided to develop their official Pitchero website under the management of Oxton-based expert Richard Fennah. This will carry more extensive news and information than in the past.

Richard can be reached personally at www.richardfennah@gmail.com or by tel. on 07886 484 891 while his website contact address remains www.cheshirecountycl.org.uk

Darren Sutcliffe, who will again be playing for Northwich, plans to ensure that all league results, tables and fixtures are covered weekly on his website: www.cheshirecountycl.play-cricket.com/

Darren can be contacted at any time by e-mail on dsooty54@btinternet.com

● Brian Birtles has announced his resignation as secretary of the UK Fast League with immediate effect. Brian disagreed with the handling of Hawk Green's application to join the Cheshire pyramid (see page 1).

Harking back to April, 1975...

THE office on the top floor at my Sandiway home is crammed with more than 1,000 past copies of the *Newsletter* which I have published regularly since the first issue on April 27, 1975 when the league was formally launched. Readers may be interested in my report on the preamble and first round of fixtures and results played on that opening day.

Beforehand, I would like to pay tribute to my dear wife Wyn who operated the famous 'Phone in' for more years than she cares to remember, taking results, details and highlights which I later turned into words before despatching the information world-wide. These went out originally by post and latterly by e-mail and internet. Only I know the time and patience Wyn put into the task which even meant we had to forgo many summer holidays.

She made many wonderful friends during her long hours on the 'phone - which, incidentally, allowed yours truly to continue playing until 1982, then umpire for a further 28 years!

Here are extracts from the first two *Newsletters* on April 27 and May 4. How many names you can recall?

'BUMBLE' AT SEND-OFF

THE Cheshire County League was given a successful send off on Friday, April 25 at a buffet party at Bowdon attended by more than 100 club officials, players and visitors.

Guest speaker was David Lloyd of Lancashire and England who delighted his audience with an amusing description of a 'recent overseas tour' followed by a Q & A session.

A reply was given by chairman Fred Millett who went on to wish all clubs good luck and good cricket in their inaugural season, which had been reached after years of planning.

An interesting feature of the opening programme was visits made to each ground staging 1st XI fixtures of John Coakley, chairman of the League Cricket Conference of which the CCL were the newest members. Mr Coakley went on his trip using a map drawn by secretary Noel Smith.

As it turned out the opening day was damp after heavy mid-week rain and low scoring was universal throughout Section One (1st XIs) and Section Two (2nd XIs). Third XI cricket started in 1976.

EARLY-APRIL NEWSLETTER: p10

1975 contd ...

A DAMP OPENER

AS it transpired, it was very wet on the League's opening day when there were four definite results, while the Warrington v Brooklands game was played on Brooklands' second ground by the agreement of the league because Walton Lea was under water.

Section 1 (1st XI) results:

Alderley Edge beat Northwich by 7 wickets:

Northwich 93 (Trevor Williams 5-36, Tony Good 3-31); Alderley Edge 93-3 (Roger Pearman 57 not out).

Bramhall beat Marple by 8 wickets:

Marple 46 (John Barton 6-7); Bramhall 49-2 (Bob Lees 48 not out).

Bowdon beat Cheadle by 3 wickets:

Cheadle 123-7; Bowdon 126-7 (Tony Strzlecki 42)

Heaton Mersey lost to Macclesfield by 48 runs:

Macclesfield 104 (David Whitworth 42, Alan Clarke 3-4, Steve Harris 3-16); Heaton Mersey 56 (Geoff Wells 3-5, Gus Williamson 3-22, Fred Millett 3-22).

Warrington drew with Brooklands (at Brooklands):

Warrington 125 (Steve Martin 4-54); Brooklands 70-9 (Keith Gentry 40, Hugh De Prez 4-22).

Winnington Park drew with Cheadle Hulme:

Cheadle Hulme 136 (Jim Hewison 56, Brian David 5-41); Winnington 120-7 (Walter Milnes 33).

Section 2 (2nd XIs) results:

Brooklands beat Warrington by 7 wickets:

Warrington 91 (Simon Batey 41, Jim Speed 4-5); Brooklands 93-3 (R. Talbot 32no).

Cheadle drew with Bowdon:

Cheadle 144 (Tom Mather 76, Jim Murray 5-13); Bowdon 103-7.

Macclesfield lost to Heaton Mersey by 9 wickets:

Macclesfield 82 (Keith Morgan 4-14); Heaton Mersey 83-1 (Ian Kelsall 41no);

Marple drew with Bramhall:

Marple 121; Bramhall 118-9 (M Harris 6-40)

Northwich beat Alderley Edge by 38 runs:

Northwich 98 (Eddie Robinson 46, Harry Coe 4-9); Alderley Edge 60 (Mike Talbot-Butler 4-3, John McGowan 4-25).

Cheadle Hulme v Winnington Park cancelled.

1975 HONOURS ...

At the end of a highly successful first season, the Honours Board read as follows:

1st XI champions: Alderley Edge; runners-up Bowdon.

2nd XI champions: Brooklands; runners-up Heaton Mersey.

There was no League 1st XI knock-out due to the success of the Cheshire Cup .

2nd XI knock-out final: Bowdon 196-7 (A. Lawrence 50 not out, R. Spruce 3-57) beat Cheadle Hulme 114 (P. Harper 37, J. Murray 3-11, A. Lawrence 3-22) by 82 runs.

Aggregate winners (1st and 2nd XI pts. combined): Alderley Edge

Steiner Inter-league Cup 2nd round (at Marple): County League 215-7 (Roger Pearman 60); Lancs & Cheshire League 217-5 (John Sullivan 92). Sullivan also won two jackpots on the Marple one-armed bandit, trousering £75.

Under 18 Colts friendlies included (at Fodens): County League 144-5 (Brian Griffiths 49), Liverpool Competition 59 (Paul Allott 8-18, including seven bowled)

Cheshire Cup winners: Brooklands

1st XI batting average winner: Keith Woodcock (Winnington Park) 718 runs at 55.23. Most runs: Roger Pearman (Alderley Edge) 756. Bowling: John Barron (Bramhall) 51 wickets at 12.18. Most wickets: Keith Walker (Brooklands) 53.

2nd XI batting average winner: John Baggs (Macclesfield) 393 runs at 43.66. Most runs: Roger Finney (Bramhall) 444.

2nd XI bowling average winner: Bob Spruce (Cheadle Hulme) 41 wickets at 9.78. Most wickets: Howard Bentley (Bramhall) 49.

That's it, folks, over and out

This Newsletter was compiled & edited by Mike Talbot-Butler:

E-mail: mike.t-b@talktalk.net

Future issues will cover Over 40s only, from Monday, Apri