

July proved to be a varied and interesting month, both on and off the pitch

Congratulations first of all to Martin Prosser who won our World Cup competition, narrowly holding on from Phil Webb and Andy Turnbull in a photo finish.

There was also a very successful "real ale" night organised by Neil Wright and a separate quiz evening. The latter raised around £800 for club funds. Thanks to Paul Scott for acting as quizmaster and also to his family who prepared delicious food and donated it to the club.

Thank you also to everyone who participated in the above events. They are very important to help raise funds.

On the pitch, reference to the Queen song "Under Pressure" seems appropriate to all of our teams, who are struggling to maintain any consistency and who are all hovering around the relegation zone, in their respective leagues. Pressure can of course be a good thing. High pressure in the summer usually means good weather for example, and there is nothing like a bit of pressure to focus the mind although it can become destructive when prolonged.

And, of course, the opposition are prone to gamesmanship as well. In a recent Sunday game one of our younger players was the subject of a particularly vociferous appeal by the wicket keeper for caught behind. He knew he hadn't touched it and thankfully the umpire agreed. He then hit 2 off the next ball, with the wicket keeper asking him if the ball had hit his bat. Similar comments followed the remaining balls so at the end of the over he confided in his experienced batting partner that the wicket keeper was annoying him. "Don't react" was the advice. "Say nothing. I'll deal with it. Watch and learn"

At the start of the next over, with the bowler half way on his run up, the experienced player put his hand up to stop the bowler, and walked away to help himself focus. Three times in a row he did this, much to the opposition's annoyance. More importantly however, the wicket keeper fell silent and remained so for the rest of the match. And we won the game. This power of silence reminded me of a story I read about the Australian captain, turned broadcaster Richie Benaud. He was in the commentary box on his own, about to present a summary of the days play when he noticed he had left some notes on a table in the corner. He stood up to walk across to retrieve them but just as he did he heard the words "And now it's over to Richie Benaud" in his earpiece. In a rush now to retrieve the notes he stretched out but overbalanced and crashed to the floor, banging his knee on the way down and pulled the plugs from both his earpiece and microphone. He now had to muffle the agony and reconnect the equipment. Some 2 minutes after the hand over he was ready again, if somewhat ruffled and so took a few more seconds to compose himself. Then he calmly announced "Having given you time to study the scorecard we'll now look at it in detail." What a pro.

Now, getting back to the exploits of our heroes, on the last Saturday in July

the 1st XI traveled to Ashton under Hill and lost out narrowly in a high scoring game and as a result they are now just one place above the relegation zone. On the same day the 2nd XI played host to local rivals Earlswood 2nd XI and ran out comfortable winners, in no small part thanks to a century from Alex Prosser. Well done Alex.

The following week both the 1st XI and the 3rd XI were rained off whilst the 2nd XI were beaten in bizarre circumstances. Needing 6 to win off the last over, with wickets in hand, they proceeded to lose 5 wickets from the first 5 balls of the over and lost by 5 runs. Fact can sometimes be stranger than fiction.

In the final midweek game of the season we had a good win away at Bournville and so secured our position in that league for next season.

And lastly, I commented on our Under 11 team in last months issue. I'm delighted to update this with the news that they won their final 3 matches of the season against Cookhill twice (by 2 runs and 52 runs) and against Earlswood by 7 runs, which was a brilliant reward for all of their hard work, especially from the coach, Andy Turnbull, who has rebuilt the junior section at the club and its a huge thanks to him for putting a lot of time and energy in to the team, providing the squad with 14 games this summer. A huge thank you also goes to all of the parents that have helped and supported the children this year (including a trek to Moreton-in-Marsh!). Its been a huge success. The highlight was perhaps a hat-trick for 8 year old Alfie Cheatham in the final match of the season away at Earlswood, but overall it was a great team effort. Well done lads and roll on next year.

As for the senior teams, we now wait and see how they respond to the pressure of relegation battles. In the words of another popular song (by M People) they now need to "Look for the hero inside themselves".

As always, full details including fixture list can be obtained on our website [www.tachcc.co.uk](http://www.tachcc.co.uk) or on twitter: @tachcc