

Hi everyone,

I hope this latest update finds you all safe and well and having started to enjoy a bit more 'freedom' following the end of what we all hope will be our last lockdown. As always there has been lots going on at your Club and hopefully this brief update will give you all a good sense of our great progress.

I am pleased to say that finally the 'all weather training nets facility' is completed and my word what a fantastic addition to our Club it is! When you now enter the Willis Lane ground it's a very impressive sight and made even more so by the small upgrade to the parking area to define the boundary and improve the surface. The first ball was bowled and defended by the respective teams captains this very week before the senior team held a full training session to hone their skills. I have no doubt this will support our aim of building the standard of cricket across the whole club. We will have an official 'opening' later when Covid restrictions are finally relaxed to recognise our very generous financial supporters of this facility.

Continuing the playing theme we have played the usual round of pre-season friendlies and seem to be set up reasonably well for the coming season which sees league games for all teams start this weekend (1st May). Our progress has been helped by the addition of a few new signings, where I would like to officially welcome John Stratton and Lucas Del Bianco to the club, and the return of a few old faces combined with our promising home grown talent. Your committee is also working hard to add an Overseas player to the mix and having identified a quality prospect are working through the paperwork to make this happen. This is not an easy task given the Covid position impacting international travel for one but hopefully I will have more positive news on that by my next update.

Similar to the senior teams our Youth age groups have also been honing their skills with our first Friday night Youth training sessions being held a couple of weeks ago. It was great to see so many children of all ages back at Willis Lane learning our beautiful game supported by our team of coaches lead by Andy Draper (ECB Level 3 coach). The Youth section again this season boast teams at U10, U12, U14 and U16 levels as the Club continues to look to the future.

I am also pleased to tell you that we now have an official Women's team lead by Melanie White. Initially this season they will be playing friendlies to build interest and their skills with a view to possibly playing more competitively next season. Training is on Wednesdays at 6-30 to 7-30pm starting the 5th May - all those 12 years and over welcome. For any further details Melanie can be reached at [chalewkee@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chalewkee@yahoo.co.uk) or follow North Perrott Bumbles on Facebook.

Whilst it's great that playing cricket has commenced the ability to watch cricket sadly remains limited due to the 'no spectators' rules currently within the Government/ECB guidance. There are exceptions for those who have caring responsibilities for one of the players or if you are a seated patron of the bar which we have been able to open in the last two weeks. Again, this isn't as straight forward as you might think with seated service being part of a revised Risk Assessment outlining how it will work required which must include things like 'track and trace' logs and the cleaning regime to ensure everyone's safety. We continue to do our best for our members and look forward to a change in the rules post the 17th May.

As usual we wouldn't be able to play and enjoy cricket at Willis Lane without Tom and the magic he works to ensure our playing surface is at it's best and Mike, Mark, Duncan, Dan, Phil M, Barry, Steve M, Jack, John and Rick are likewise keeping the wider grounds up together too. Our thanks go out to all of them for their support.

Similarly away from Willis Lane the committee continue to meet each month 'virtually' to ensure the safe and secure running of the Club. To keep you all as informed as possible here is an update on a couple of discussion points this month that I'd like to share:-

1) **Membership Subscriptions** - thank you to those that have already paid their 2021 membership. It has been a challenging 12 months for the club financially and with the current restrictions continue to be so. Although we remain in a solid financial position these are much needed funds required to support our ongoing costs which as I have previously outlined run at circa. £600pm. **Therefore please can you ensure that any outstanding subscriptions are paid as soon as possible.**

2) **Ground Maintenance** - with the restrictions enforced by lockdown it has been harder to get some of the pre season jobs completed at the ground so if you can spare a couple of hours please contact Mark Downing as we'd be grateful of the support. For those of you on SPOND Mark regularly post dates and times of working party activities - all socially distanced of course.

Anyway, I hope you've found the update useful and let's continue to look forward to warmer weather and dream of relaxing weekends watching Perrott play cricket post the 17th May!

Thanks

Jules

**Jullian Marshall-James**  
**NPCC - Chairman**  
30th April 2021