



Cricket Development Strategy 2011

A Proposal for Henfield Cricket Club

Introduction

The purpose of this proposal is to establish the principles of a cricket development and coaching strategy at the club for 2011 and beyond.

Although the proposal covers all levels, the main focus is to build a strong, competitive and sustainable 1st XI whilst also developing our junior, women's and recreational cricket. It is a 'whole club' strategy but one which recognises that the success or otherwise of the 1st XI has an appreciable ripple down effect.

It follows from a poor league season for the 1st XI in the Sussex Cricket League in 2010. This league is clearly becoming more professional and demands a different approach if we are to be successful at this level.

If we continue to do what we have always done, then we will just get more of what we currently have.

Change

When making recommendations for change it is inevitable that some criticism will be implied and inferred. It is not the intention to pick over the ashes of a poor season in 2010 and less still to apportion blame; rather it is to acknowledge that we must make a clean start.

Assumption

We make one key assumption: **that we have a core of young players who want to play at SCL3 and higher, and who are prepared to commit to a new approach.** If so, then it is your ambition that we as a club must support.

What We Want You to Do

There are many details here that have not yet been worked out. Therefore, please consider the proposal at a high level; if the principle is good we will make it work. What we require is:

- a) A commitment from the club to support this development actively
- b) A commitment from all players wanting to play league cricket to work to a higher level
- c) A commitment from senior players, parents and supporters to becoming coaches and volunteers, because it cannot happen without more manpower.

An open meeting will be held at the Club on Friday 8th April, at which the floor will be open for feedback and ideas. Meanwhile if you have any questions please address them to Ken Scott at kenscott7@dsl.pipex.com, or development@henfieldcricketclub.com.

Background

Henfield 1st XI finished 2010 at the foot of the Sussex Cricket League Division 3 West, avoiding relegation only by a technicality in the league below us.

Despite this position, we were not the worst side. Indeed several performances were worthy of a top half finish, if only we could have maintained that level.

It is not that we don't have the talent. What we lacked in 2010 was application and appetite, team cohesion, spirit and self-belief, all of which require preparation. With these, we would probably have closed out at least three close games.

However it was the imposition of the ten point penalty that was arguably THE major factor in the final standings, but not in itself.

Unjust as the penalty was, our response to it was resigned and victimised rather than combative and assertive, almost to the point of not wanting to play in this league. It is no surprise, with hindsight, that a run of bad defeats followed.

Its effect was far greater than ten points because we allowed it to be.

This may turn out to be a blessing in disguise, if it has given us the kick.

Principles

Professionalism and Commitment

League cricket in Sussex Cricket League Div3 is only two levels below the highest we can attain, and is becoming increasingly professional. To play and succeed requires professional attitudes and disciplines, and a commitment to being part of a squad, to train at the required level and to play a part in development and team building.

Our management structure in the form of the cricket committee must reflect this.

Young Players / Ownership

The core of the side for the next five years is going to be our current crop of young players aged 18-22 and those following at U16. We must acknowledge now that the 1st XI is their team, and it is their ambition we have to support.

Too often in the past we have been guilty of having young players make up the numbers rather than giving them responsibility, confidence and support.

Development Pathways

There must be a clear upward pathway from 3rd XI / U18 to 2nd XI to 1st XI, with each team preparing young players for the next level.

There is no automatic downward pathway. We will encourage retiring senior players to take an active coaching and development role in the club, which will be an essential facet of continuing to play league cricket in a lower side.

Recreational cricket does not prepare 1st XI players. We must provide sufficient competitive opportunity for our young players aged 15-19, in their own team environment.

Women / Junior / Recreational Cricket

We must, alongside developing a more elite approach to league cricket, maintain a healthy balance by looking after the recreational and social needs of all club members.

Our Sunday teams will remain a crucial aspect of the club, providing opportunities for all to play.

Coaching

We have invested in junior coaching, and should look to make use of the Club's coaching resources at senior level as a priority. Our current coaches are listed below. Most have volunteered because their children are involved and we should not assume their availability to commit further.

Therefore, we should increase our investment, and encourage senior players to consider a coaching and development role. Coaching is a highly rewarding way to stay close to the club's success, and to put something back into the game. The club should look to provide 100% funding support in return for a minimum contracted commitment from coaches.

Current ECB Qualified Coaching Staff

	Level	Current Responsibilities	Contact
Ken Scott	L2+*	General	01903 812834 / 07958 984378
Kathy Sealy	L2+	Women, U15	01273 495359 / 07821 333398
Dave Hodgkin	L2*	U9 / U10 / U15	01273 495359 / 07508 472304
Richard Dale	L2	U12	01273 494353 / 07810 180465
Craig Scott	L2*	General	01903 812834 / 07593329163
Conway Thorns	L1	U13	01273 495838
Brett Wellby	L1	U13	01273 493665

+ - Coach Development modules, * - Coaching in Schools module

Coaching & Development

The following represent actions to be developed:

General

1. Aim to achieve Clubmark+ accreditation for our coaching programme.
2. Encourage at least four new coaches to train in 2011/12 and to support existing L1 and L2 coaches to attain the next levels.
3. Set aside funding:
 - To develop our own club coaches
 - To provide professional coaching for nominated development players
 - To provide professional coaching support throughout the club
4. Develop a coaching contract for the club to encourage and retain coaches.
5. Make other coaching resources (newsletters, DVDs, equipment) more visible and available.

Colts

1. Adopt the LTAD (Long Term Athlete Development) model for all Colts development up to U19
2. Maintain and improve the Junior Development squad, bringing in high-potential players from U12 for more focused and advanced coaching than is possible with the masses.
3. Allow coaches to move with their teams from U7 to U12. From U13 onwards appoint age-specific coaches with specialist knowledge.
4. Continue to encourage senior players to become more involved in junior coaching.
5. Colts teams at U14 to U16 should select the best players available from U13 upwards.

Under 19 / Development

1. Provide an appointed coach / mentor for players aged U16-U19 to ensure that they have a development plan and a supported pathway. That mentor is assigned to the player and represents the player's interests in whichever team he or she is playing.
2. Establish Development / U19 teams for 2012

Women

1. Support the new Women's team fully throughout their first league season and beyond, ensuring that they receive the same commitment as all colts' and men's teams.
2. Encourage the women's team to work to the same principles as the senior men, at a level appropriate to their ambition.
3. Provide an environment for girls U18 and encourage more girls in that age bracket to participate, aiming to have a girls' section equivalent to the colts from 2012.

Senior Men

1. Establish and formalise roles:

Coaches prepare; Captains lead. This involves embedding receptiveness to coaching within senior league teams as it is an unfamiliar role at Henfield. The coach / captain / team relationship is fundamental to a team's success. Captains must commit to working with their team and with development players according to agreed strategy and to individual development plans.

2. Utilise club's own coaching resources:

Involve our club coaches at senior level as far as possible, buying in professional coaching at 1st XI level for batting and bowling and other specialist areas where appropriate.

3. Establish Development squads:

- 1st tier: committed experienced and younger players from which the 1st XI should be selected. Those not playing 1st XI on any given week must be playing key roles in the 2nd XI.
- 2nd tier consists of 3rd XI and younger players from U15-U19
- 3rd tier : young players aged 12-14
- All Development squad players to have development plans agreed with a senior coach.

4. Training Scope:

Fundamentally change our approach to training in the following ways:

- Make it a year-round activity.
- Expand the scope of training to include fitness, team building and both team and personal psychology.
- Fielding is 70%+ of the game so must be given much higher focus.
- At least one L2 coach should be available at each training session, and work to a coaching plan. However, the responsibility for organisation cannot lie solely with the coach. Captains and/or an appointed member of each group should take joint responsibility for running effective sessions.
- Training must be in ability groups. Essentially 1st XI squad players train together and so on, with some cross-over to provide challenge lower down.
- Establish two training sessions per week at 1st level: one to allow individual practice of skills, and one where the whole team is together for fielding, debriefings and building team cohesion.

5. Team Code:

Whilst acknowledging that life goes on, a commitment to training should be fundamental to a player being selected to play. This should be part of a Team Code, to which all players sign up.

6. Match Day Preparation:

Commit to better and earlier match day preparation with a regular timetable, home and away.

- The team must take the match organisation and ground preparation burden from the captain to a large extent on a rotational basis.
- 90 minutes before each game should be totally focused on preparation for playing. This should apply to all league teams; for some years our U14 and U16 teams have been better prepared than the senior sides ... and they have unlearned it very quickly!