

# Henfield Cricket Club

## Annual Report 2025

254th Season



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## Message from the Chairman

Can I start by saying how grateful I am to all the members, captains, players, coaches, parents, friends and supporters of our great Cricket Club. When I took over from David Jemmett as Chair at last year's AGM, I was filled with trepidation and apprehension at the task ahead. The support I have received has been very warm and encouraging.

The Club's Committee has worked very hard and I thank them all for their patience as I get to know how everything 'works'.

Last year's AGM was a sombre affair, following so soon after Conway's sad passing. Conway was Henfield CC – a President of great stature and a hugely irreplaceable man behind all things Henfield CC and beyond. I was very heartened when son Kevin joined the Committee in March – a safe pair of hands, who continues the Thorns' dynasty with wisdom and action.

On and off the field, great strides have been made. It has been an extraordinarily successful season – the weather has of course helped. The cricket has been outstanding with promotions, finals and great victories across all age groups. To top it off, the Sussex Cricket League recognised Brett & Jordon with awards for batting and bowling respectively at the annual awards night in October. Congratulations to both for an outstanding season.

The enthusiasm and passion shown by all is wonderful to see – none more so than our Colts. Parents and the players are an absolute credit to our Club – always helping, always showing immense sportsmanship and always smiling.

Off the field, we have invested heavily in upgrading both the bar and kitchen. Colin Hayllar and Graham Slade are true Henfield CC heroes. They have worked tirelessly for several weeks – all unpaid – in modernising both facilities. When you next see them, please do take a moment to thank them for their efforts - I'm sure it would be hugely appreciated.

President's Day and our Oktoberfest themed Annual Dinner were both huge successes – due in no small part due to Sian's extraordinary work in their planning and preparation. We owe Sian a huge debt of thanks.

Taking over the bar from Sam was a huge ask – but Tracy and Richie have done brilliantly. Learning along the way, the bar has delivered a record surplus for the season.

Investment continues with new lighting, new carpeting, car park works (finally!), new signage and a replica Lord's wind vane now adorns the roof. We bought both a new barbeque and a marquee for events. Banner advertising revenue around the perimeter increased, thanks to Mick for his continued help and support on this excellent initiative.

My sincere thanks goes to Nicholas for his incredible efforts, together with the two Martins, in attending to all matters premises, pitches & outfield – not forgetting his Treasurer role as well! All unpaid, many hours each week spent - we are so very lucky to have Nicholas.

We are a hidden jewel in the village and 2026 is going to be a year of spreading the word – that Henfield CC is the place to be.

President's Day will be on Sunday 19th July – exactly 100 years to the day since the Pavilion was opened by Arthur Gilligan. I hope the village community turns out in numbers for what is an auspicious day in our calendar.

Let's hope for another great season of cricket and thank you for all you do for our great Club.

## Chairman of Cricket

### Cricket Committee Annual Report.

Yes, cricket is alive and well again on the common, and there is so much to be excited about for next season.

2025 was a tremendous success for the club, with triumphs and progress across all the teams and age groups.

Huge congratulations to the first team, who won promotion with a fantastic season finishing 2nd in Division Five. Throughout the season we consistently showed mental strength, character and cricketing ability, fighting back to win games where we looked second favourite, and bouncing back to put in our strongest performances the weeks after a defeat.

That was driven by an incredible team spirit and belief, led by George Stewart, captaining with his usual passion and aplomb. Strong individual performances were a corner stone of the year, having the top run scorer and wicket taker in the league, but even more importantly a side where everyone contributed during the season, and there was genuine belief in who ever was at the crease or leading the attack.

There was also so much to be proud of and excited by in our other sides led expertly by Ben and Mark . The 2nds finished a comfortable 6th in the table, and despite often lending players to the 1st and 3rd teams, had many fantastic results. Our 3rd team who were always in the hunt for promotion throughout the season finished a fabulous 4th, just 40 points from 2nd.

What was most pleasing and gives me great heart for next year and our future is the balance of senior players with promising colts. Not only did the colts sides have success themselves, but young players were so influential this year in all our senior sides. It was incredible to see 3 of our 7 club hundreds this year (our highest tally since 2019) being scored by u16s.

Looking ahead to 2026, we have a tremendous opportunity to build on this seasons success. I strongly believe we have all the talent in the club to win at least one more promotion next season, but that doesn't come without hard work and investment.

The committee are providing that investment and we have secured game changing winter net facilities that can really help us all raise our games to the next level. From January we'll have adult nets at the incredible new Falmer facility with purpose built nets and ball tracking technology, that can help us all better identify our strengths and opportunities to improve.

On top of this, we'll be building on the fabulous foundations laid last year by the captains, colts managers and cricket chairman to build team and player development plans across the entire club.

This will ensure players know and have support to improve the areas of their games that can have the biggest impact to their performance, as well as enabling us to better utilise our player abilities across the entire club.

We also have colts training up and running at Steyning, so please get involved with that and help pass on your knowledge and skills to the next generation of Henfield players.

We have all the plans in place to make 2026 another incredible year for the club and even more successful than 2025, we now just need your involvement and commitment to make that a reality.

Brett Moore

Chairman of Cricket

## First XI

The 1st XI 2025 season will be remembered as one of progress, pride, and collective determination. From the first ball bowled to the final run scored, the squad carried a sense of purpose that ultimately delivered what we set out to achieve—**promotion to Division 4**. This success didn't come by accident. It came from graft, commitment, and moments of individual brilliance that stitched together a truly memorable campaign.

Every successful side needs a player who can change games in multiple ways, and for us this year, Jordan was exactly that. Whether it was steadying the innings with the bat, producing great spells with the ball, or pulling off athletic stops in the field, he set the tone for the rest of the team. Jordan's consistency and impact were recognised beyond the dressing room as he deservedly claimed the **League Bowling Award**, a testament to the wickets he took, the pressure he applied, and the big-game temperament he displayed throughout the season. His influence extended well beyond statistics—he was a leader in attitude, intensity, and execution.

If Jordan was the engine, Brett was the run factory. Throughout the season he delivered performances that stabilised innings, pressured oppositions, and often changed the momentum in our favour. Accumulating a phenomenal **610 runs**, he finished as the club's and the league's top scorer, securing the **League Batting Award** with style. Yet despite all those runs, boundaries, and match-shaping contributions, Brett's teammates maintain that his *true* defining moment came off the field: his unforgettable nightclub dance moves. There are centuries, and then there are shoulder shimmies and hip wiggles that go down in club folklore. Brett provided both. And honestly, we're not sure which was celebrated more.

One of the season's greatest pleasures was the emergence of **15-year-old Gus Crawley**, who stepped into 1XI cricket with the composure and skill of someone twice his age. Called into the side without fuss, he immediately impressed with his accuracy, pace, temperament, and fearless approach. Time and again, Gus bowled crucial spells that turned matches in our favour. His wickets were vital, his attitude exemplary, and his potential unmistakable. The impact he made this season is only the beginning—this young talent has a huge future, and the team is incredibly proud of the way he has stamped his mark on senior cricket.

While players often earn the headlines, this season also highlighted the importance of those who support the game from the sidelines. David Jemmett played a quietly crucial role in our campaign—most notably with his umpiring performance against Crawley. In a high-pressure fixture, David ensured that we completed our full quota of 20 overs, allowing the match to reach a decisive result. That decision, proved to be the small but vital margin that separated us finishing 2nd rather than 3rd. So thanks Dave.

Beyond the individual highlights, what truly defined our season was the team spirit. Every player had a role, every performance mattered, and the squad capable of challenging at the top end of the table. From gritty run chases and tight death overs to moments of brilliance in the field, the team showed resilience and belief in the big moments. That unity carried us to promotion—and will carry us further still.

With promotion secured, attention now turns to next season and the new challenges Division 4 will bring. Standards have been set high—higher than they've been in years—and the expectation is to match or exceed them through:

- **Continued application of skill**
- **Stronger fitness and preparation**
- **Sharper focus in pressure moments**
- **A commitment to improvement from every player**

To every player, volunteer, umpire, scorer, supporter, and friend of the club—thank you. This season has been a standout one, made possible by the contributions on and off the field.

Here's to a year we'll remember fondly, and to an even bigger, bolder, and better season ahead.

Up the club!

George Stewart

1st XI Captain

## Second XI

Won	6
Lost	8
Abandoned	2

### Wins

May - West Witt Home

June – Roffey Home

July – West Witt Away

Aug – Middleton Away, West Chilt Home, Ram Home

The 2nd XI played some great cricket in 2025, particularly mid-season, and enjoyed – like everybody – the wonderful summer.

Some of the pressure in the League fell away early on, with Selsey pulling out after just a couple of matches and West Wittering – who we beat comfortably in our first game – quickly establishing themselves as the League’s whipping boys.

However, with pitches favouring batsmen this year, we struggled to be as competitive as we were last year, winning 6, losing 8 and finishing in 6th place.

Our purple patch came in late July and August, with a run of four wins in succession, against West Wittering, Middleton, West Chilt and Ram.

Although beating Middleton away was particularly satisfying, and sneaking home against West Chilt was a thriller, the highlight was beating a very good Ram side (who went on to get promoted) at home in mid-August.

The match showcased three of the season’s stand-out performers, with Joe Crawley taking 5 for 18 to restrict Ram to 168, and Dimi Mendis and Dan Woodward, with 60 and 27 respectively, combining well to get us close enough for us to win by 3 wickets.

Dimi and Dan were by far our strongest batters this year, scoring 537 runs and five 50s between them, usually at least a run a ball. Dimi worked hard and successfully to spend lots of time in the middle. Dan can win games on his own: his footwork is non-existent, but his timing is sublime.

But – as last year – we were not consistent enough as a batting unit, with no one providing Dimi and Dan with regular back up and none of us pushing on for a 100. In a summer dominated by big scores, we simply weren’t able to put enough scoreboard pressure on our opponents often enough to get more positive results.

Our seam bowling attack was again excellent, spearheaded by Joe, and well supported by Nithin, Gus, Angelo and – when we could get him! – Dananjaya. This group can, and often did, bowl out any of the sides in our League, but their economy rates were in the 4s this year rather than the 3s, as last year. For

A special mention to Nithin, who impressed from the very first game at Birdham and got through 85 overs during the season, taking 15 wickets, often at crucial moments; and to Dian, who made a big and positive impact on the side in all disciplines. And a massive thanks to Tim Furber, who stood as umpire for us many times, deliberating his decisions carefully and fairly on each occasion.

Looking forward to next year: Will Clark exuded pure class batting against League winners Petworth Park; Seb Thorns hooped it against Three Bridges; Archie Heitman showed off his booming drive at Roffey; and a young Richie Dale held our batting together in the Witterings..all of them players to watch out for next year!

Ben Helps

2nd XI Captain

## Third XI

The results:

Games 18, Won 10, Lost 7, Cancelled 1. Total points 357 (2024:286), League position 4th (2024:7th).

It is worth noting that these stats represent a continued improvement on both of the previous seasons. In fact, the last time the 3rd XI won 10 league games in a season was back in 2013.

Outstanding achievements:

New all-time record successful run chase of 269-3 away vs St Peters (beating the previous highest run chase of 209-9 vs Keymer & Hassocks back in 2008 by 60 runs).

Second highest all time successful run chase of 237-5 vs Cuckfield at Partridge Green.

First Senior league 100 for William Clarke (U15) away vs St Peters (105).

First Senior league 50 for Casey Wells (U13) at home vs Cuckfield (58).

Season overview / highlights:

The 2025 season has undoubtedly been a massive success for the club. Continued improvements to availability have resulted in better league performances, more wins, more points and new records being set. Again, it's been a privilege to captain Henfield the 3rd XI this year.

The mantra of the 3's remains two-fold. Firstly, to support the development of the colts contingent as they transition into playing senior cricket, whilst secondly, providing an opportunity for senior players to continue playing competitive cricket. The senior players facilitating the development of the colts and benefiting from their youthful energy and contributions on the field!

The 2025 season was another superb example of the 3's side delivering against this mantra, but also illustrates a change in balance. In the last few seasons, the seniors have taken their fair share of responsibility, but this season, I think it is fair to say that the tables are turning. The seniors still earn their places, but the colts are opening the batting and bowling each week, setting personal and club records and regularly influencing games to an extent I have not seen in previous years. Long may it continue. The statistics are, as always, engrained in the leagues records books for all to see, so I won't walk through the season game by game, however a couple of individual matches do stand out.....

The first of which saw us travel away to play St Peters and is a great example of the rollercoaster of emotions that can be contained within a match. Having been asked to field first, the excitement started with the very first ball of the match, Seb Thorns delivering a superb inswinger and getting their opening bat caught behind by Toby Boyce, two colts creating a superb start. However, the remaining St Peters batsmen got stuck in and built partnership after partnership in what was an aggressive batting display. As we walked off the field after the first innings, you could see Henfield heads were down, it had been a hot stint in the field and the 268-6 on the scoreboard was tough to avert our eyes from. Again, responsibility was given to the

youngsters, with U15 Will Clarke and U13 Casey Wells opening the batting. Casey played well and set a great platform with Will before departing with the score at 66-1. Kevin Thorns joined Will at the crease and played well for his 44 before missing a straight one with the score now 160-2. Archie Heitman continued with Will until the later departed having scored a chanceless first senior 100, what a joy it was to watch that knock and have the team together to celebrate Wills achievement. With the score now 227-3, Archie Heitman continued his usual big hitting to see us home. The highest ever 3rd XI run chase, beating the previous record by 60 runs, led by the under 18's at the top of the order. Henfield 3's moving in the right direction, and a prime example to all involved that games twist and turn. From delight after the first ball, the score looked ominous after the first innings, but our colts never lost belief that the win was still on the cards. Grit, determination, dedication and a fair chunk of talent proved them right.

The second game that stands out was another successful run chase for HCC, this time vs Cuckfield at Partridge Green. Again, after losing the toss, we were asked to field first. Cuckfield batted well and posted 234-8. Our run chase began with, our now regular opener, Casey Wells building another solid platform at the top of the innings. Batsmen 2 and 3 both departed to leave Josh to join Casey at the crease with the score at 49-2. While Josh had managed a few T20 appearances for Henfield this season, this was his first, and unfortunately last run out for the 3rd XI in 2025. It's a real shame that someone with his talent and contribution to the team can't play more often, fingers crossed we will see more of him next year. Josh and Casey continued to bat well, and the pavilion erupted when Casey reached his first Senior 50, eventually being stumped on 58 with the score 166-3. Josh pressed on, but was unfortunately caught on 90, his maiden ton still illudes him, but this will hopefully encourage more cricket from him next year. The middle order wrapped up the run chase with HCC finishing on 237-5, the second highest successful chase ever for HCC 3rd XI.

Those 2 situations provide a delightful illustration of our season, and the purpose of our side. Having the availability that allows the captain to give the colts responsibility really offers them the best chance to gain experience. When they enjoy success, which has proven to be more often than not, the whole team gets to enjoy it and celebrate with them. I am yet to score a competitive ton, if I ever do, I can't believe the I will enjoy it more than watching Casey get his first 50 or Will get his first 100.

Creating such an environment, and giving youngsters responsibility in competitive cricket creates the cricketers of the future. Our colts have delivered beyond expectations over the last few seasons and have again been exceptional throughout the 2025 season.

It would be amiss to conclude this season's review without mentioning the a few other brief highlights. James Taylor arrived at the club this year as personal circumstance unexpectedly positioned him in Henfield for the summer. He was a hugely positive influence to have on board, boundless energy every week, willing to do any job asked of him and a very competent spin bowler to have in the side. Paul Pheasant, an integral part of our club, played fewer games than I would have liked, but showed he can also take wickets for fun blowing spin. I am sure we will see plenty of him in the future once his lads are old enough to play senior cricket. Sam Sowerby charging in to bowl is quite the sight, as was watching him despatch a short delivery for six into the trees at PG. Archie Heitman has worked so hard at his cricket over the last two years, and it has been great to see that turn into performance improvements. When he hits it, it stays hit, and he is hitting them more often than not nowadays. Casey Wells technical opening batting has been consistent and a joy to watch, as was his big boundary catch out by the bench

had been missing out on. Another all round U13 star, effortless straight drives and the ability to bowl such an accurate heavy ball, makes him my guy to watch in the stats next season.

2025 has again been a season I have thoroughly enjoyed with a team I am proud to captain. The progress made over the last 3 seasons has been a superb journey to be part of. Long may it continue!

Awards:

This year's batting trophy goes to a superb talent. Scoring the most runs all season from only 4 innings for the 3's is quite an achievement – scores of 44, 52, 84 and 105 – Will Clarke.

Wickets were shared well across the bowlers, but the standout bowler this season takes the prize, with a total of 23 wickets, mainly opposition top order, by Seb Thorns.

Players Player – Votes were cast for a broad range of payers, and many people would be worthy winners. This colt is quickly developing into a superb cricketer, he not only battles against opening batsmen, but often with himself, and perhaps more often his Dad. He's getting better and better and even more feisty which is just what you want from an opening bowler, and of course he is HCC through and through – Seb Thorns.

Thanks go to:

A massive thank you to all who supported our efforts this season, the club supports the side well and continues to provide an environment to allow us to provide competitive cricket for a true mix of old and young players.

A huge thank you to John Tudhope, our groundsman at our home away from home, Partridge Green. We received several comments on how nice a ground it is and how well the track behaves. Your efforts are always appreciated. The ground looks superb since the work to flatten the square was completed shortly after our last home game. It's going to be an even better place to play cricket next season.

Big thanks also go to Steve Pheasant for scoring. It makes my job on match days so much easier to have someone dedicated to looking after the book. Despite having to put up with a scorer's table made from bales of hay at Braypool, I truly hope you enjoyed watching the 3's this year and will be around to support our scoring requirements again next season.

Finally, a big thank you to all the 3's players who made the season so enjoyable for me to be involved in. I know I have not been able to mention everyone in this review but you all know who you are, and you know what you did. Everyone contributed to a great team environment, and our improving youngsters will hold us in good stead for next year! A final thanks has to go to all the senior players who support me as captain on the field of play. It's invaluable to have alternate opinions to consider when making decisions along with varying skillsets and experience to help guide the colts. A last thanks goes to all involved in our colts training and development, this season has truly shown how valuable your efforts are for the future of our club.

Mark Elliot

3rd XI Captain

## Under 15's

2025 was another memorable and successful season for this group of talented junior cricketers. The preparation for the season started in October 2025. The county decided that the junior indoor leagues were no longer financially viable, so we used the opportunity to start our indoor training much earlier than in previous years in the hope that we would hit the ground running by the time we were able to get outside. We also welcomed two new additions to squad in Ellis Hartshorn and Tom Carter.

Playing in the top division of the South area, we knew the challenge would be a tough one and there would also be a target on our back after our strong showing in 2024. The team started off away to Felbridge & Sunnyside, edging a close game by chasing down 92 in the final over. Joe and Will put on over 50 for the first wicket, which was a promising omen for the season.

Two defeats followed, losing to a strong Preston Nomads side on the Common and then being eliminated by Balcombe in the National Cup. The main highlight of this was a great batting display by Jimmy Thomas but everyone else struggled to get going.

Off the back of these defeats, we faced probably our toughest assignment of the season, travelling to the Nevill Rec to play Brighton & Hove – arguably the strongest team in the county. It was an evening that will live long in the memory as we secured our first ever win against them – by 9 wickets! Joe and Angelo set the tone in an opening spell that ripped through the B&H top order, and with further tight bowling and excellent fielding they were restricted to 98 off 16 overs.

It had the potential to be a tricky run chase, but the team set about it with minimum fuss. Joe and Will put on 86 for the first wicket, before Ben and Angelo calmly saw it home. It was a complete performance in all facets of the game; a cricketing lesson. We played intelligent cricket to overcome the negative tactics of the opposition, whilst also playing in the true sporting spirit of the game.

With the confidence built from this statement win, the team went on a great run of victories, seeing off Ditchling, Cuckfield, St Peters, Preston Nomads and Felbridge. Amongst the highlights were Harry Vernal seeing us over the line in a very tight game against Ditchling – he has made huge strides with improving his batting and this crucial contribution was just reward for all the hard work he has put in. The win over St Peter's was also memorable – Gus and Ellis steadied the ship after a wobble, before it was left to Seb and Jimmy to get us over the line with a scrambled 2 in the final over thanks to some shoddy fielding under pressure from the opposition.

At this stage, we were top of the league. We had an opportunity to achieve something incredible, and unsurprisingly every week the rest of the league were wishing us luck and hoping that we can see off the challenge from Brighton & Hove. The home game against them on the Common was an incredibly tight affair. Ultimately, we came up just short with them chasing the total down for the loss of 8 wickets, and crucially for the tiebreaker, across the two games (with both teams having scored the same number of runs) in two fewer balls.

With three fixtures remaining, everything was still to play for. We comfortably beat Cuckfield and we were already aware that Ditchling would be conceding their final match of the season against us. So we had to hope that we could beat St Peters on 21 July and that Brighton either slipped up or were washed out in one of their remaining games.

Unfortunately, things played out in reverse. At 17:58 the heavens opened on the Common. We were hit by torrential rain, thunder, lightning, and even hail. The square and outfield were flooded, rendering the ground unplayable and forcing us to abandon. None of the other games in the league had any rain, and no rain fell south of Blackstone. We only picked up 2 points for the abandoned fixture, whilst B&H

It felt terribly unjust to not be able to settle the league on the field and was a very frustrating way to conclude the season. However, for the first time ever we beat Brighton & Hove, and over the course of the campaign we beat every side. Heads were held high and it goes without saying that the reputation of the team within the league grew. Furthermore, and testament to the boys (and their parents), the amount of good luck wishes received from opposition teams after we had won again highlighted the spirit the boys play the game in as well as the standards they were reaching.

The season really did highlight the high level this team is playing at. The fielding and bowling of this team really set them apart from the rest of the league. The ability to make cool and calm decisions under pressure won them games and there was always someone who would take responsibility when it really mattered.

Statistically, Will Clark led the way with the batting. He was the leading run scorer in the league with 207 runs. Gus finished 4th and Joe finished 7th. With the ball, three of our bowlers (Seb, Angelo and Will) were all tied as 3rd highest wicket takers and Joe had the 2nd best economy rate in the league. Toby and Gus were both in the top 10 for fielding dismissals, Toby finishing 2nd despite missing the last 4 games due to a fractured wrist.

The festival in 2025 presented a new challenge for us, given that the team had to play a year up due to there being no U15 competition. This was always going to be a tough assignment. Unfortunately, on the first day we lost to Steyning. The boys put in a superb performance with the ball and in the field. However, the wicket was not very good for batting which, in combination with some poor shots and a lack of application with the bat, saw the team bowled out well short of the modest total.

The boys bounced back against Eastbourne with a solid victory. Will Clark carried his bat for an unbeaten 106\*, and he put on 151 with Gus Crawley for the 3rd wicket.

That left us to face Burgess Hill, who had won their previous game with maximum points and were eyeing up a place in the final. However, the Henfield team battled in superb fashion in a game for the ages. Burgess Hill are a very strong outfit and despite our best efforts with the ball they comfortably posted over 200, although questions could be asked about whether they batted on too long and should have declared earlier. The run chase started well with Will and Joe keeping up with the required run rate for the first 10 overs or so. Burgess Hill were able to stifle things through taking wickets and some very tight bowling, leaving the boys to make the pragmatic decision to try and bat out for the draw. In some very uncharacteristic, old-school batting, Gus faced 65 balls for just 24 runs to take us to the brink of saving the game. After he was out, it was left to Seb (0\* off 12 balls) and Tom (0\* off 3 balls) to get us home. Rarely can a team have been prouder of two lads who scored no runs!

It was an incredibly exciting game of cricket, and a reminder that whilst we play to win, the way we battle through tough experiences and the spirit in which we play the game in is of equal importance to winning games. As coaches, this draw was celebrated with as much enthusiasm as any of the wins the team recorded over the season as it showed the resilience we want to see from the boys, along with the cricket smarts and adaptability that the boys will need as they take more steps into adult cricket.

We must thank all the players for their continued commitment to the team. Training 2 times a week is a big undertaking in conjunction with playing both junior and senior cricket. However, the attitude is (nearly) always spot on. And that willingness to learn and improve no doubt leads to the team spirit you have, and the positive and sporting way you play the game. We are only a small squad, at a relatively small club, but the way you have made a mark in Sussex cricket is something to be truly proud of.

We also must thank the parents for the way in which they support us. They have bought into the way we want to run this team and that commitment is bearing fruits. Your kids are a real credit to you and we are very grateful for the opportunity to coach them. Our home crowds on match days give this team a massive boost through your support.

The ground staff again have created a playing facility that we cannot fault. Thank you to all involved for the work you do each week.

Lastly, we extend our thanks to the other coaches and managers within the club. The loaning of players when we have been short has been a huge help and the way those younger kids have performed when selected is credit to what you have been doing. Thanks also to Paul Pheasant for managing the junior section as a whole. It can sometimes be a thankless task and we often ask a lot, but you are always willing with your time.

2026 promises to be an exciting year. With most of the team now playing adult cricket, we are looking forward to seeing what can be achieved. The season will be unusual as it will start later, due to the GCSE's. But once those are out of the way it there will be lots of cricket to be played!

Peter Boyce and Kevin Thorns

Coaches Under 15's

## Under 11's

This summer saw the team step up to hardball cricket. I am happy to say that we have survived what can be a challenging season for junior cricketers as the kids have seen that it's just a better game with a hardball and that all the pads and helmets work quite well if you miss the ball!

We have had the usual topsy turvy run of results as we've negotiated a summer of pairs cricket. I can't think of a player who's not learnt something over the season in this format and I plan to run some more pairs games next year for the kids in the team who are playing up.

We had our first taste of standard rules cricket. A handful of players went to St. James' for a six-a-side tournament at the start of the season. Again, more lessons were learnt about higher priced wickets and a couple even experienced the existential terror of a duck! We pulled together and beat Haywards Heath in the penultimate game, running a two off of the last ball. Well done Bertie and Austin.

August brought forth the main event, though. Our first festival week. Sadly, we only managed two of our three scheduled matches owing to weather, but we won both of them comfortably. We found out a lot about lots of the kids. Seth's patience in both of his innings belies his age and also flies in the face of most grown-ups' opinions about children's attention spans these days. He and Joshua Watson learned on the job, running between the wickets effectively. Josh Clark was asked to captain both games and worked very hard. I don't wish to make a fuss about my own children above the rest of the team, but Jude batted very well for his maiden hundred, again showing the application required to play the longer form of the game. Being on the park at Paghams and watching them all working together against the clock to bowl Paghams out was a treat. Bertie taking the winning catch will live long in my memory.

Next season beckons more changes. Standard rules (when you're out, you're out) cricket in a competitive league. As I said, I hope to supplement this with pairs cricket for players who will still be U11 to make sure our squad all continue to get opportunities. If we can grow the team enough, we could even end up with two age group sides.

To all our grown-ups, we want to say thank you very much for your support, especially on match days. You all help to make this what it is and keep it special. See you all next summer!

Fez, Mike and Steve.

Coaches Under 11's

## Under 8/9's

### Season Overview

The Under-8/9s squad had an excellent first season in 2024, showing significant improvement across all disciplines while maintaining a positive attitude. The team played 10 matches, winning six and securing a memorable last-ball draw in another. Players scored 682 runs (excluding extras), including 70 fours and 5 sixes, and took 80 wickets, including 17 catches and 12 run outs.

### Development & Progress

Coaching focused on building core skills and tactical awareness. Batting confidence improved markedly, bowling became straighter and more consistent, and fielding sharpened considerably. The squad showed excellent teamwork and sportsmanship, forming new friendships and consistently supporting one another.

Several St Peter's Primary School U9 players were selected by their Sport Lead, Karen Searles, for trials with Sussex in the Autumn. Although none were selected, the experience was valuable. I expect many to try out again next year, and I would expect some of the U8 players to try out.

### Season Highlights

The season had several standout moments.

The team's first wicket came in match one against Hurst, bowled by Oscar and caught by Stanley, in a game the team won.

Against St Matthias, the squad defended a small total in the final two overs, with Herbie and Cam taking four wickets between them.

The first sixes of the season came against Hassocks, with Luke, Stanley, and Jack all clearing the boundary.

A dramatic away draw against Hurst was secured with a composed final over from Teddy, yielding just two runs and a crucial wicket.

The awards night was another highlight, with players and parents celebrating the season. Special thanks to Kevin and everyone involved in organising a great evening.

### Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank my fellow coaches, Patrick and Seb, as well as the parents for their support throughout the season. From transport to boundary-side encouragement, the squad's success would not have been possible without them.

### Looking Ahead

Next season, we plan to introduce sessions in the nets to get the kids used to hard ball cricket. We need to discuss whether to keep the team together as an U9/10 team or maintain separate U8/U9 and U10 teams. Some U9s are technically gifted and might benefit from playing with and against U10 players, especially as they were some of the stronger players this year. The challenge might be only having a handful of U8 players from All Stars which is a considerable jump to playing organised games.

Mike Cherriman

## Allstars & Dynamos

This year, we had 22 kids for All-Stars, slightly down from 23 in 2024. We didn't run the Dynamos sessions this year and instead focused on the U8/U9 Team. It was great to see many familiar faces from 2024, as well as new players joining.

This year, only Rob Bryant and I were Activators, but with the help of several parents, we managed the sessions well. Their support helped create fun and inclusive activities.

Like last year, posts on local Facebook pages helped with numbers, and we plan to do the same next year. We also offered a session to the local Rainbows group, which will hopefully encourage more girls to join the All-Stars sessions next year.

I see the All-Stars sessions continuing next year, running for eight weeks between May and June.

Mike Cherriman

Allstars

## Secretary's Report

Closing thoughts from the Secretary

Well what a season that was? Not all cricketing summers play out so well, success brings renewed and stiffer challenges on the field the next season. Plenty of time over the winter for our cricket leaders, who ever you are, to plot and plan for the 2026 effort.

I should like to close this annual report with a huge thanks to my predecessor, the legend that is Mick Cleary for putting this booklet together. Thanks Michael. I extend those thanks to all the contributors, those cricket leaders again, who responded so promptly to my request of you and also Craig Scott for the stats.

Thanks must go to our magnificent sponsors where again a large slice of organisational thanks goes to Mick for putting the banners together that give the ground a real professional and progressive look in the summer. To our sponsors we look forward to your continued support in 2026

On a secretarial note id welcome latest contact details from anyone in Henfield CC if they have changed in the last 12 months to richiedale@btinternet.com or my number 07713114591. Contact me if you are not on the club whatsapp chat and would like to come on board. It covers all aspects of our senior cricket including our social events.

On that theme I wear a second hat as Assistant Bar Manager and Tracy and myself want to thank our superb bar volunteers who are so vital to the functioning of Henfield Cricket Club. Our biggest single source of income is the bar and without it we couldn't aspire to reach the heights of local cricket that we are able to do.

As a relatively small village we punch well above our weight on so many fronts, how about our brilliant u15s this year for example, long may that continue. Fridays remain our 'big night' for bar purposes but we are open to members and spectators over the weekend from typically 3 pm on both Saturdays and Sundays and there is surely no finer place in Henfield to knock back a glass or two of your favourite, than on the Common, in the setting sun, watching cricket.

Thanks everybody. Looking forward to seeing you all in 2026

Richie Dale

Secretary

Henfield CC



