MEN’S CRICKET CLUB 2016/2017

Semester 2 Report

Semester 2 sees the majority of the year’s action for the cricket club. This year has been no exception. The semester began in a busy fashion, with fourteen members flying off to South Africa to tour Cape Town and its surrounding regions. Although only spending less than two weeks there, the touring party managed to play six games of cricket, winning two against high class opposition, as well as partaking in numerous other activities such as shark cage diving, a surf lesson, a vineyard tour, and an educational outreach visit to Langa, one of the larger townships in Cape Town. The tour was a huge success. It was enjoyed by everyone who went, was a great way of preparing ourselves for the upcoming season, and helped to integrate some of the younger members into the team.

Once back in St Andrews, the club returned to training in the newly developed Sports Centre. The
superior training facilities here, compared with the facilities we used at Madras college last semester, were gratefully welcomed by the members and were of huge benefit to us as we continued to work closely with Ian Stewart, our newly appointed coach this year. Our sights are firmly set on the upcoming season. These net sessions were attended by record numbers this year, mostly thanks to our improved outreach this year and our thriving social scene, which has seen more than four times the average attendance of socials last year. This can only benefit us on the field as we attract more, talented cricketers into our fold. More tangible evidence of this would be the new introduction of a St Andrews men’s 3rd XI, who compete this year in Scottish 2A. We hope that this team will perform well and will help to prepare members for games in the higher teams.

This large increase in members also contributed to the most contested AGM in memory of anyone currently within the club. Not a single position ran uncontested, and almost every position was decided by only a small margin of votes. It is this competition and desire for responsibility within the club that is the biggest testimony to the well-being and augmented status of the club.

Of course, the cricket club involves itself in more than just BUCS events. February 4th saw the inaugural “Seagullian Ball”, held at Hotel du Vin. A roaring success, the event saw over 100 people
attend, and raised over £600 for The Rob George Foundation, a charity which this club has supported continuously over the last few years. We will look to run this event again next year, hoping to see it considered as one of the main events of the university calendar. We also ran, once more, the Super 8s competition, which was as hotly contested as ever, the final being decided by only 8 runs, and the “Seagullian Open”, our annual golf competition. This year’s tournament not only saw a record number of participants, but was also held in perhaps the nicest weather of any tournament we have held so far. A very enjoyable round of golf was followed by a convivial evening in the Balaka restaurant, where we awarded prizes, and celebrated the exploits of the day’s golfers.

Still to come this semester are the remaining BUCS fixtures, for all three teams, as well as the Alumni game, to be held at Eton School, and the beach cricket game held at the Ship Inn, Elie. Both of these events attract healthy crowds, and serve as useful outreach for our club as we continually look to expand and improve.

Current Goals

As we stand in our BUCS season, the 3s are beginning to find their feet in their league, with each week’s performance improving upon the last, the 2s find themselves at the top of Scottish 1A, having won their first three games, and hope to win their remaining two to win the league, and the 1s are fighting to stay up in Prem B, a sizeable challenge for which have been preparing all year.

Looking forward to next semester, we are currently in talks with Edinburgh University, looking at setting up our own varsity fixture against them in September. This has attracted the interest of Cricket Scotland, who have now backed our plans and will help to advertise the fixture. This would be a huge step forward for us, as it would not only attract more people to join our club, but would also cement cricket as a sport central to the University. We feel we punch well above our weight as a club; we are building a future in which we are a club of real, heavyweight substance in British sport.

Sadly, this year sees the culmination of a partnership of over 30 years between the men’s cricket club and the Balaka restaurant, the latter having been put up for sale toward the end of this
semester. Once our season has finished, we will be looking into finding a new sponsor local to St Andrews, as well as continuing our search for a larger, corporate sponsor. In addition to this, our focus after the season will also be to work towards securing performance status for our club within the AU. We take ourselves very seriously as athletes, and want to convince others of that fact too. Performance status will help to reap greater rewards from our hard work off the field and will undoubtedly improve results on it.

WOMEN’S CRICKET CLUB 2016/2017

It has been a wonderful year for the Women’s Cricket Club.

After finishing at the top of our league last year, undefeated with an astronomical run-rate, the team was up for promotion to the BUCS Premier League, following a much delayed knockout match against the Edinburgh women’s team. Coming back in September, the team worked incredibly hard to prepare for the knockout match, which took place on an unseasonably lovely day in October. A competitive match played in the spirit of the game ended with a hard fought victory for St Andrews, and sealed the team’s promotion to the Premier League.
The indoor 6s team performed much better than in previous years, with some long awaited victories at the first BUCS indoor tournament in Durham, although there were no such victories in the second of the tournaments. Our newer members got the opportunity to play in a friendly tournament, gaining some valuable experience.

Back in the sports hall after Winter Break, the team was able to hold more frequent training sessions and get down to business in preparing for entry into the Premier League! Although weekday afternoon practice slots have been difficult for many of the team to make, and Friday night practices hurting numbers on some occasions, the team was grateful to have the nets back, which was a major problem last year.

Over Spring Break, the club travelled to Portugal for a preseason tour where ten members of the team and two alumni spent several days training outdoors, as well as doing indoor conditioning at the facility’s gyms. It was a valuable experience, especially for first time players who had never played cricket outdoors before.
Nine of our team members attended SSS trials alongside several players from Edinburgh, and hope to participate in the coming years!

Our outdoor season opened with our annual match against the Forty Club Scotland District, which was much enjoyed by all who played. Not only was it good practice before the start of the season, the experienced players on the Forty Club were able to provide some good coaching and encouragement to our team.

With half of our six-match BUCS season now over, we have been very pleased with the way our comparatively inexperienced team has performed against some of the top women’s cricket teams in the country. Although we have had three losses to Loughborough MCCU, Durham MCCU, and Leeds MCCU, we have been in no way disappointed with our team’s performance. Many of our players have been playing for three years or fewer, some who have just taken up the game this year. Our team has not only played well but has shown incredible spirit and commitment, traveling all the way to Loughborough and Leeds during our revision period. With three more BUCS matches and at least one more friendly against Stirling, we have a lot to look forward to this season.

The club has come a long way this year, and we are not deterred by the three losses in the BUCS Premier League. They are valuable experience for our team and an excellent opportunity to improve.