

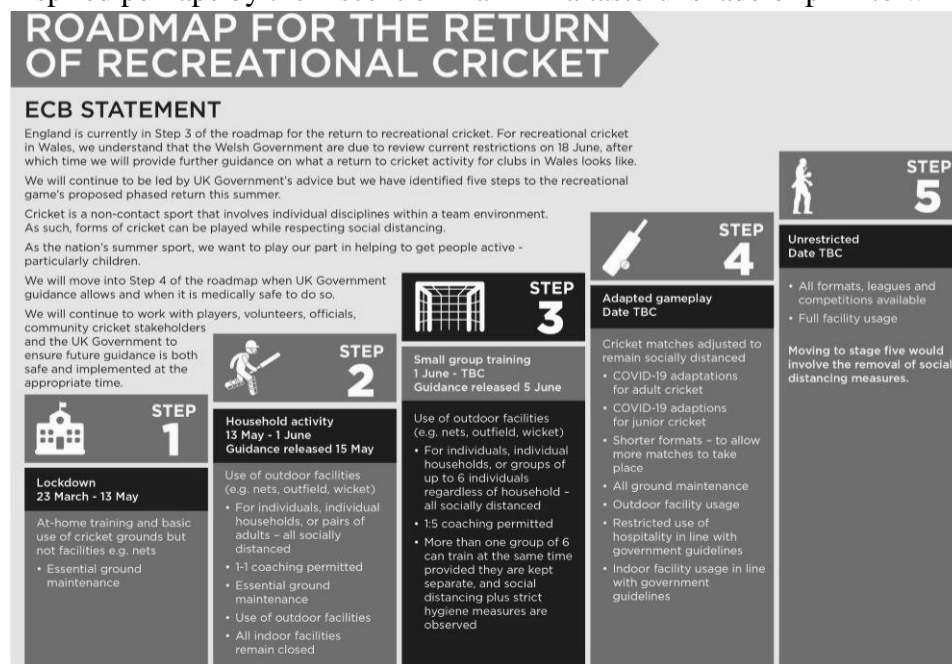
ISLIP CRICKET CLUB



Is there a direct link between the possibility of cricket and the weather? With England and their upcoming opponents the West Indies self-isolating in preparation for the first English cricket of the summer, the almost unbroken spell of dry weather is over and thunderstorms are with us. When will we see the first “Rain Stopped Play” notice on our TV screens, putting CV-19 firmly in its place?

We are, of course playing catch-up; cricket in some other parts of Europe has continued. The European Cricket Network website shows no signs of the much-heralded reopening of cricket in Germany, but I can recommend the highlights of pretty much any Finnish T20 game to those who want to briefly recapture the magic of village cricket in Islip.

More generally, there are the first glimmerings of progress towards the resumption of recreational cricket in England. The ECB tells us that we are currently in step 3 of a five step plan, which allows for small group training sessions of up to six people while respecting social distancing, progress made all the more real by the publication of a detailed graphic – inspired perhaps by the Ascent of Man - in a tasteful shade of pink to which this column is



unable to do justice.

Islip players are following the guidelines and are meeting in small groups to use the nets, so the club's period of inactivity is over as we wait for “Phase 4 – Adapted gameplay – Date TBC” before hopefully one day being able to

stand up again. The club's patience has not however been matched by that of the broader public on their visits to Islip's playing fields. Years ago, the cricket nets were funded by the Parish Council and, while the club maintains them, they have always been open to the public. With cricket clubs across the country closed during lockdown they assumed an unexpected rarity value, attracting people from far and wide. After unacceptable behaviour over the May Bank Holiday weekend, use of the nets has been restricted (thanks go to Ollie Black and Harry Brock for their prompt intervention). Anyone with Islip connections who would like access should contact Rick Henshaw (rick.henshaw@btinternet.com) or Ollie Black (Ollieblack@hotmail.co.uk). A decision on whether the nets will again be open to the public will be made when the Parish Council is able to reopen the play area.

Other preparations for Adapted Play are gathering momentum. The changing rooms have a new floor. There is still some carpentry and plumbing work to do inside before they are ready to use but that is expected to finish in the next few days. Work on the outside will follow.

All that has left us with plenty of time to ponder last season's statistics which this column mentioned briefly last month, and now here they are in all their glory:

Batting

Name	Appearances	Innings	Not out	Runs	50s	100s
Ollie Black	18	18	4	548	2	2
Adeel Rehman	11	11	2	333	3	0
Jack Launchbury	10	10	3	155	0	0
David Goodfellow	10	10	1	178	1	0
Ludo Bennett-Jones	13	11	3	154	1	0
Ben Crawford	10	9	2	111	0	0
Andy Epton	7	5	1	60	0	0
Harry Brock	18	17	1	138	0	0
Sam Kimber	14	13	2	89	0	0
Kevin Crawford	16	10	3	48	0	0
Nigel Mason	16	10	4	41	0	0
Neil Brock	12	8	1	46	0	0
Josh Swadling	17	16	0	94	0	0
Stan Nelson	12	6	1	12	0	0

Bowling

Name	Bowled in	Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wickets	Average
Adeel Rehman	11	79	22	215	23	9.35
Ben Crawford	10	61	9	238	15	15.87
Neil Brock	8	40.4	4	190	11	17.27
Kevin Crawford	14	79.5	10	302	16	18.88
Jack Launchbury	9	45.5	4	217	10	21.70
Ludo Bennett-Jones	13	82.5	12	353	14	25.21
Harry Brock	14	66	2	405	9	45.00
Andy Epton	5	28	2	124	0	

Now that is all well and good, but in a season in which we nearly broke even, losing just one more game than we won, are there any trends we can pick out? Playing at home, we broke even (P13, W6, D1, L6). Playing away we lost five games and won only three. But what about the players? Which members of the squad appeared in a winning side most frequently?

The answers to that question are not obvious. Despite being the club's most successful batsman, Ollie Black lost more games than he won. By far and away our best all-rounder, Adeel Rehman had a 54.5% win rate. Top of the charts came one-time Mill St resident (and now EasyJet pilot) Andy Epton who won 71.4% of the games in which he batted, and 60% of those in which he bowled. Not far behind him came Ben Crawford with 6 wins in the 10 games he played.

So we hope that cricket makes its comeback faster than EasyJet and starts up before training for next season's football so that Andy and Ben can play more cricket with Islip. Let's hope that before too long we shall be able to start the journey towards the 5 innings and 20 overs needed to qualify for the club's 2020 stats.