

End of Season Report – Men’s Section

Team of the year is the 5th XI.

Man of the year is Justin Jones, 5th XI captain.

The 5th XI was undefeated champions of their league. This team, and its captain, has gone from strength to strength over the year. It has a good balance of young and mature players, it develops the youngsters. Congratulations to the team.

The 6th XI were in the same league as the 5th XI, they came a creditable 5th place, and did their part for the club by beating teams competing with the 5th XI for top places. My special thanks to Chris Bream who somehow manages to get a team out every week, it is the hardest role in the club, getting a full 6th XI on the field every week. Chris achieves it and more, he gets a winning team out.

Old team of the year is the HobNobs who won their league and gained promotion. The team scored an amazing 103 league goals. Derek Cunliffe joining the team may have contributed. A sound purchase by captain Nigel Guppy. The Bees who played in same league deliberately achieved results to stay within their current league, hence we now have the HobNobs and Bees in different Wessex leagues, at last.

While talking about oldies, the Cavaliers had their best season that *they can remember*, they won more games than last year, and are expected to achieve even more next season. This team’s contribution to the club is outstanding, not just on the pitch, but with the operation of the club, they run the bar (drink lots at the bar), maintain the pitch, supply umpires, etc etc.

The 2nd XI were 2nd in their league, but unfortunately were not successful in the promotion playoffs. An excellent achievement by this young team. The team scored 91 league goals in 22 matches, and only the top team Woking (35) conceded less than their 45 goals against. May be some defensive training required. Unfortunately manager David Batchelor is retiring, so we need a new manager! My thanks to David for all his efforts with the team.

The Hares (3rd XI) conceded 73 goals, scored 62, and achieved 8th place in their league. I watched this team a number of times, the skills of this young development team is amazing. The enthusiasm to be on the ball and attacking is breath taking. The club has considerable talent being developed here by our outstanding coach Peter Nail and its manager Paul Rennie.

Last but not least we have the 4th XI. This is a true “team”. They support each other on the pitch and have fun off the pitch. They play excellent hockey, a solid defense with a quick break away attack. They achieved 4th place in their league and at one stage were top of the table. Did captain Bosie’s injury cause the team to go off the boil? Many thanks to Jackie Butt for managing “her boys”.

My only concern with the season is the amount of dissent shown to umpires by all players, coaches and managers in all the teams, and by certain spectators. This is not what we expect from Havant. We will be focusing on this next season.

1st XI Report by Merijn van Willigen

In the end we had a decent season, and we can look back on some good progress made. Initial concerns that the loss of Ezz and Warren would be hard to deal with were quickly dispelled, when we recruited an unexpectedly

high number of players over the summer. This means that Havant remains the club of choice for top hockey in the south, and some of those players (Jamie Askam, Craig Snelling, Jon Smedley, Andy Isaacs and Andy Pett) have become regulars in an improving team. An additional highlight is the way in which our youngsters have competed for pitch time, with Dan Faulkner, Sam Hatherley, and Ben Mackey starting regularly and contributing well. Ollie Nail was added to the group after Christmas and is showing huge promise.

On the pitch, it is obvious that we drew too many games, and in many cases (Stourport x 2; Guildford(a); Fareham(a); Whitchurch(a) and Bourneville (h)) these were points lost, rather than gained. In some ways this is down to a level of naivety and inexperience, and this will become a considerable part of the review in preparation for 2011/12. On the upside, the structure of our attacking play has improved greatly, our short corner routine is improving and in the last 6 games we only conceded 2 goals from penalty corners (which had been a problem before then).

Preparation for 2011/12 has started, and we have already managed to put together a challenging pre-season. This should be the year where we bridge the gap to the top of the league, and compete for a top-3 finish. Our stretch goal will be to get to the post-season play-offs, and having taken points off every team in 2010/11, this is not unrealistic.

The team wishes to thank all Havant members who have supported us in the last year, and we hope to see you again in 2011.