## MINUTES OF BANGOR CRICKET CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Date of Meeting:** Monday 28th November 2022 at 8.00pm

**Place of Meeting:** Uprichard Park

**Members present:** See below

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| **Members Present** |  | **Apologies** |
| * Stephen Burns |  | * Mark Thallon |
| * Johnny Parker |  | * Laurie Cunningham |
| * James Griffin |  | * Peter Dickson |
| * Mark English |  | * Mark English |
| * Peter McIlwaine |  | * Andy Pyper |
| * Matthew Pitts |  | * Chris Escott |
| * Paul Houstoun |  |  |
| * Brian Millar |  |  |
| * George Prince |  |  |
| * Bob McGee |  |  |
| * Chris Harte |  |  |

**Chairman’s Opening Remarks**

The acting Chairman, Peter McIlwain, welcomed everyone to the meeting. A number of apologies were acknowledged from members unable to participate in the AGM November 2022 Meeting.

Thanks expressed to James Griffin for standing in as Chairman when Jeremy Stewart left part way through year. Thanked Jeremy for his leadership over the period of his tenure including through the tough times of COVID. Thanks to outgoing committee, team captains, youth coaches and their contributions made to club over the year. Thanked Stephen Burns for the continued ground maintenance with the support of the grounds working group. Thanks to Alison, Christine and the other Bar Staff together with other members of the club who volunteer their services.

Reiterated that desire to increase participation of a wider group of people in the club to make club more successful, spend more time at the facilities and make it part of their preferred social choices. Relations with the Rugby section of the club continue to prosper.

Thanked voluntary donors for ongoing contributions that have helped across different aspects of running the section over the years.

Results patchy in year and whilst disappointing at top of club but plenty of positives for the years ahead. Andy Pyper and Paul Houstoun not able to maintain 2nds and 3rds captaincy next season.

Thanks passed to Johnny Parker for his level of commitment throughout the season across various aspects of his role as club captain.

Thanked Bangor Academy for starting competitive cricket in the school, establishing facilities in the school which the club benefit from in the winter and their support in re-establishing playing facilities at Ward Park Arras.

Confirmed five senior teams being entered for next year partly to provide a link between youth and senior cricket. Youth continues to strengthen with greater representation at NCU level. Look forward to seeing this success move up the club.

**Minutes from the previous AGM, Matters Arising and 2022 season report**

Paul Houstoun confirmed that there were no matters arising from the Bangor Cricket Club 2021 Annual General Meeting. The minutes from the 2021 AGM were Minutes proposed by Stephen Burns and seconded by Matt Pitts. The draft 2022 season report was proposed by Stephen Burns and seconded by Bob McGee.

**Chairperson aims for 2023 Cricket Season**

1. Cricket section voice in club and facility development to ensure well regarded and equitably treated.
2. Women’s and girl’s cricket section establishment. Now have girls playing regularly on Tuesdays’. The section will add to sustainability of the club. Thanks to James Griffin for volunteering to take drive the section forward.
3. Additional Ground facilities to accommodate the growing number of participants. Looking to re-establish Ward Park Arras as a cricket venue in conjunction with local schools.
   1. Council verbally agreed in principle to install an artificial wicket for use by numerous parties.
   2. Need recognition that there are no municipal cricket facilities in Bangor. Ward Park would provide passing recognition of cricket being played in the town.
4. Youth. Continue to strengthen and pull through into senior sections (aided by the formation of a fifth team).

**Financial review**

No specific update but comment passed that Financials are in a good a position for the 2022 season and a good footing for entering into the 2023 season.

**The Election of Office Bearers and Members of Cricket Section General Committee.**

In accordance with the Club Rules, the following nominations were made by Cricket Committee and were formally confirmed by members during the Annual General Meeting:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Name** | **Committee Role** |
|  | Peter McIlwaine | **Chairman of Cricket** |
|  | Paul Houstoun | **Secretary** |
|  | Stephen Burns | **Treasurer / Grounds** |
|  | Jonny Parker | **Club Captain** |
|  | George Prince | **Club Communications** |
|  | James Griffin | **Women’s section co-ordinator** |
|  | Mark English | **Youth Co-ordinator** |
|  | Brian Miller | **Without Portfolio** |
|  | Matt Pitts | **School Liaison and Safeguarding** |
|  | TBC | **Commercial** |
|  | TBC | **Social** |

**Any Other Notified Business**

Bob McGee noted that the club appeared to be in a much stronger position than six years ago with progression over the period. Bob highlighted the importance of senior role models for younger players and the need for the senior team to aim for a return to section one as soon as possible and the danger of standards falling if remaining in section two for too long. Chris Harte reiterated the need for role model throughout the club and the need for a blend of players in the lower teams to provide guidance to younger players. Chris proposed organising longer format games in the summer, with other likeminded clubs, for player development. Peter McIlwaine confirmed that would be an initiative to follow up on.

The meeting ended at 8.55pm.

**Appendix - 2022 Season Report**

**1st XI Report**

The season for the 1st XI has brought it's struggles with ultimately the 1st XI suffering relegation. Congratulations must go out to Andy and the 2nd XI who secured their Junior 2 status and Mo on the 4th XI's third place finish.

Section 1 returned to the tough league that it has been, as this season brought to an end any Covid restrictions or variations. The 1st XI found life difficult and runs were an ever-present issue. It is a very attritional league but one I am very keen to return Bangor Cricket Club to ASAP. It could be very easy to focus on negatives and as such I am going to do exact opposite. Rather than view the season past through glasses tinted with disappointment, I am instead going to look forward to the opportunities that it has afforded us. With the team moving to Section 2, I am excited about the opportunities that this presents. Many of our younger cricketers will be able to hone their craft and as a team hopefully create and enjoy a winning culture. Section 1 often comes down to experience and this is something I look forward to building next year. This season had many positives and it was great to see the return of Kuda and the impact he was able to have both on and off the field. Another returning face was that of opening bowler David Kennedy. David’s return to Upritchard Park provided both great experience and was an invaluable asset to the young seam bowling group.

I would like to begin the thank you list with each and every player who represented the 1st XI. Training and preparation each week was not representative of the eventual league position and I thank the players for their commitment and attitude right to the end. The ground and wickets were again right up there with the best on the island. Massive thanks to Stephen Burns and the many hands who help in preparing Upritchard Park to the pristine standards that they have come famous for. No bigger compliment can be given to the standards of the ground this summer than that of the feedback from the Ireland and Scotland coaches after the Celtic Cup that visited Bangor in August. Having international cricket again at Bangor Cricket Club was a team effort and something as a whole club we should be very proud of. Thanks go to the continued efforts of the committee who work tirelessly in the background to continue to grow the club and the strength of our club as a whole would not be where it is without them. Thanks to Christine who kindly organises the between innings refreshments and for the guest scorers who offered their services this season. Massive thanks go to all the coaches who volunteer their time working with our youth section and providing sustainability of our future senior teams. Lastly, I would like to thank those who come and support the team. Seeing familiar faces home and away is great for the team and I hope that we can put in performances next year that can leave all in attendance happy.

**2nd XI Report**

The 2022 Season ended with a respectful 4th place finish for the newly promoted 2nd XI in their first season back in Junior League 2. The Season began with heavy defeats to the eventual league winners, Woodvale II and also Derriaghy. The team got back on track with a big win against familiar foes Woodvale III in what is always a feisty encounter. On the back of this win, a run of several victories then came against Woodvale III again (Thanks to a spectacular century from Mark English), Carrick and CIYMS (x2). The season then proceeded to take a bit of a turn as we came up against some of the stronger teams in the league. Defeats came at the hands of Armagh, Cliftonville Academy and Derriaghy. However, an impressive victory at home to Armagh all but ensured the survival of the Second XI in Junior League 2. This win will certainly go down as one of the most impressive of the season. An impressive bowling performance on a good Upritchard Park pitch restricted a strong Armagh team to 160. In reply, the Bangor Trio of James Patterson (74\*), Zach Kerr (31) and Ross Garrett (27\*) went about despatching the Armagh attack to all parts to secure an important victory. The last two games of the season ended in defeats to the promotion chasing Woodvale and Cliftonville Academy.

If you had offered me a 4th place finish before a ball was bowled, I would certainly have taken it. It has been a great achievement to keep the team in what is a very competitive league and the difference in the quality opposition was certainly evident throughout the season. This year, the team has again featured a blend of youth and experience with valuable contributions coming from both young and old. Mark English, Paddy McMillan, Stephen Skelly and Ross Garrett all made vital contributions in important games. On the younger side, Sam McMillan, Michael Skelly, Will Simpson and Josh Walker all contributed wickets and runs to the campaign. I would also like to put on record my thanks to Conor Cox, who stood in and captained the side on a few occasions in my absence. It has again been a pleasure to captain the side this season and hopefully the successes seen this season can be repeated, or even bettered, next season.

**Andrew Pyper – 2nd XI Captain**

**3rd XI Report**

After the highs of the 2021 promotion season the Thirds had a more tumultuous season that ultimately led to relegation back down to Junior League 5.  With the suspension of cricket, for the passing of the Queen, relegation was finally confirmed on the last weekend of an elongated season with results going against the team, despite a victory in our final match.  With three teams finishing on 20 points (5 wins each) the Thirds were placed into the relegation based on being in a lower league in the prior season.

The seesaw season started with a loss to Saintfield II followed by a win against Woodvale IV before the first round of the Minor Lindsay Cup with another match against Woodvale IV.  Despite a strong batting display from Paddy McMillan (63 runs in a score of 161 off 30 overs) and bowling figures of 6-0-32-3 for Matt Pitts, Woodvale IV passed the Bangor total with 2 balls to spare.

Availability issues saw the Thirds utilise 43 players across the season which proved to be a double-edged sword in terms of lack of team consistency but an opportunity to promote the youth within the club.  U13’s Myles McNaught and Daniel Rayner both made an appearance at the end of the season after impressive showings for the Fourths.  The first of numerous upcoming father and child combinations was seen with Ben Pitts joining Matt Pitts for an appearance that, in a tandem bowling spell, saw Ben take a wicket in his first senior appearance. Max Escott gleefully took on the chance to be one of the main bowlers for the team finishing as top wicket taker, with 16 wickets, for the season including the best return of the season 5-0-11-4. Max was followed in the season wicket hall by Matt Pitts and Stephen Skelly with seven wickets apiece and Stephen Cumper on six.

Iain Chapman was leading run scorer (178 runs) for the season. Appearances by Paddy McMillan (135 runs in 2 games) were curtailed by promotion to the Seconds and Firsts in conjunction with Sam McMillan’s rise up the club teams. Jamie Hall contributed well in his inaugural season with 123 runs in 7 appearances with the expectation of greater things to follow next season.

A few matches towards the end of season demonstrated that, whilst we performed on par with the ball, getting consistent batting performances was the likely root cause of our relegation. Giving the opportunity to Michael Skelly and Conor Cox, stalwarts for the seconds, to bat demonstrated the potential strength in the seconds batting order.  Michael notched up 113 runs in 3 matches with a notable contribution of 39 not out in a last ball victory over Lisburn III which saw Jack Irwin hit a four off the final ball of the over to get Bangor over the line. The middle order pairing of Conor with Matt Pitts proved a winning combination in two matches.  These performances kept the Thirds in the mix until the final weekend.

The final match of the season epitomised the attitude of the team which bodes well for a bounce back next season despite having been officially relegated the day before. Bowling first Bangor restricted North Down III to 113 for 6 off twenty overs.  Iain Chapman was, according to Iain, controversially taken off for the last over having returned figures of 2-0-9-2 to be replaced by Conor Cox who repaid the skipper’s faith with a wicket returning an impressive overall return of 4-0-10-1.  Ian Fletcher gave a demonstration in the art of underarm boundary fielding, on a rare occasion when he wasn’t behind the stumps, which a number of us are seeing relived in his Padel serve technique in the off season.

Iain Chapman opened the batting and with typical aplomb quickly dispatching the opening bowler for a straight 6.  In an unexpected gift of generosity Iain gave himself out to what appeared to be a bump ball.  Having walked back to the scorers, and due to a lack of understanding of the exact etiquette in such circumstances, Iain remained out despite the umpire not raising his finger.

This brought Carter McCormack to the crease who converted his undoubted potential into a key innings holding the innings together as a number of wickets fell around him before himself falling when looking to pick up the run rate as the match appeared to be going away from us.  Conor Cox (19 not out) again joined Matt Pitts (25 not out) at the crease with the pair hunting down the remaining 46 runs with great assuredness.  With 20 runs being taken off the 16th over the pair brought home the victory in the 19th over making the victory seem a lot more straight forward than envisaged halve way through the innings.

Overall, a few more lows than highs but with the promise of better things to come.

**Paul Houstoun – 3rd XI Captain**

**4th XI Report**

2022 turned out to be a great season for the fourths in various aspects. The fourths finished 3rd in the Junior league 8 (a) by winning 6 out of their 9 league games. They were very competitive throughout and there were plenty of highlights to take encouragement from.

While several senior players continued to demonstrate strong performances, many young players like Myles McNaught, Daniel Rayner and Josh McMillan also got the opportunity to get stuck into senior cricket, show their impressive talents, and all-rounder capabilities.

In the bowling department, Stephen Cumper, Max Escott and Matt Pitts continued to show impressive & match winning performances with the spin during the season with both being the top wicket takers for the fourths. The pace bowling unit led by the brilliant Jack Irwin, along with amazing Andy Hare and emerging young star of the club Myles McNaught added further strength to fourth’s bowling arsenal.

In batting department, seniors led from the front and showed the experience and valour to put some great batting displays. Matt Pitts, Paul Houstoun, Muhammad Moazzam, Ian Fletcher and Warren Goldthorpe were the leading run scorers for the fourths with one or more half century (50s) scored during the season.

The key highlight for the season for Fourth XI were as follows;

* **Top Wicket Taker:** Stephen Cumper (14 Wickets)
* **Top Runs Scorer:** Matt Pitts (173 Runs)
* **Best Individual Match Performance**: Matt Pitts (5-26 in bowling and 55 runs with bat against Donghcloney Mill
* **Emerging Young Players of the Year:** Carter McCormack, Myles McNaught, Daniel Rayner, Josh McMillan

All in all, a very positive season with notable contributions throughout the team! Thanks must go to Stephen Cumper, Chris Escott, Paul Houstoun, and Stephen Burns for their continuous support for the fourth XI and fulfilling our fixtures.

**Muhammad Moazzam – 4th XI Captain**

**Youth section**

The youth section enjoyed another successful and enjoyable year, demonstrating further development from the previous years.  In addition to increased numbers participating in our Tuesday coaching evenings (we have 172 youth members) we were able to field more youth teams than ever before in league competitions, turning out two Under 11 sides, three under 13 sides and a very welcome return to our under 15 team.   The U15's were a particular highlight under Ricky Armstrong's guidance, bringing in a number of boys who were new to cricket.  The team developed strongly through the year, recording some great victories along the way.  Success came to all teams, the U11's and U13b's reaching their respective league finals. The U17s, the girls' team and the Under 9's also competed well outside of league matches and these are all teams to develop further next year.

Congratulations go to Myles McNaught, Daniel Rayner, Felix McMillan and Josh McMillan who represented the NCU in their age group this year.  Bangor is now well represented at NCU coaching events and I'm confident we'll see the benefit of this at representative level  and on the field for Bangor in the coming years.

None of this could happen without the invaluable commitment of our group of up to 20 youth coaches and helpers who give their time each week. To see so many young people enjoying cricket at our club is a great credit to them.  Thank you to them all.

**Peter McIlwaine – Youth convener**

**Bangor Cricket Club – Grounds Report 2022**

**Pre-Season**

End of season renovations with a heavy scarification, were completed as early as they have ever been and with favourable conditions, a healthy grass seed strike was evident by the end of September. The bare ends were overseeded at this stage and provided for a great coverage across the entire square. Regular spiking, feeding and cutting also provided for healthy square come the spring when preseason rolling was completed.

**Investment**

In line with our continued investment in our facilities and with the invaluable support of a 50% capital grant from Ards & North Down BC, a second synthetic pitch was laid at the Upritchard Court side of the square and was ready for use in the early part of the season.

**Playing Season**

The season got off to an early start with the first competitive match before the end of April. Favourable weather conditions allowed for full pitch preparation. In a change from previous years, pitch prep commenced 10 days (prev 5 days) in advance of the first scheduled match. This made for good pitches throughout the summer with consistent bounce and carry. A very positive NCU Grounds report has been received (draft at this stage) and it is encouraging to note the supporting comments, “outstanding pitch”, “super batting track”, “excellent ground”, “superb ground”.

Our ground is now recognised as a top NCU venue which has resulted in Upritchard hosting several representative games during the season, including the Ireland v Scotland U17 Celtic Cup.

The season wasn’t without its challenges with high winds causing havoc with sight screens on a match day, our efforts unfortunately only resulting in damage to the screens themselves such was the force of the wind.

All of the above is thanks to all our dedicated grounds volunteers who have supported grounds preparation throughout the season. For fear of missing out someone, I’ll not mention any names but you know who you are, thanks!!

**Stephen Burns – Grounds Convenor**