



DRAFT 2025 Season Report

I am absolutely delighted to present this report on what has been an truly outstanding and vibrant 2025 season for Bangor Cricket Club. Across every measure, our club has not only built upon the strong foundations of previous years but has set new benchmarks for achievement, community spirit, and player development, from our thriving youth sections right through to our senior men's and women's teams. This success is a testament to the collective effort and unwavering dedication of everyone involved, and we continue to extend our profound gratitude to the volunteers who make all of this possible.

Key Highlights and Achievements:

Club & Infrastructure: Building for a Brighter Future

The ambition we showed off the field has been matched by our progress on it. Our "Buy a Brick" fundraising initiative was met with tremendous enthusiasm, allowing us to successfully reach our £100,000 target. This fantastic achievement, complementing the Ulster Rugby Club Levelling Up Fund, will enable vital clubhouse upgrades, including two new self-contained female changing rooms, improved accessible WC/shower facilities, a disabled access lift, and a new player entrance. We are thrilled that construction has just started, with efforts made to keep much of the clubhouse operational during the renovation.

In a landmark decision for the club's long-term vision, we welcomed former New Zealand international Ian Butler as our new Director of Cricket. This strategic role is pivotal in shaping our coaching philosophy and ensuring continuous player development for years to come. Innovation also extended to club operations, with new membership cards introduced for bar and club discounts, steering us towards a more modern, partly cashless system.

The grounds team, under the exceptional leadership of Stephen Burns, once again performed miracles. Despite what felt like a record number of games, Upritchard Park maintained its pristine condition, achieving the highest ground score in Section 1 and ranking fourth across all clubs scored by the NCU. We also made crucial ground and drainage improvements between the square and clubhouse to enhance water runoff. Furthermore, our scoreboard received a significant upgrade to an LED display, fully integrated with NV Play, enhancing the match-day experience for all.



Men's Senior Teams: A Force to be Reckoned With

Our Men's 1st XI truly re-established themselves in Section 1, finishing a very respectable 5th in their first season back at this level – a successful return indeed. They continued their remarkable dominance in the T20 format, securing the T20 Trophy for an incredible third consecutive year! Their journey also saw them advance to the second round of the prestigious Irish National Cup. Individual brilliance shone through with Sam McMillan scoring a century and earning selection for the NCU Emerging Knights, while overseas player Connor Brown made valuable contributions with both bat and ball. Chris Pyper and Michael Skelly both achieved impressive 5-wicket hauls, with Michael even training with Leicestershire CCC during his off-season at university.



Figure 1 – First XI T20 Trophy winning team



Figure 2 – First XI season ending Team



The strength in depth across our club is evident in the Men's 2nd XI, who were deserving runner-ups in Junior League 2. Our Men's 3rd XI were crowned League Champions of Junior League 5 and will be promoted to JL4 next season – a fantastic achievement! This was highlighted by Gareth McCullough and James Griffin's sensational 259-run partnership, both scoring centuries in a single match. Josh and Felix McMillan also contributed with fine half-century knocks. Our Men's 4th XI secured their spot in JL8 for next season, with Adam Purce hitting a century, demonstrating the talent nurtured throughout our senior ranks. The Men's 5th XI continued its vital role, providing an excellent platform for our youth members to transition into senior cricket through a development league and cup format.



Figure 3 – Second XI Team



Figure 4 – Promoted Third XI Team



Figure 5 – Fourth XI Team



Figure 6 – Fifth XI Team



Women's Section: Continued Growth and Success

Our Women's Section continues its inspiring progress. The Women's 1st XI competed exceptionally well in Section 1 during their inaugural season at this level, building on their Junior League 1B title win last season. A hugely significant development was the successful introduction of a Women's 2nd XI, providing even more invaluable opportunities for game time and fostering the growing talent within this section.



Figures 7 & 8 – Senior Ladies XI Teams

Midweek Team: Unbeaten in the League!

Our Midweek Team delivered a remarkable undefeated league campaign, winning all 10 of their matches! Their impressive run saw them advance to the semi-finals and ultimately reach the final, where they were narrowly defeated by a strong Dunmurry team. A truly brilliant effort!



Figures 9 & 10 – Mid Week XI Teams



Youth Section: Our Future Stars

The Youth Section continues to go from strength to strength, boasting record numbers of nearly 300 juniors across 10 teams. We remain committed to providing coaching and training for boys and girls from age 5 upward, promoting fun, development, and inclusivity. Our U11 and U13 Boys teams both won their respective leagues, with the U11 Boys even aiming for the Quoil Cup for the third year in a row within 24 hours of securing their league title – an incredible display of talent and determination!

We are incredibly proud of the significant representation our junior members achieved at NCU level, including Megan Stranaghan (U15s), Rachel McDowell (U17 Girls), Felix McMillan (U15s), Teddy McIlwaine, Michael Girvan, Oliver Campbell (U13s), and Louie Ferguson, Benjamin Andrews, and Ethan Martindale (U11s). A special mention goes to Daniel Rayner for his NCU talent development tour to India, which included exposure and coaching at the Chennai Super Kings Academy. We also celebrate Felix McMillan, who at just 14 years old, made his Senior 1st XI debut and represented Ireland U15s – what a talent!



Figures 11, 12 & 13 – Stars of the future



Bangor Rugby Football and Cricket Club
Upritchard Park
Bloomfield Road South
Bangor
Co Down
BT19 7PN

Thank You to Our Invaluable Volunteers and Facility Providers

None of these successes would be possible without the phenomenal dedication of our volunteers. A heartfelt thank you once again to Stephen Burns and all members of the grounds team for their tireless work in preparing a magnificent ground for us each week. Their commitment ensures Upritchard remains a fantastic place to play.

Likewise, immense gratitude goes to all our coaches for their guidance and passion, to our team managers, our committee members, and every parent and supporter who dedicates their time and energy behind the scenes. Your contributions are the lifeblood of our club, and truly make our community thrive.

With the number of players at the club the continued use of facilities at Bangor Academy, Bangor Grammar School and Ward Park Arras provides a continued lifeline for future development throughout the year.

Looking Ahead

As we reflect on such a successful 2025, we look forward to the future with immense excitement. The planned clubhouse renovations, the strategic input of our new Director of Cricket, and the continued growth across all sections set us up for even greater achievements. I urge you all to continue your incredible support, contribute where you can, and perhaps even consider stepping forward to volunteer in roles that are vital and rewarding.

Here's to a continued journey of success, camaraderie, and sport. I wish you all the very best for the upcoming 2026 season!

Additional Club and team news can be found at [-https://www.bangorcricketclub.com/category/club-news/](https://www.bangorcricketclub.com/category/club-news/)

Peter McIlwaine (Chairman)