

Chairman's report 2023 season

Dear members and friends,

First and foremost, may I thank all those who are attending in person this evening and making the effort to be here.

Secondly, to reflect on the recent passing of our friend Richard Barber, former President, Chairman and Life Member who we will all miss greatly. There were not many AGMs that Richard missed in his 40+ year membership and association with NECC. He was a great source of advice, kind words and encouragement, particularly to me when I became Chairman. I will always remember his words on taking up the role of President which were that the strength of the club was the members who turn up on a cold Sunday in February to the AGM to support their mates. Richard loved sport, the camaraderie of clubs and players on and off the field and played a significant role in our great friendship with Enfield Ignatians RFC. I hope we can take this spirit into this year even more so than usual.

2023 started with many positive signs – new ground arrangements in place, the 2nd XI winning Division 9B the previous season and the 1st XI once again held their own in Division 3A against the odds. Sunday and other friendly cricket had been played with great spirit and enthusiasm. Come April and not quite everything had gone to plan since February to say the least but heads were put together to come up with a workable ground solution (if it didn't quite always work out in practice) and with a handful of new/returning players, things looked reasonable. The weather at times (May, July, August...) didn't help but overall, we made the most of all the games that could be played and there were some great team and individual performances.

We do face considerable challenges as always – on the field to fill sides and offer players meaningful cricket each week. This does require flexibility and co-operation (my plea for which last year didn't seem to be heard in some places) to ensure we fulfill our League obligations as well as Sunday matches. Please do think of the often-difficult job the captains have when trying to pick teams. Play where you are asked to play and support the Club by offering to help with the weekly jobs – ground, pavilion, bar etc. Time is our most precious commodity, and we all know it is difficult to balance things out. But we do need more support – bluntly.

Off the field, we continue to await news of the phone mast (at time of writing we have had no further communication from any party) and how the development of the Anglo Aquarium site for housing will affect us, and the wider plans the Council have across Enfield. We are also only a year out from a rent review (2025), and aware of a possible imposition of large increase in rent for the pavilion when it becomes Council property (21 years into the lease, under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954). Both will be issues for the Committee to consider and require careful engagement with LBE in the years ahead. We are not protected to the extent that we may have thought just a few years ago when it comes to security of our tenancy in this corner of the world.

On a brighter note, 2024 is the year that we mark 70 years of North Enfield's tenure at Strayfield Road. We have been starting to plan some events for the year including '1954' anniversary fixtures against clubs still active from that first full season, a Junior/Senior cricket day (late May Bank Holiday) and a special Chairman's XI match in July. More to follow on all that soon.

As always, thanks to those on the Committee who contribute so much to the running of the club and give their time and effort freely to help our club thrive, especially those Junior coaches and helpers training up the next generation of North Enfield players.

We've made it to our platinum anniversary at Strayfield Road so let's make it a great year all-round. On a personal note, this will be my final year as Chairman so I am particularly keen to enjoy it as much as I can!

All the best for 2024,

Mally

David Malleson

Chairman, North Enfield CC