We have a very committed and enthusiastic colts section, including several players who will make very good cricketers, but we don’t have a critical mass and if we, every member of our club, don’t take steps to address this, then our future as a competitive adult cricket club is in jeopardy.

In 2014 we had 43 colts and this dropped to 33 for the 2015 season, and, assuming that all those who are eligible return next season, the number will be 29. This is the first season since I’ve been involved with the colts that we have had to concede more than one game owing to lack of players. We are in dire need of new players and it is the responsibility of everyone in the club to bring in more youngsters. Talk to friends, neighbours and work colleagues and promote interest in our club.

Following this preamble you will probably have realised that the 2015 season was not a great success. With a large number of colts moving from U11 to U13 and the senior U13’s moving up an age group, I requested that both U11 and U13 teams be moved down a division. Unfortunately my request was ignored and the results suffered accordingly. However, the U15 team were very competitive in their division

Our U11 team continues to be very enthusiastic in spite of their lack of success. Although our season’s record shows 3 victories, 2 of these were conceded games, with our only real victory recorded against Cockfosters (our other match against Cockfosters was unfortunately rained off). We had no new players join us last season in this age group and unless we are able to recruit more we will have only 9 players for the U11 age group next season.

Our U13 team, playing in a strong division, were unable to win any games, although they were competitive in our games against Enfield. However, as the season wore on and their defeats got worse, their enthusiasm and spirit started to suffer. We only had 10 players in this age group and we relied on several U11 players to make up the numbers for the team, all of whom acquitted themselves well.

Our U15 team had a very good season and were competitive in all of their matches, with their final position in the division only being decided in the last games of the season. There were 9 points separating the 2nd, 3rd and 4th teams in the league, with us ending up 4th. We were especially disappointed because we had conceded a game earlier in the season owing to lack of players (school exams) and Potters Bar surprisingly calling off their home game due to rain the previous day. We had 12 players at this age group and once again there was reliance on the lower age group to make up the numbers in the team on several occasions.

The awards evening was again held on a Friday at the end of the season and was a great success, in spite of a small reduction in attendees owing to some schools breaking up early and parents having already left for their holidays.

The following players received awards for the 2015 season:

* U11 awards

Batting – Max Molloy; Bowling – Aditya Sembian; Most improved – Robert Walking; Clubman – Brody Willis

* U13 awards

Batting – Alex Molloy; Bowling – Tom Reid; Most Improved – Aveneesh Deleep; Clubman – Daniel Mangan

* U15 awards

Batting – Sam Brazier; Bowling – Oliver Carey; Most improved – Kai Willis; Clubman – Daniel Cordell

Unfortunately Southgate Adelaide’s 6-a-side tournament had to be postponed from its usual date and was rearranged for much later in the season, which resulted in us only being able to enter an U11 team. Nevertheless, it was still a most enjoyable day for those who took part and, as usual, we played with great spirit and participated well.

The start of the school holidays fell badly and meant that we were unable to hold the Summer camp that we had run for the last two years, but we are hoping to resurrect it in 2016.

I have already talked about the need for more young players and I hope that you are all aware of the importance of a thriving colts section for a successful adult cricket club. Without the continual replenishment of playing members club cricket will die out. Over the last season we have selected 3 or 4 U15 colts to play in both our Saturday league teams and also the Sunday friendlies team, and we would like to continue this, with more if possible. So get recruiting!

As usual I’d like to extend my thanks to all those that help with colts, from the coaches and helpers at training, to the managers for running the sides and all the match-day helpers, umpires, scorers and last but not least, the parents for getting their ‘treasures’ to the games.

Have a good Winter and I look forward to seeing you all again at Winter nets at the end of February.

Keith Walker