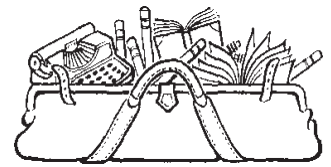




Newsletter for Norfolk Cricket League Clubs

Cricket Bag

Issue 18



Winter 2008

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- Alliance Expansion
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The Norfolk Cricket League is sponsored by Lucas Fettes & Partners

Please send any comments or items for inclusion to:
18 Pristow Green Lane,
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NR16 1PX

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www.ncleague.co.uk

Diary Dates ...

Awards Dinner -
Friday 10 October 2008
City Suite, Ramada
Jarvis Hotel

Annual General Meeting -
Friday
21 November 2008
UEA SportsPark

Expansion Plans Analysed

In February 2008 the NCA Management Committee was given a mandate at their AGM by their members to open discussions with the NCB and feeder leagues with a view to expanding the NCA by a minimum of 1 division from 2009 onwards. These actual words are important: at no point has the NCA Committee been given a mandate to implement any expansion, just to open discussions about it.

As previously reported, the NCB called a meeting – chaired by Richard Green – at the end of May to discuss the proposals with the NCA and the Feeder leagues. At that meeting RG said that expansion in 2009 was unrealistic and proposed a series of meetings to discuss how any expansion of the NCA would be implemented and improve facilities and standards. This latter point is crucial as it was the original driving force behind the proposal. However, the NCA representatives at that meeting said that there was no point in holding further meetings. Subsequently, the NCB has stated that comments made by RG at this meeting were his own and did not reflect the views of the NCB. These factors render this 'meeting' as entirely worthless.

Consequently, one can argue that there has only been one meeting between

the interested parties, held on 13 August. However, even this meeting could not be said to fall into the category of "opening discussions" since:

- + the meeting was arranged for a date and time when the NCL acting chairman was unable to attend
- + there was no pretence of 'opening discussions' as the NCA simply stated that the expansion would take place and the views of the feeder league representatives were ignored
- + the NCB chairman had stated before the meeting that the history of the expansion plans was not to be discussed, and that the meeting was principally about sorting out the detail of the expansion

The precedent for how proceedings should have been conducted this time was set when Norfolk cricket was restructured in 2003.

Unfortunately, this season has been largely overshadowed by the threat of the expansion of the Alliance.

As 'Cricket Bag' goes to press, we have just heard that the NCA Management Committee have decided to go ahead and expand by three divisions, despite the protests of the feeder leagues.

But, with the season finished, no-one knows where they stand because none of the teams that have applied to join the NCA have received confirmation of what is happening.

This is our take on the whole sorry saga ...

Then, **ALL** Norfolk leagues were involved in the consultation process and, subsequently, **ALL** clubs in those leagues had the opportunity to vote **BEFORE** the qualifying season started. Incidentally, some 84% of all league clubs voted in favour of the proposals which led to the structure as it has been for the last five years. As Richard Green stated in his resignation statement, "Norfolk cricket, not the Alliance, owns the structures and logically only a vote of all clubs can change them."

Unfortunately, the Management Committee of the NCA seems to be determined to force through these proposals against the wishes of the feeder leagues and without apparent reference to its own members.

(contined overleaf)

Executive Committee Details

President	Tom Bartram		
Vice President	Chris Free		
Chairman (Acting):	Alan Harris	01379 674427	harris823aj@aol.com
Secretary:	Alan Harris	01379 674427	harris823aj@aol.com
Treasurer:	Tony Gregory	01603 738673	apggregory1@tiscali.co.uk
Results (1, 10):	Tim Porter	01986 894084	timporter_tp@tiscali.co.uk
Results (2, 3, 4):	Mike Ridout	01603 787725	mike.ridout@btinternet.com
Results (5, 6):	Paul Combstock	01493 443827	paul.combstock@sky.com
Results (7, 8, 9):	James Kay	01603 260872	james.kay@cavell.co.uk
Awards & Sponsor:	Jonathan Cooke	07885 958768	photo_create@yahoo.co.uk
Complaints:	Paul Combstock	01493 443827	paul.combstock@sky.com
Welfare Officer:	Malcolm Kauffman	01603 783849	mal@beltoncricket.co.uk
Committee:	Keir Hounsome, Roger Horn, Simon Richardson		

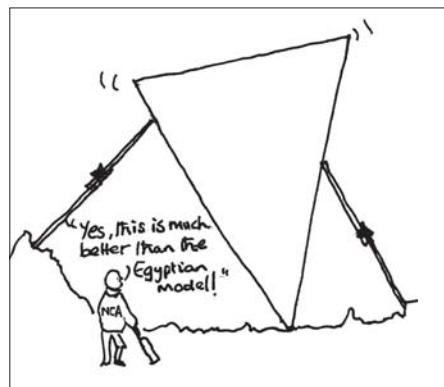
Expansion analysed

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The NCL Executive Committee recognises that it has a duty of care to all of its members. And it is worth stating again that this wide remit covers teams in the following categories:

- + those teams with ambitions to progress to the NCA
- + a majority of teams who are happy to play recreational cricket in a competitive framework
- + a small minority of teams (all of which, incidentally are NCA-related) who want the NCL to provide a competitive environment in which to develop their own young players outside of the NCA structure

It is this recognition that has led the NCL to state that it has no objection in



principle to an NCA expansion. However, it needs to be implemented properly. This means that it should take place in a sensible timescale; that the 'rules' for selecting the promoted teams

should be **TRANSPARENT** and in place **BEFORE** the qualifying season starts; and should only occur **AFTER** due consideration, discussion and agreement between **ALL** parties.

The current, autocratic proposal that the NCA expand by three divisions has no merit and also has the following drawbacks:

- + it would render the 'feeder' scheme effectively closed for the foreseeable future since, by definition, all the teams who are likely to meet the Alliance entry standards for facilities will have already gone
- + Norfolk would end up with a 'pyramid' in which the bases (the feeder leagues) were smaller than the apex, which is supposed to represent 'an elite'
- + in its lower divisions, the NCA will have teams who are currently in various divisions in the feeder leagues - leading to unmatched cricket
- + it will also mean that whenever any feeder league team is promoted in future, it will totally outclass the teams who will be in NCA Div 6
- + it does nothing to address the apparent shortcomings of facilities standards in the feeder leagues - which was the original motivation behind the Alliance proposal
- + it reveals the NCB to be a toothless organisation

Standards

The Alliance lust for expansion was - apparently - driven by the standards in the feeder leagues not being high enough. But did you know that ...

- promotion and relegation between the NCL and NCA started in 1994
- since then, six teams were relegated from the NCA, but only Beccles in 1996 have re-gained their Alliance place
- the team which replaced Beccles, Great Witchingham, has gone through the Alliance to the East Anglian Premier League
- in the same period, 16 teams were promoted from the NCL. None of them has been relegated back!

Clearly, the NCL needs to work hard to improve its standards!

CWO Courses

We would like to remind all clubs that the courses required for Club Welfare Officer qualification - 'Time To Listen' (TTL) and 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children (S&PC) - must be renewed every three years. We understand that the Criminal Records Bureau check also has to be updated.

The NCB have indicated that they are trying to schedule more courses and we will bring you these details when available.

In the meantime, if you have any course queries, please contact the NCB's Cricket Development Manager, Kieron Tuck, on 07785 722281 or via e-mail to: kierontuck@ecb.co.uk.

Final Division Standings

Division	Winners	Runners Up
1	Hethersett & Tas Valley	Gt Witchingham A
2	Winterton	Ketteringham Hall
3	Brooke A	Cromer A
4	Great Melton A	Bradenham A
5	Lowestoft A	Aylsham St Giles
6	Great Melton B	Bungay A
7	Drayton A	Martham
8	Watton	Rocklands A
9	Hardingham A	Hemsby
10	Blundeston	Garboldisham B

Congratulations to all the winners and runners up, especially to Blundeston, who claimed the Division 10 title in their second year in the League.

With this newsletter, you will find entry forms for the individual awards, and these need to be returned by Friday, 12 September. Voting will take place at the Executive Committee meeting on Monday, 15 September.

Remember - you've got to be in it to win it!

The Awards Dinner will take place on Friday, 10 October

All Mod Cons

Although we appreciate that not all Club Secretaries have access to e-mail, we would like to hear from anyone who is prepared to receive messages on behalf of your Norfolk Cricket League club. It is very useful to be able to send out short-notice information to all our member Clubs and we have done this a few times already. If you are prepared to accept messages for any of the following 'missing' clubs: (Brisley, Loddon, Rocklands and Sprowston), please send an e-mail to norfolkcricket@aol.com.

