



## NOVEMBER, 2013 NEWSLETTER

# Tackling website changes

ECB have pulled the strings on all their play-cricket.com websites and replaced them with new site addresses.

The entails much work for all who use the site (that is every club in the League as well as the Cheshire Board and County Club). Cheshire county club Secretary Derrick Hastings warns: "All references from external sites are broken, which means that scorecards and such no longer appear. I have rebuilt the County club site and David Sharp is doing likewise with the Board's. Leagues have been made aware of the problems and have started work on their own sites, but it not easy to figure out".

League website administrator Darren Sutcliffe says: "Play-cricket administrators are now aware of the problems and are working on their sites to correct some of the problems including resolving the issue of missing information. My advice is to wait until a further up-date is issued as some things may correct themselves. I have looked at the new format and it is not too difficult to navigate. You may see from the League's own Homepage on which I have done some work that I have installed the Vivio banner. I have managed to post the 1st XI fixtures and hope to add the 2nd XI fixtures soon".

He adds: "There is a guide for using the site on YouTube which can be accessed via each cub's Homepage from the link that says 'Please insert your welcome message here. Please click on the link below for assistance'".

Two of the first League clubs to create new websites - with different degrees of success - are Nantwich and Oxton.

**Up-dated information and an exchange of website views will be on the agenda at the League management committee meeting at Timperley on Wednesday, November 20.**

## ***HYDE LOSE 4 – AND RECRUIT 3***

**HYDE were shocked at the loss of four senior players at the end of the 2013 season, but have moved to recruit three top-quality replacements.**

**Leaving to join neighbouring Denton West in the Lancashire County League are batsman John Ashley, all-rounder Dan Cranmer and paceman Tom Young, while opening left hander Tom Twiney is leaving the area to further his career.**

**The Werneth Low club, holders of the RedInsure T20, but never yet Premier League champions, have acquired the following trio: Macclesfield and Cheshire batsman Khalid Sawas (592 club and 612 county runs last season), Alderley Edge's experienced Jason Whittaker (310 runs and 60 wickets in 2013) and one of the League's best young all-rounders Danny Williams, from Poynton. The son of club captain Jimmy Williams, Danny scored 652 runs and took 40 wickets last summer when he played for Cheshire's Development XI.**

## **Third XI plans for 2014**

THE special Third XI meeting at Warrington in October voted in favour of adopting wide-scale changes to the format of Sunday cricket in 2014. The intention is to reduce travel and encourage young players who may not want to figure in the longer form of the game as in the past, especially if they have played in the mornings.

The main items of change proposed are

O Teams below Sunday Division 1 to be formed into in two western and three eastern geographical groups with normal promotion and relegation. New Brighton and Sale will be replaced by Cheadle and Middlewich in Division One, while New Brighton and Sale will merge into the new set up minus Romiley 4, who have quit after conceding several 2013 fixtures. New teams are expected to be Alderley Edge, Cheadle Hulme Ladybridge and Trinity, together with possibles Sandbach. Weaverham have decided not to join.

O The style of cricket to be 80 overs games, with draws still possible.

O Bowlers to be restricted to 12 overs.

O Saturday Divisions 1 and 2 will continue as in the past. There will be a 12 / 10 teams split following applications for admission from Ashley and Haslington

**A final vote to approve the proposals – or otherwise – will be made by clubs at the January meeting.**

## **2014 LEAGUE FIXTURES**

THE expertise of TACS Cheshire League vice chairman and computer expert Graham Coull has enabled the League to produce their 2014 fixtures earlier than usual.

As previously announced, the season will begin on Saturday, April 19 when the **ECB Premier League** programme includes a clash between reigning champions Chester Boughton Hall and last season's close runners-up Neston, at Filkins Lane. The opening day fixtures are as follows:

### **ECB Premier League:**

Alderley Edge v promoted Bramhall  
Bowdon v promoted Urmston  
Chester Boughton Hall v Neston  
Grappenhall v Marple  
Hyde v Oxton  
Toft v Nantwich

### **Division 1**

The **First Division** stand out game is between Middlewich and mid-Cheshire rivals Davenham who were promoted at the end of their maiden season last September. Games are:

Brooklands v relegated Didsbury  
Cheadle v Sale  
Cheadle Hulme v Christleton  
Middlewich v Davenham  
Oulton Park v relegated Macclesfield  
Promoted Timperley v Widnes

### **Division 2**

Back in the League after 18 years following promotion as runners-up in the TACS Cheshire League, Northwich open their **Second Division** programme at home to relegated Heaton Mersey. Returning after just 12 months, Upton host Tattenhall. Here is the full list:

Alvanley v Poynton  
Congleton v relegated Bredbury St. Mark's  
Northwich v Heaton Mersey  
Stockport v Irby  
Upton v Tattenhall  
Weaverham v Warrington.

The season ends 22 weeks later on Saturday, September 13.

The full, corrected 1st and 2nd XI fixtures should now be available on the League website. They have been distributed by League secretary Geoff Wellsted and are also available from MTB. .

Third XI fixtures below Division One cannot be completed until after the January management meeting.

### ***RedInsure T20 plans***

THE Cricket Committee recommend that the new format adopted for the **RedInsure T20** last season should continue in 2014 despite the problems which arose.

A provisional draw has been made involving 32 clubs in eight geographical groups of four excluding Bowdon, Christleton, Heaton Mersey and Weaverham who all pulled out of scheduled fixtures at short notice in 2013.

The seeded clubs in the groups are those who finished in the top eight of the ECB Premier League namely: Chester Boughton Hall, Neston, Hyde, Alderley Edge, Oxton, Grappenhall, Toft and Nantwich. Stiffer penalties for match concessions are planned. Under the proposed format, all group games would be played on Thursdays from May 15 – June 26, with quarter-finals on July 10.

A new draw will be made prior to Finals Day, which will be at Upton on Sunday, July 27.

The winners at Upton will progress to the Area Finals on Sunday, August 10 on the ground of the Birmingham League winners. Also taking part will be the North Staffs & South Cheshire League and North Wales winners. The Regional final is on Sunday, August 24 and Finals Day is on a first class county ground on a September date yet to be fixed.

## **Over 40s seek quarter - finals**

NEW teams in the **Over 40s section** next season will be Ashton on Mersey and Timperley, the latter returning after a two year absence.

The special meeting at Warrington on October 16 accepted the resignation of Cheadle Hulme Ladybridge, who were responsible for five of the 20 conceded fixtures in 2013.

The make up of the four geographical groups of eight will be:

**West** : Caldy, Chester, Irby, Neston, Oxton, Tattenhall Wreckers, Upton, Warrington who switch from the North-East. group.

**Central**: Alsager Dabbers, Ashley, Bowdon, Bowdon Vale Vikings, Davenham, Grappenhall, Mobberley, Toft

**North-East**: Alderley Edge Wizards, Ashton on Mersey, Brooklands, Cheadle, Cheadle Hulme, Sale Silverbacks, Timperley, Urmston Tigers.

**South-East**: Bollington Veterans, Bramhall, Bredbury Saints, Macclesfield, Marple, Offerton, Poynton Legends, Offerton.

Clubs have voted to introduce quarter-finals next to maintain interest in the groups. These games will be on the first Sunday after the final scheduled fixtures. The play-offs will be at Chester Boughton Hall on late Summer Bank Holiday, August 25

The possibility of playing games in the first two and last two weeks with pink balls to counter poor light is being considered. The possibility of acquiring tiflex balls has been raised with Reader's.

TailorMade Group pensions have withdrawn after two years sponsoring the section and thanks have been expressed to Peter Barrett for his support.

Ian Sharrock has compiled the fixtures which run from Wednesday, May 7 to Wednesday, August 6. They are available from MTB now and will be on the League website from next week.

**O The proposals to introduce quarter-finals need to be approved at the January management meeting.**

## **2014 Cheshire fixtures**

CHESHIRE'S home venues in 2014 will include Bramhall, Alderley Edge, Bowdon and Nantwich, with one still to be decided.

One-day **Minor Counties Knock out cup** home games are against Cumberland on Sunday, May 11 TBA and Lincolnshire at Bramhall on Sunday, June 25. Should Cheshire win their group the quarter-final is earmarked for Chester Boughton Hall. Away games are at Northumberland on April 28 and Shropshire on May 18.

**Minor Counties championship** (3-day) home games: Cornwall at Alderley Edge Sunday – Tuesday, June 22 – 24; Wales at Bowdon July 20 - 22; Oxfordshire at Nantwich August 17 – 19. Away games: Hereford at Colwall June 8 – 10; Devon at Sidmouth July 6 – 8; Wiltshire at South Wilts August 3 – 5.

### **New chairman**

Cheshire's annual meeting is at the Golden Pheasant, Plumley on Monday, November 18 (7.30 p.m.) when John Pickup ends his three-year term as chairman and is set to be succeeded by David Bailey. Jim Law is nominated as vice chairman and John Pickup as president in succession to Tony Percival. Hyde chairman Paul Chorlton is standing for the committee.

A profit on the year 2011-2012 of £4,542 was to be reported thanks to income increasing from £38,747 to £45,659. This is almost entirely due to a grant of £32,871 from the Minor Counties Cricket Association. Match expenses were reduced almost £3,000 to £41,627 and included a sum of £10,537 for an away match against Cornwall. There are accumulated capital reserves of £89,730, reported new treasurer Keith McGuffie.

The 2013 championship batting averages were topped by Hyde's James Duffy with 261 runs at 87, including the season's top individual score of 203. Most runs came from Khalid Saqwas, 612 and Warren Goodwin, 575.

The bowling averages were headed by Danny Woods who took 59 wickets at 13.58. Woods is currently playing grade cricket in Australia and on his return may look for a teaching post in the Manchester area, while committing himself to another summer at York.

## **National ko entries closure date**

ENTRIES for next season's **National Club championship** close on November 29 and forms are available.

A total of 11 clubs from the League entered last season.

Competition dates in 2014 with rain dates in parenthesis are: round 1 Sunday, April 27 (May 3); round 2: May 11 (May 18); round 3: June 1 (June 8); group final June 22 (June 29); round 5: July 13 (July 20); quarter-finals: August 3 (August 10); semi-finals August 31 (September 7); final (on first class county ground) Sunday, September 24 or 21.

Games will be played in regional groups of 10 and the draw will be released in January.

O Entries for the newly-titled Davidstow Village Cup have to be submitted before January 1, 2014

## **Christleton pitch and outfield double**

THE end of season stats drawn up by League Grounds chairman John Bygate from umpires' reports show that Brian Wareing's Christleton emerged top of both **Pitch and Outfield tables**.

Christleton averaged 19.36 out of a possible 20 for the quality of the Little Heath pitches, with Middlewich second on 19. At the foot of the table two clubs who recorded marks of below 4 were newcomers Davenham, 14.91 and Poynton, 14.82.

The League have contacted Toft requiring them to obtain mobile covers as per ECB and Premier League regulations.

Christleton gained a maximum 20 mark for their outfield, just ahead of Oxton, 19.67 with 11 other clubs enjoying marks of more than 19. At the foot of the table were Bollington, 16.18, Congleton, 16.55 and Brooklands 16.91

A total of 24 clubs gained the maximum mark of 5 in the 2nd XI pitch table, with one – Davenham – below four at 3.25.

Davenham have been urged by the League to redouble their efforts to follow the improvement programme set out by Cheshire Pitch Adviser Paul Agar.

The 3rd XI pitch table for clubs with second grounds was topped by Timperley with a maximum 5 mark.

## **WAGS BOOST SENIORS' DINNER**

THE presence of more than a dozen players' wives and lady friends resulted in a record attendance at the **Cheshire Seniors' annual dinner** at Chester Boughton Hall on November 1.

Organiser Paul Freedman said: "It is delightful to see so many people here, especially the ladies, although I gather this is not universally popular among our more chauvinist members. I am sure the jokes will be cleaner".

Over 50s' skipper Gary Cash said that although his team had enjoyed a good record, winning eight of 10 group games they did not make the last 16, with Durham emerging as champions. He looked forward to new recruits helping the team do better in 2014 when the format would be unchanged with five groups of eight teams, despite attempts at change.

Tim Wearden topped the batting averages with 191 runs at 63.66 with Cash himself scoring most runs, (206 at 51.50). The best bowlers were Andy McIlroy (7 wickets for 124) and Chris Moore (14 - 270).

### **Stand-in spokesman**

Over 60s captain Andy Hurworth was unable to attend because of his wife's illness and Ken Crofton stood in to speak about the season's activities which had resulted – 'probably inevitably on the law of averages', he admitted - with failure to win the National title for a fourth successive year. He added: "We had our days, but losing three group games, then going out to Wales in the semi-final left us empty handed".

Skipper Jim Wilde reported on the newly-formed Over 60s 2<sup>nd</sup> XI which had involved travel to Worcestershire, Devon and Kent, to whom they had lost in the quarter-final. Individual highlight was a fine innings of 149 by farmer Chris Leech at Grappenhall against Somerset which had left him unable to drive his tractor next day. Most runs were scored by Rob Ashley, 328 and most wickets by Ken Crofton, 15.

Guests at the dinner were Cheshire Board chairman Peter Davies, Cheshire Board management chairman Stan Davies, new Chester Boughton Hall president John Legry and Mike Talbot-Butler the Vivio Cheshire County League's *Newsletter* Editor.

O Over 50s Wednesday home match details for next season are: Northumberland at Alderley Edge on May 21 (tbc); Notts at Toft on June 11; Durham at Grappenhall on June 18; Derbyshire at Hyde on July 9.

## **More umps needed**

AN increasing shortage of umpires was highlighted at the **End of season meeting of the League Umpires & Scorers Association** which was followed by the annual hot pot, at Sale on September 18.

Chairman Ian Greensmith believed there had been 'a slight struggle' in 2013 with few 2<sup>nd</sup> XI matches covered.

Appointments secretary Jon Hacking felt that up to half a dozen new panellists would be needed in 2014. There was an arrangement with the TACS Cheshire League to transfer three members annually all of whom had done well last season. All but two 1<sup>st</sup> XI matches had been covered by two umpires in 2013.

Umpires education courses were being held at Hale Barns and Oakmere this winter; details were available from Geoff Young. .

### **20 discipline cases**

The chairman said that there had been an increase to 20 in the number of players disciplined. Greater consistency was required from umpires reporting cases of misconduct. A revised Disciplinary Code was to be introduced.

Neville Kent was complimented as Cheshire ECB ACO membership services officer for setting up the periodic Newsletter.

Guest speaker was Nick Cousins, Senior Executive Officer to the ECB ACO at Lord's who discussed topics across the umpiring spectrum. This was followed by a Q & A session..

O Umpires Ankit Jain and Martin Howe have been advanced to Level 2 status for 2014.

## **Umpires AGM matters**

THE **League Umpires and Scorers Association AGM** at Toft on Wednesday, November 13 was attended by 28 members and one guest (TACS Cheshire League chairman Peter Davies), a further 13 offering apologies.

The main items to emerge were:

O The present system of umpires' markings by captains had caused controversy and provided little beneficial feedback for umpires themselves. It was evident that umpires were sometimes penalised by captains for adjudication and match control if they had given unpopular decisions.

O Members were reminded that HM Revenue and Customs regarded umpires' expenses as potentially taxable. Members were urged to keep detailed records of mileage and costs incurred as well as expenses received. There had so far been no reports of HMRC investigations of any individuals.

O Treasurer Bob Abel reported a balance of £759 compared to £806 a year earlier. Affiliation fees to the county to help cover training costs had been doubled to £2 per panel umpire. The end of season hot pot had been subsidised by £85. Subscriptions remain at £5.

O It was agreed to continue the umpires exchange system with other leagues and a link-up with the North Staffs & South Cheshire League was suggested

O All officers and committee members wished to continue and those elected were: Chairman and League management rep. Ian Greensmith; Secretary Glyn Roberts; Treasurer Bob Abel; Appointments secretary Jon Hacking; Umpires' marks coordinator Ken Spilsbury; Fairplay coordinator John Lofthouse; Committee: Alistair Davies, Rick Davis, John Lowe, Geoff Wellstead.

## ***MERE QUIT CHESHIRE LEAGUE***

AFTER being denied promotion to Division One because they did not have Clubmark, Mere have quit the **TACS Cheshire League** and their 1st and 2nd XIs have joined the Cheshire Alliance.

This defection has caused changes down the chain with Kingsley remaining in Division Two and Alderley Park avoiding demotion to the Alliance and staying in Division Three.

The League expect to appoint a new chairman at their January AGM following the decision of Peter Davies to stand down after 16 years' sterling work.

## **League Conference news**

THE winter meeting of the **League Cricket Conference** at Banbury on Saturday, December 7 will again discuss the viability of the President's Trophy inter-league knock out.

The Trophy, won by the North Staffs & South Cheshire League for the fifth successive season in 2013, was beset by more difficulties. Two of the 11 entrants dropped out before the start and more games were subsequently conceded than actually played.

The Conference have been notified of the eight-week suspension of Bowdon's Simon Marshall from April 19 next season. He will be unable to play in any League under ECB or Conference auspices

Twelve months suspensions have been notified of Staffs Club championship club Walsall YPF players Naveid Younus and Rizwan Hussein which are effective until July 12, 2014.

The continuing suspension has also been notified of Gareth Roberts (Bowdon Vale) which continues until May 5, 2014.

The resignation from Conference after 38 years' of the now disbanded Manchester Association has been accepted with regret. Meanwhile, the admission of the Airedale & Wharfedale League and Worcestershire Clubs Sunday League have been accepted.

The death has occurred of Jackie Graveney, wife of Conference president Tom Graveney.

**OVERSEAS PLAYER AVAILABLE:** Australian leg-spinner Chris Williams has contacted *Newsletter* to offer his services to any CCL club next season.

He describes himself as a leg-spinner, aged 23, who has played for Geelong in the Victoria Premier League alongside Khalid Sawas and Jonny Kettle, who will speak for him if contacted.

His e-mail address is: [chrisjameswilliams1990@gmail.com](mailto:chrisjameswilliams1990@gmail.com)

## *News from around the clubs*

### **ALDERLEY EDGE**

League panel umpire and former Alderley Edge and Bramhall player Chris Smith is to captain the club's newly-constituted Third XI next season. Meanwhile, Chris soldiers on this winter as Carlisle United's most-travelled (and optimistic) fan.

Match secretary and erstwhile League panel umpire Rick Davis is giving up his work running the Cheshire Cup and Shield competitions. A successor is being sought for 2014.

### **BOLLINGTON**

Former Bolly captain Matt Dawson provides details of a potential 2014 overseas player. An Indian friend, he is Shivsagar Singh, 34, who played in the North Staffs & South-Cheshire League for Crewe from 2010-12. A former Bengal first-class cricketer, he is a left arm spinner and left hand batsman and can be contacted by e-mail on [shibuspin@rediffmail.com](mailto:shibuspin@rediffmail.com) while his career details are on <http://www.espnricinfo.com/India/content/player/3383.html>.

Now associate members with their senior teams operating in the TACS Cheshire League, Bolly have elected Rob Murdoch as chairman and Ollie Nolan as Third XI captain, while Ged McKernan leads the Over 40s Veterans team.

### **BRAMHALL**

Long-serving member of the Lancashire & Cheshire Cricket Society, Barry Rickson has been elected chairman of the Council of Cricket Societies. This is a network of nationwide groups who meet during the winter months and invite talks from players, ex-players, umpires and other cricket enthusiasts. League secretary Geoff Wellsteed is a regular speaker on the circuit.

Members celebrate their Division One title triumph with a black tie dinner dance at Bramhall Golf Club on Saturday, November 23.

### **CHESTER BOUGHTON HALL**

The death has been mourned of long-time member Martin Griffiths at the age of 59, following his collision with a bus at Bromborough two weeks earlier. He was the father of well-known club players Matthew, 29 and Lauren, 26 who played for England Ladies..

Players and officials have been invited to a Civic Reception at City Hall by the Lord Mayor to celebrate their treble trophy-winning season.

Cheshire left-hander Lee Dixon - currently in Australia for the Queensland Test - takes over from treble-winner Steve Ogilby as 1<sup>st</sup> XI captain. The erstwhile League After-Dinner speaker is uncertain about his 2014 availability.

John Legry has been elected President in addition to his duties as secretary and fixture secretary. In other administrative changes Jim Gillson becomes chairman and David Fisher is the new 1st XI captain.

### **CHRISTLETON**

New club secretary is Jacqui Gittins, who succeeds Russ Butcher.

### **HEATON MERSEY**

Tim Humpage, elder son of League chairman David Humpage, has been elected Cricket chairman in succession to Colin Norbury.

Nicola Bennett has stood down as secretary, but remains the League's only female president.

### **MACCLESFIELD**

One of the club's most popular recent overseas players, Evan Gullbis is making a name for himself in top Australian cricket with Tasmania. He was named Man of the match when he took 4-36 against Victoria in the Ryabi (50 overs) Cup. Gullbis rarely bowled while at Macclesfield.

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### ***Club news continued ...***

#### **MARPLE**

Mark Bennett has been elected 1<sup>st</sup> XI captain in succession to Matthew Shelton whose four-year term saw the club gain successive promotions from Division Two to the Premiership.

Gary Cash is now the undisputed highest run scorer in League history following the retirement from Saturday cricket of Peter Kingham at Poynton. The scorer of 218 Premier League runs last season hoisted Cashy's tally since 1977 to a massive 17,904. Kingham's tally is closed – barring a sudden change of heart – at 16,692 put together from 1985 – 2013.

#### **OXTON**

After standing down due to injury 12 months ago, Graham Cashin is not fit enough to resume and Simon Stokes continues to lead the 1st XI. All other captains – and officers – have been re-elected.

A fine servant in recent seasons – especially during his captaincy– fast bowler Andy Birley has hung up his boots.

#### **SALE**

Paul Battersby takes over from Matthew Millward as chairman at Dane Road, with Ian Dixon becoming secretary. Keith Wellings is confirmed as captain after three different players led the team in 2013.

South African all-rounder Wihan Lubbe, who scored 845 runs and took 20 wickets for Sale as their overseas player in 2012, has made his first-class debut. Playing for North-West Province recently, he scored 34 against Western Province at Potchefstroom.

#### **TATTENHALL**

Tatters were short-listed for cash awards offered by the Lloyds Bank Group Community Fund which put up one prize of £3,000 and three of £300. The money is earmarked to help provide an artificial practice pitch for the junior section

#### **TOFT**

A large oak tree crashed on the roof of the pavilion at Booth's Park during the October storms. The damage was not considerable and repairs have been almost completed.

#### **UPTON**

Chairman Harry Sharrock last week celebrated his 80th birthday and received a congratulatory card from the League which also welcomed his club back on their return after 12 months in the TACS Cheshire League,

The last major function in the soon-to-be demolished tea-room was the autumn hot pot supper on November 1. A new building will be ready for the first match in April, 2014.

#### **WIDNES**

Steve Duckers stands down after five years as Widnes secretary and club representative on the League management. He is succeeded by Andy Burns.

*Contributions of further Club News throughout the winter will be welcomed*

## **Accolade for The Mere**

THERE was varied reaction to the League's recent **Presentation Dinner** at The Mere, which attracted a record attendance of more than 350 people.

John Bygate, who has organised the function so well for the past 20 years, has stood down and a new Dinner sub-committee has been formed to plan the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in October, 2014. Their first job will be to decide on a venue, either the one which has accommodated the League function since 1997, or a fresh one .

Meanwhile, *Cheshire Life* Magazine has named the venue - now officially known as The Mere Golf Resort and Spa - as their 2013 Hotel of the Year.

O Only one personality has spoken twice at the League's Big Bash since the first was held at the Stanneylands Hotel, Hale in 1975. He is Geoff Miller (Cresta Court 1985 and Mere Golf & Country Club 2003).

**NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER: 8**

## **Macclesfield dressing-rooms bite the dust**



**Macclesfield chairman Simon Griffiths sends *Newsletter* this picture of the antediluvian (1929) dressing-rooms during demolition work carried out by players getting rid of their frustrations after demotion from the Premier League.**

**Grants from Sport England of £49,200 and the England & Wales Cricket Trust, of £38,051, will enable two new large dressing-rooms, an umpires' room showers, toilets and facilities for the disabled to be built ready for the new season in April, 2014, reports chairman Griffiths.**

**Meanwhile, a fund-raising appeal has been launched to instal an electronic scoreboard and a synthetic practice area urgently required for young players.**

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Clubs are reminded that they must submit lists of 2014 officers immediately their AGMs have been held: to MTB and League secretary Geoff Wellsted. A form is available to assist once new websites have been established.

Advertisements from clubs or individuals for use in the 2014 Handbook will be welcomed, together with pictures of winning team or individual presentation awards. Pictures for winter Newsletters will also be appreciated

**NEXT ISSUE OF NEWSLETTER: DECEMBER, 2013**



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