



2026 season review

A season of resilience, achievement and a very promising future

As the 2026 cricket season draws to a close, there is plenty for everyone connected with Little Shelford Cricket Club to reflect upon – and plenty to be proud of.

From our youngest players taking their first steps into competitive cricket through to the senior sides competing in the Cambridgeshire leagues, the Club has once again demonstrated what makes Little Shelford such a special cricketing community.

There have been difficult days, particularly for the 1st XI, but there have also been some outstanding achievements. Our U15 XI winning the County Vitality T20 Cup and finishing runners-up in their league, together with the U13 XI winning their league, are undoubtedly the headline successes of 2026. Perhaps most encouraging of all has been the overall strength and enthusiasm of our junior section.

Most importantly, every team has played its cricket in the right spirit – with enthusiasm, respect for opponents and a willingness to support teammates. As Chairman, I am extremely proud of that spirit, and of the diversity and inclusiveness of our Club.

1st XI – a challenging season and a new beginning

The 1st XI had a difficult season in CCA Senior League Division 3, finishing 10th with three wins from 18 matches. Player losses during the season made it particularly difficult to maintain the strength and balance available in previous years.

There were nevertheless some encouraging performances. The team pushed Buntingford close in August, scoring 203/7, and finished the season with a competitive 189/9 against eventual champions Chippenham.

The individual statistics demonstrate that there is plenty of ability within our senior ranks. Avinash Mehta led the batting with 401 runs, including three fifties, while Juned Mubassir scored 318 runs at an impressive strike rate of 119.31. Gemunu Kulasekara also scored 297 runs, while Sanketh Kesarla recorded the Club's only senior century – an unbeaten 105.

With the ball, Gemunu was outstanding, taking 20 wickets at an average of 18.25 and an economy rate of just 4.31. Paul Ellum took 16 wickets and Alex Harrison 15, while Suhaib Mohammed produced the senior bowling highlight with 5/38.

Relegation is disappointing, but I believe we should see it as a reset rather than an ending. It provides an opportunity to rebuild the 1st XI, bring through some of the talented younger players developing within the Club and, importantly, rediscover the winning feeling. I am confident that 2027 can mark the start of a new chapter.

2nd XI – quietly doing a very good job

The 2nd XI deserve considerable credit for their season, finishing 7th in their league and securing a solid middle-table position.

There were some excellent performances, particularly in August when they beat Royston by 16 runs and then Linton Village by a huge 145 runs, scoring 240/7 before dismissing Linton for 95.

The 2nd XI also performs a crucial role in giving players the opportunity to develop and gain senior cricket experience. That role will become increasingly important as our juniors progress into adult cricket.

The senior statistics show considerable depth. Rupert Beale scored 277 runs, Dylan Bose 213 and Chris Schofield 187, while Andrew Derrett and Chris Schofield both recorded four-wicket hauls.

With several of our junior players already beginning to make the transition into senior cricket, the pathway from junior cricket through the 2nd XI and ultimately into the 1st XI gives us real reasons for optimism about 2027 and beyond.

U15 XI – County Cup champions!

The biggest junior success of the season came from our U15 XI. The team finished second in the Under 15 Premier league, with six wins from seven completed matches and 25 points. But it was in the ECB Vitality Club T20 Under 15 County Cup that they really made their mark.

After reaching the final, Little Shelford faced Audley Wenden at Spicers Sports Ground, Sawston, on 28 June. It proved to be a memorable afternoon, with Little Shelford winning by 16 runs, scoring 150/5 against Audley Wenden's 134/5.

(Left: Picture of our victorious U15 team with coach Ian Reid)

The individual statistics underline the quality of the squad. Eshaan Kumar scored 389 runs, including an unbeaten 50, while Samit Salaunkey scored 309 runs, including three fifties. Aniket Shastri and Atharv Kurade also passed 225 runs.

With the ball, Ibrahim Mukhtar took 14 wickets, including a remarkable 5/9.



Somaiah Calappa, Advik Seth and Jonathan Wong each took 10 wickets, while Atharv Kurade produced excellent figures of 4/6.

It was a superb all-round team

performance and a wonderful reward for a group of players who have clearly enjoyed their cricket.

U15 B – development and close contests

Our U15 B team finished 5th, with one win and six defeats.

However, league position does not tell the whole story. There were some very close matches, including a one-run defeat to Saffron Walden and an eight-run defeat to Royston. The team also recorded a 10-run victory over Royston and finished the season strongly with a 170/3 victory over Royston, winning by 46 runs.

For a development side, these experiences are invaluable. Players learn how to handle pressure, recover from disappointment and, most importantly, play as part of a team.

The U15 B XI is an important part of our junior pathway, and I hope many of these players will continue developing their skills and confidence and eventually make their way into our senior sides.

U13 – league champions!

Our U13 XI produced another of the season's headline achievements by winning their league.

The final table shows Little Shelford at the top with 26 points from eight matches, ahead of City of Cambridge and Histon.

The results demonstrate an excellent season, including impressive victories over Haverhill, Longstanton Grasshoppers, Cambourne, Great Shelford and Histon. They beat Histon by 82 runs and Great Shelford by 126 runs before finishing with a 12-run victory over City of Cambridge.

The junior statistics provide plenty of further encouragement. Eshaan Kumar's 389 runs and Samit Salaunkey's 309 were outstanding, while Cillian Harrison scored 133 runs in just three games, including a fifty.

Bowling was equally impressive. Ibrahim Mukhtar's 14 wickets and 5/9 stand out, supported by 10 wickets apiece from Somaiah Calappa, Advik Seth and Jonathan Wong. Santushti Mathapati also produced excellent figures of 2/2.

More important than the statistics, however, is what they represent: a generation of young cricketers learning to bat, bowl, field, compete and enjoy the game.

More than just results

One of the things I value most about Little Shelford Cricket Club is that our cricket is about much more than league tables.

We field teams across a wide range of ages and abilities, and our players come from a wonderfully diverse range of backgrounds. Everyone has a role to play. Whether you are opening the batting for the 1st XI, taking your first wicket for the U13s, playing for the 2nd XI or simply supporting a teammate, you are part of the same Club.

We have also maintained our tradition of friendly cricket, including a close contest against Great Shelford in June, when Great Shelford eventually won by just four wickets after Little Shelford scored 217/7.

That balance between competitive cricket and enjoyment is important. It is what keeps people involved and creates the environment in which young players can develop.

Looking ahead – Festival of Cricket and our 150th anniversary year

Although the competitive season is now finished, there is still one important date in the cricket calendar.

On Saturday 5 September, we will hold our annual Festival of Cricket at the Wale Recreation Ground. The day will include junior challenge matches for the David Altham Memorial Trophy, a junior lunch and awards, followed by the Centenary Cup match between Little Shelford XI and Great Shelford XI. There will also be a free BBQ and refreshments for players, supporters and Vice-Presidents.

The Festival is a fitting way to celebrate everything that is good about cricket in Little Shelford cricket, community and fun. We will also present our 2026 Player Awards during the Festival. Unfortunately, the timing of this magazine means that I cannot reveal the award winners here – you will have to wait for the next edition!

Finally, I would like to thank every player, coach, team manager, scorer, umpire, parent, committee member, volunteer, Vice-President, supporter and sponsor who has contributed to another memorable season.

The 1st XI may have had a difficult year, but our Club is in a strong position. Our 2nd XI is providing a valuable bridge into senior cricket, our U15s are County Cup champions and league runners-up, our U13s are league champions, and our junior section continues to thrive.

As Chairman, I could not be more proud of the spirit in which our teams have played their cricket.

Here is to 2027, our 150th Anniversary year and to many more runs, wickets, catches, laughs and, hopefully, a few more trophies along the way!

Preparations are already underway for our very special milestone **celebrating our 150th Anniversary**. We plan to combine the celebrations with the Village Weekend, with activities currently expected to take place between **10–12 September 2027**. The committee is exploring a range of special events and hopes to welcome former players, supporters and some notable guests to help mark this remarkable achievement in the club's history. More details will

be announced over the coming months, but for now please keep the dates free.

Do remember you can view all our matches, results and player statistics, including friendlies and Junior Section games on our ECB Play-Cricket web site: <https://littleshelford.play-cricket.com/> and you can also follow us on Twitter [@LShelsCricket](#).

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