

## MJCA CRICKET COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025/6

Last year, I reported that we had seen, over several recent seasons, an expansion of both the number of teams entered by Clubs and the number of Leagues that MJCA has provided for these teams to play matches in. The positive trend in 2024 was that even more matches were played and fewer matches were conceded. In the 2025 season, while all of these trends continued, the most critical factor in terms of cricket actually played was the weather. We were blessed by a summer with much less than normal rainfall and this resulted in many fewer matches being weather affected and therefore the number of matches actually completed was sharply higher.

The highlight of the outdoor season in 2024 was Richmond's U13 Boys winning the U13 National Cup. Middlesex Clubs did even better in 2025, with Sunbury crowned as National champions at the U15 Boys age group and Old Merchant Taylors (OMT) were joint National champions at the U13 Boys age group. In the latter case, despite a much drier summer overall, the U13 Boys Final was rained off and the title shared.

In our own County wide competitions, Ealing again won the Victor Ludorum trophy as the Champion Junior club in Middlesex, albeit it was a much closer race than in 2024. Ealing won 1 Girls County Cup and 1 Boys and 2 Girls County League competitions, but also finished as runners up in 3 other Boys County competitions and 2 other Girls County competitions. Other Boys County winners were OMT (4), Sunbury (2), Eastcote, Teddington, Primrose Hill, Winchmore Hill and Wycombe House. And the other Girls County winners were Highgate (2), Canons, Richmond, Shepherds Bush and Sunbury.

A full list of winners can be found on the MJCA website.

Thanks go to Bushy Park, Ealing, Highgate, Sunbury, Teddington, Wembley and Winchmore Hill for hosting our County Finals and to Callum Millar and Ashish Lakhani for their assistance in organising umpires for our County Finals.

The interest in our winter indoor leagues has grown dramatically in recent years. In the season that is currently underway, we now have 41 Clubs who have entered 187 teams, which compares to 38 Clubs entering 161 teams in 2024/25. We have now expanded to 4 sites which has meant we can offer more matches to the increased number of teams entered.

In terms of the winners of the indoor competitions, Stanmore were again winners of the Victor Ludorum trophy as the Champion Indoor Club in 2024/25, winning 3 of the 5 Boys competitions. North Middlesex won the other 2 Boys competitions. The Girls' winners were Ealing (2) and Highgate (2).

The success of the indoor competitions is overwhelmingly due to the efforts and hard work of Peter Hollman who we again thank for his massive contribution. I should also mention the support he has received from Ashish Lakhani, who managed all the umpiring and scoring appointments and assisted Peter with the Indoor rules

Details of the indoor competition winners can be found on the MJCA website.

We are continuing our planning for the 2026 Outdoor season. Over recent months we have reviewed our Outdoor Competition rules, in consultation with our Clubs, and the updated rules for the coming season have been published on the MJCA website.

In 2025, we introduced new U17 Boys competitions, merging our own existing competitions with the Middlesex Youth Cup, previously run by Middlesex Cricket. The new Premier League and Championship League competitions, each with a knockout competition on a Countywide basis once the Group stages were completed, were a great success and feedback from Clubs was very positive. The increased number of Clubs entering these competitions in 2026 reflects this feedback. I would like to thank Callum Millar at Middlesex Cricket for his assistance in running these new competitions.

In 2026, we will be trialling the provision by MJCA of higher quality cricket balls for certain competitions, primarily Division 1 in Boys Areas, for the U12 Age Group and above, and for all Girls Hardball matches at U13 and above. And MJCA will also provide cricket balls for the Quarter Finals, Semi Finals and Finals of all the Countywide competitions. This initiative, in which all Clubs will use the same ball in certain competitions, reflects what now happens in most Adult cricket and has become increasingly prevalent in Junior cricket in many other Counties. We hope that using a standard higher quality ball will assist in raising the standard of cricket in MJCA competitions.

And, once again, I would like to thank Clifford Pile and Peter Lowrey and all the members of the MJCA Cricket committee for all of their hard work and support over the past year.

Finally, I wish all clubs an enjoyable season in 2026.

James Grigg  
MJCA Cricket Committee Chairman.