

Dartmouth College Cricket Club:

The Year of 2008 and Beyond

By Omar Iqbal Khan, Member 2006-2009

When I was first asked to write this piece, I had the same reaction that most of us have...ugggh....more work! But then considering this would be my last few months here, I thought it would be a good opportunity to appreciate and be thankful for the cricket in the past few years.

And that's where we can start. Cricket in Hanover. A small town, home to the smallest Ivy League school and of only about a population of ten thousand people, far far away from the busy metropolitan hustling bustling cities like Boston, New York and Washington DC where immigrants from all nationalities stream in and one can expect the passion of cricket to thrive and grow. Yes, Cricket in Hanover. A strange concept. 3 years ago when I did a random Google search after accepting my training position in Neurology at Dartmouth, I would have half expected to find anything with the words 'Dartmouth' and 'cricket' in the Google search box, but I did. I stumbled upon the Dartmouth College Cricket Club (DCCC) website, where the front page picture was of 2 guys sitting with a girl, drinking tea. Ahh, so it's a tea club, is what I thought. Boy was I wrong. Coming from the subcontinent there would be doubt if one could find more passion for cricket anywhere else, but the one thing I learnt, is that cricketers carry the love for cricket wherever they go, and being more than 10,000 miles from home, in this small town of Hanover, the craze remains alive.

When I played my first game for Dartmouth which was also one of the last games for the 2006 season, Dartmouth's winning record was changing. The new 2007 season saw many fresh faces and lots of young talent, with not much match experience but a lot of passion. So as expected the year was riddled with losses. The good news was that Dartmouth Cricket had ended the year playing the most matches it had ever in a season. The year 2008 saw a change in this abundance.

With President Nick graduating and handing over the cricketing affairs to a new group, President Amit with his team that included VP Vibhor and Treasurer Vinay, Dartmouth played its first indoor club match and a series of three matches with Tuck Business College kicked off an exciting year. Immediately following a win against arch rivals as well as best of friends, Chittendon Cricket Club on their home ground and another win in our indoor facility, the year started with a promise that Dartmouth was back in full force.

With Chris and Amit at the helm, the batting and bowling was strong as ever. Regulars like Vibhor, Miral, Apurva and I and our dear new comer Prince formed a deadly pace attack with unplayable swing ability from Jay, Vinay and in the later year from Parveen, the bowling department seemed to be the best it

could be, though a regular spinner was still missed dearly. Dartmouth was able to break the team record of dismissing an opposition at the lowest total in a 30 over match in the last 2 years.

Looking at batting numbers, such was the force that matches played with underdogs like Middlebury were complete one sided affairs, with DCCC posting the highest total to date in 30 overs at MCCC. Amit again led the numbers in batting with dependability being the key and multiple huge scores. Jay and Chris were green as ever but the three surprises of the year were new comer Prince whose ability to strike the ball was unerringly scary, Govind, who also developed into a reliable wicketkeeper and Vinay, who had transformed into a dependable opener with good opening stands this season.

Fielding was one of the big areas of concern last year for DCCC, but this year there was a marked improvement in that area as well.

Of course, one cannot ignore the real reason behind this amazing transformation and winning fortune and the mantle has to lie with members like Parveen, Yash and Govind and the return of our an old dear member Warren, whose enthusiasm and commitment to playing and coming to practices cannot be overlooked.

Though exciting were the beginnings, the year ended on a somewhat dull note. One of the major challenges faced this year was the unavailability of Scully, our home ground, due to renovations and then an eventual change to a unplayable turf there. The new field hockey ground became available late. Amongst lack of home matches, declining numbers of available players and less members available for travel, only a handful of away matches were possible, the most disappointing of which was against St Columba's Cricket Club in Newport, RI.

Though overall it was a positive year, the new year hopes to bring more cricket, fresh faces and a bigger roster. With the changing of guards, as President Apurva taking over the helm, cricket will hope to continue to thrive and be loved in this small town on the green.

As I say goodbye to three wonderful years of cricket, I express gratitude to be able to play highly competitive amateur club cricket at an age when I thought I would only be able to play against neighborhood toddlers. I probably say this for all that through cricket we were able to find friendship that has traversed beyond just the paths that led us to this wonderful game.

Best of luck Dartmouth.