

The 2023 season was a mixed season for the Hythe friendly xi. On the field, the friendly xi won nine games and lost eight. We played against a wide range of opposition from good natured tour sides, traditional village teams, colt developmental sides, high quality county outfits and local rivals aided by bandit ringers. The team was captained mostly by Dan Duell, who created a pressure free atmosphere that allowed the young cricketers within the squad to feel supported and trusted in pursuit of this aim, in this regard, the season was an incredible success. Dan entered the 2023 season with a clear mission of creating a Sunday team that welcomed a diverse range of players from across the cricket club. In this mission, the Sunday side featured players from all adults' sides, individuals who no longer play competitive cricket, and colts from across all age ranges. Moreover, when needed the friendly side continued to situate Hythe and Dibden CC within the heart of the local community by welcoming nomads from across the New Forest scene.

Notable individual success stories included Ben Holbrook who amassed an impressive an impressive 469 runs at 117.25, including 2 centuries and 3 half centuries. There were also hundreds for Andy Wakely and Dave Parry. Dave Parry's knock was the batting highlight of the season coming against Braishfield on an extremely bad weather day. Luckily, the skipper and the opposition did not listen to Dave Parry's incessant pre-match moaning about calling the game off due to the weather. With the ball, skipper Dan Duell and Kev McCarthy shared 14 wickets each. On July 8th, Kev McCarthy (sadly not actually in a friendly game) achieved the incredible feat of registering his 500<sup>th</sup> wicket for Hythe and Dibden CC. Out of his now 512 wickets for Hythe, Kev has 315 victims from friendly games. Numbers like this won't be repeated until a 70-year-old Tom Jones takes his 500<sup>th</sup> wicket in 2060. There were no five wicket hauls this season. The best individual bowling figures were Dan Duell's 4/5 against Bramshaw.

The 2023 friendly xi season will also be remembered for the new anthems it gave the club.