



### Annual Report - The 2006 Season

For the third summer in a row expectations were high for a successful season and for the third season running, the side were left to rue missed chances and what might have been. There were several notable individual performances as always, but putting these together to get results was just not happening on as much a regular basis as we would have wished. The Championship season started with a home game against Hampshire at Sandford. For Devon, both Mike Lievesley and Francis Pyle were making their debuts. Devon were asked to bat by the visitors and were soon in trouble at 31 for 3. Bob Macey and Nick Rogers got the score back on track and up to 104 for with 12 overs remaining and a competitive total looked on the cards. But, as far too often over the past few years, the middle and lower order failed to fire and the Devon innings closed on a disappointing 166 for 9 at the end of their allocation of 45 overs.

Hampshire's reply was on a drying wicket and although Devon's bowling was reasonably tight, Hampshire cantered home to victory in the 42nd over with a massive 8 wickets in hand. Devon had the chance to get themselves back on track only a matter of days afterwards when Wiltshire were the visitor's for another home game, this time at Bovey Tracey. "Shaggy" kept up his record for the summer and lost the toss once again. This time Devon were asked to field by Wilts skipper Pete Mathias. Devon's bowlers took the fight to the Wiltshire batters from the very first over. Jon Jenkins and Mike Lievesley conceding only 34 between them in their 18 overs. Because of the stranglehold imposed on them, the Wiltshire batsmen then seemed intent in committing 'Harry Carrie'. The first three wickets to fall all coming by the way of run outs, Macey, Lievesley and Rogers the fielders responsible. It was then over to the Bob Eames show. Bob proceeded to capitalise on the start the opening bowlers had given Devon and returned the best figures for at least 10 years of 6 for 28 off 8.4 overs. Wiltshire eventually succumbed with two balls of their innings remaining and were all out for a total of 141. Pete Shepherd bludgeoned a quickfire 35 to set Devon off to flying start but after he fell leg-before, Devon lost another three quick wickets in Eames, Macey and Rogers. But skipper Julian Page (44 not out) was joined by Mike Canning (41 not out), and the pair saw Devon safely through to 142 without further mishap. Devon's season was finally off and running.

Dean Park has proved to be a bit of a mixed hunting ground for Devon in recent years, and it was with a patched up side that Devon travelled to Bournemouth in early June. Dorset won the toss and batted on a hot and humid day. A slow but steady start saw Dorset reach 45 without loss in the first 15 overs and although the hosts batters tried, the scoring rate stayed virtually the same throughout the innings. Captain Page was happy to see a target of 176 set on what was a lightning outfield. Devon were again given a good start, Page and Shepherd compiling 72 for the first wicket. "Shep" went on to top score with 81 in yet another of his typically bullish knocks. Macey (28) and Mike Canning (32no) duly finished off a good days work for Devon. Canning again in his own inimitable style (or crash, bang wallop). Devon coming out victors and skipper Julian Page stating that it was easily his side's best performance of the season to date.

The trip to Taunton Deane for the next Championship game proved to be a bit of a turning point in the season however. After an early run out, Somerset's batters proceeded to smash their way to an imposing total and all but batted Devon out of the game. Jon Jenkins and Mike Lievesley apart, all the Devon bowlers came in for treatment.

Devon were always behind the clock and but for a maiden Championship 50 from keeper Nigel Mountford, Devon would have been on the M5 on the home far earlier. Two wins and two defeats from the opening four games was far from an ideal start and made qualification for the knock out stages of the competition look a little out of reach.

Devon were due to play the tourists from the Isle of Wight at Sidmouth but after rain the previous few days, the game was called off as late as 11 a.m., but after a lot of ringing around, Hatherleigh CC were good enough to accommodate the fixture, so a quick dash across the county was in order. Surprise surprise, skipper Page lost the toss yet again and Devon were asked to bat and literally took the game away from the Islanders as they compiled their highest score of the season in smashing their way to 276 for 6 in their 45 overs. The innings was built round a maiden century for Pete Shepherd. Pete flailed the ball to all parts of the ground, and some parts of the surrounding

countryside as well and looked a little disappointed when he was out for exactly 100. Contributions all down the order and an unbeaten 45 from Chris Theedom ensured that Devon should complete their third win of the summer. In reply, not one of the visiting batsmen reached double figures. The wickets were shared around the Devon bowlers and when Mike Canning mopped up the tail to finish with figures of 3 for 7, Devon had won by a massive 225 runs.

The trip to Jersey turned out to be a little disappointing. Devon put themselves in a position where they really could and should have won the game. But lapses in concentration and a little bad luck left Devon ruing missed chances and they were now all but out of the running to progress in the competition. This left Devon with a final game of the season at home to Cornwall at Bovey Tracey with pride the only thing left to play for against the men from the Duchy. Tight bowling yet again from Devon 's bowlers restricted Cornwall to only 173 for 6 from their 45 overs. There were two wickets each for Pyle and Jenkins. Devon 's reply got off to the worst possible start, skipper Page going for a duck. But yet another belligerent knock from Pete Shepherd, his 2 nd 81 of the summer, and 44 from Chris Theedom, took Devon all but over the winning line and the season had finished with Devon having a won four and lost three record.

The batting was topped by Bovey's Shepherd in scoring over 300 runs at a rate of a run a ball. The wickets were shared around all of the bowlers, but stand out performances of 6 for 28 by Bob Eames against Wiltshire and economy rates for the whole season of under 3 runs per over from both Jon Jenkins and Mike Lievesley were also notable achievements. The club would once again like to thank all the host clubs for helping to stage the home. Not forgetting all the tea ladies who once again done the side proud. A special thank you must go to Hatherleigh Cricket Club and Nick Rogers' wife and friends for staging the home game against the Isle of Wight with literally minutes notice.

Thanks as well to all the umpires and officials who made the playing of these games possible. To Dave Gambie for the thankless task of arranging all the fixtures for both the Championship and second teams. For Chris Theedom for once again putting in an immense amount of work for the club and to Dave Amery for all his efforts in running and completing a very successful season for the second eleven. 2007 sees a new captain in that of Stuart Lott. The club would like to thank Julian Page for all his efforts in his stint as captain. Finally, we look forward to what will hopefully be a slightly more successful season in 2007.