

## ANNUAL REPORT – 2007 SEASON

### Introduction

The 2007 Season commenced with much anticipation following the previous year's double promotion in both League competitions. By the end of the season everybody had to reflect on a summer that took the Club to the depths of despair in midsummer yet finished on such a high with the first title in thirteen years.

Whilst the winning of the NatWest Pro40 League was a huge achievement by the team given the circumstances, 2007 will also be remembered as 'The Year of the Great Summer Floods'. The whole region was badly affected by the inclement weather during June and July but for the Club it was a disaster the like of which has never been seen before. It pushed the Club's resources to the limit and will have an impact on the financial position for several years to come.

A total of 2,251 overs were lost to the weather during the season – 1,910 of these in the LV County championship alone. Seventeen days were complete washouts – 13 in the LVCC, 3 in the Twenty20 Cup and 1 in the NatWest Pro40 League. Although it cannot be verified, many believe this to be as bad as it has ever been in terms of lost playing time.

### International Recognition

Steven Davies was selected for the England 'A' tour to Bangladesh in early 2007. He played in two Test Matches and three ODI's. He was also selected for the MCC vs Champion County (Sussex) at Lord's in April 2007.

Vikram Solanki (Captain), Kabir Ali and Gareth Batty were all selected to play for the England Lions against the West Indies in a one day match on the County Ground on 21<sup>st</sup> June. Vikram then captained the England Lions against India in August.

Vikram was selected for England in the World Twenty20 in South Africa during September.

Alexei Kervezee continued to be selected for The Netherlands throughout the year.

Both Phil Jaques and Doug Bollinger were selected for the Australia 'A' team tour to Pakistan in September which meant they had to finish their domestic season with the Club on 17<sup>th</sup> August. Subsequently Phil Jaques secured the opener's spot in the full Test side for the series against Sri Lanka and made a hundred in each match.

Dewald Nel was selected for Scotland on a regular basis throughout the year including the World Twenty20 in South Africa during September.

Academy player and RGS Worcester pupil, Neil Pinner, was selected for the ECB U16 team which played a series of matches against Australia Schools U16 in September. Matt Pardoe was also in the squad.

James Taylor was selected for the England team for the U19 World Cup to be staged in Malaysia in February 2008. Mehraj Ahmed participated in the final selection trials for the squad.

At the end of the season, Moeen Ali and Steve Davies were both selected for the ECB England Performance Programme (previously the National Academy).

### **The LV County Championship – Division One**

A disastrous start to the LV County Championship campaign saw the County take just 8 points from the first 3 games. Four heavy defeats to Durham, Warwickshire, Yorkshire (the fifth worst defeat by an innings in the Club's history) and Sussex saw the team firmly anchored at the foot of the table with just 20 points from 5 matches.

Only a Kabir Ali career best 8-50 in the first innings and Graeme Hick's 133<sup>rd</sup> first class hundred in the match against Lancashire (a game when four sessions were lost to the weather with the team in a strong position) relieved the early season gloom.

The seventh match, between the two promoted teams, was dominated by the home team with Worcestershire scoring a record 701-6d in the first innings. In the final session of the match, Surrey's last pair held out for 21.4 overs to secure a draw. The Worcestershire innings saw the top three batsmen all score a hundred for the first time since August 1902 against Derbyshire – HK Foster 112, FL Bowley 122 and RE Foster 109.

The rain affected return game against Warwickshire at Edgbaston which ended in a draw was notable for one thing – the moment on the third day when Graeme Hick became the fifth fastest player ever to pass 40,000 first class runs and only the second player after Don Kenyon to score 30,000 for the County.

At the halfway stage of the schedule, the team were firmly anchored at the bottom of the table. The second half started no better with the two abandoned games against Kent and Lancashire followed by a rain affected draw against Surrey at Guildford and a heavy defeat against Hampshire at the Rose Bowl.

The only Championship win of the season came at Kidderminster in August when another rain affected match resulted in Yorkshire setting a run chase of 336 in a minimum of 65 overs on the last afternoon. Runs from the whole top order and a brilliant 98\* from Ben Smith saw the team to a six wicket victory with eight overs to play.

The first three days at Canterbury were lost to the weather which meant the two teams had not been able to bowl a ball in anger in the Championship in seven days. The eighth day did produce some cricket albeit an inevitable draw. This was followed by a five wicket defeat to Durham at Chester-le-Street in a highly competitive match but Surrey's win over Hampshire in the same round of matches consigned the County to relegation and a quick return to Division Two after just one season in the top flight.

The final 'home' match of the campaign at Kidderminster resulted in a heavy 294 run defeat against an in form Hampshire side led by Shane Warne and the season ended with a further defeat against eventual Champions, Sussex, at Hove.

Luck with the toss did not help. Captain Solanki only won the toss three times - Surrey at home, Yorkshire at home and Kent away. The first of these matches should have been won with a record first innings total and Surrey nine wickets down at the end; Yorkshire were defeated and the first three days of the Kent game were rained off. On too many occasions the team faced a daunting first innings total after a day or more in the field.

In summary the LV Championship campaign was very poor from beginning to end. Just 17 batting bonus points out of a possible 80 and 36 bowling bonus points out of a possible 48 tells the full story of a side that occasionally showed individual brilliance but inconsistency as a team with no batsman scoring 1000 runs for the first time since 1927.

### **The Friends Provident Trophy**

An emphatic win at Old Trafford in a rain affected Friends Provident Trophy match got the campaign off to a good start but a disappointing batting display at home to Leicestershire Foxes and a poor bowling performance at home to Nottinghamshire Outlaws followed by an abandoned game at Headingley meant an uphill struggle to qualify for the semi finals.

An emphatic 7 wicket win over Derbyshire Phantoms at New Road led by an unbeaten fourth wicket partnership of 131 between Smith and Hick was followed by a record 143 run defeat at Durham despite a debut performance from Moeen Ali of 86 runs in 83 balls. Durham's 332-4 was the second highest one day total scored against the County in its history.

Despite not being able to qualify for the semi finals, the final three conference games resulted in an 8 wicket win over Warwickshire Bears in a high scoring encounter at New Road when both teams passed 300; a 56 run win over the Northamptonshire Steelbacks with Hick becoming only the third player to score 40 one day hundreds (Graham Gooch and Sachin Tendulkar being the others) and a no result against the Scottish Saltires having posted a total of 365-7 in the first innings – the second highest one day total ever for the County – before rain ended play with Scotland on 20-3 after 8 overs. In the last three matches the team passed 300 each time whilst amassing a total of 974 runs for the loss of just 15 wickets and finally finishing 4th in the conference.

### **The Twenty20 Cup**

The exceptional weather conditions meant not a single Twenty20 Cup game was played at New Road. After seven group matches, the team had been beaten by the weather three times, had lost to Gloucestershire Gladiators twice and beaten both Somerset Sabres and Northants Steelbacks. The win at Kidderminster over the

Steelbacks produced a record Twenty20 Cup run aggregate of 449 runs in 40 overs, the highest ever losing total of 222 by the Steelbacks and the third highest ever team total of 227 by the Royals.

The last game against the Bears at Edgbaston produced a superb win by 13 runs. With other results going the right way, the Royals reached the quarter finals for only the second time in the five year history of the competition.

Drawn against the Gloucestershire Gladiators, a poor bowling performance at Bristol resulted in a seven wicket defeat and a disappointing exit from the competition. The competition as a whole was blighted by the weather in 2007 (Leicestershire had five abandoned games out of eight group games) but the Royals are still seeking to find that elusive formula for ultimate success in this exciting form of cricket.

The importance of the Twenty20 Cup competition continues to grow. Two extra games will be played in the group stages in 2008 and plans are being considered for a Champions Trophy competition in India involving the top two Counties/States/Provinces from England, India, Australia and South Africa playing for a prize fund of £2.5m.

### **The Nat West Pro 40 League**

The competition started after the first of the floods at New Road so all 'home' games in the competition were played away from the County Ground. The first game against Hampshire Hawks was re-scheduled for Derby but the continuing poor weather meant not a ball was bowled. The second game was played at Edgbaston against the Sussex Sharks and a good bowling performance followed by excellent batting saw the team home to a comfortable seven wicket victory.

Further wins against Essex Eagles by 62 runs and Nottinghamshire Outlaws by 9 runs were eclipsed by an outstanding six wicket 'home' victory against Lancashire Lightning at Taunton to see the team three points clear with three games to play.

The title could have been won at Kidderminster as a result of a crunching 151 run win over Northants Steelbacks but the Hampshire Hawks also won leaving the Royals needing one point from their last two matches.

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September on a balmy evening in Bristol the title was secured in front of the TV cameras as a result of a blistering opening partnership between Steve Davies and Moeen Ali. Chasing 271 to win, they put on 142 in the first fifteen overs to help secure a comfortable six wicket win and the Club's first major title in thirteen years.

The celebrations went on well into the night. The team had played some outstanding cricket in the competition despite the loss of several senior players and it was heartening to see the young players step up to the mark and make such a significant contribution.

### **The Tourist Matches**

On Midsummer's Day in June, the newly named England Lions (previously the 'A' team) took on the West Indies in the visitor's first warm up game for the NatWest Series. The start was delayed until 4pm because of heavy showers. Captained by Vikram Solanki and including both Kabir Ali and Gareth Batty, England batted first. Vikram top scored with 38 runs off 26 balls as England reached 174 in a match reduced to 24 overs a side. West Indies passed this total in the final over to win by 7 wickets with 73 from Denesh Ramdin and 72\* from Runako Morton.

At late notice because of the flooding, the Tourist match against Sri Lanka 'A' was switched to the lovely grounds of RGS Worcester. It was the first time a List A game had been played at the school and on a good wicket, the visitors raced to an easy 7 wicket victory. With 5 players having Test experience, their bowlers reduced the County to 28-5 at one stage before a recovery from the tail saw a respectable total of 176 posted. A fluent 74 from Dilruwan Perera saw Sri Lanka to victory with just under 15 overs to spare.

As a result of the floods, the ECB re-arranged the England U19 v Pakistan U19 Test Match in August to Scarborough. The scheduled Blind Test Match had to be cancelled.

### **Individual Performances in 2007**

#### *Graeme Hick*

On 17<sup>th</sup> May at Old Trafford, Graeme Hick scored his 173<sup>rd</sup> century (his 133<sup>rd</sup> first class century and 103<sup>rd</sup> for Worcestershire) in all forms of cricket to take him into second place in the all time list of century makers in all forms of cricket ahead of Graham Gooch with only Jack Hobbs on 197 ahead of him.

On 26<sup>th</sup> May at New Road against Sussex he scored his 174<sup>th</sup> century (his 134<sup>th</sup> first class century and 104<sup>th</sup> for Worcs).

On 10<sup>th</sup> June during the FPT match against Northants Steelbacks at Northampton, he scored his 40<sup>th</sup> one day century and took a share of the competition record of eight centuries along with Nick Knight and Robin Smith. It was his 175<sup>th</sup> century in all cricket.

On 17<sup>th</sup> June during the County's first innings against Warwickshire at Edgbaston in the LVCC, Graeme Hick became the 16<sup>th</sup> player to complete 40,000 first class runs when he had made 49 in his 841<sup>st</sup> innings. He was the first player to do so since Graham Gooch in 1994 and only four players have achieved this milestone in less innings – Len Hutton (811), Wally Hammond (826), Herbert Sutcliffe (832) and Geoff Boycott (838). During the same innings he passed 30,000 runs for Worcestershire becoming the only player to do so apart from Don Kenyon.

On 29<sup>th</sup> June during the Twenty20 Cup match against Northants Steelbacks at Kidderminster, he scored his 176<sup>th</sup> century and 2<sup>nd</sup> century in Twenty20 Cup cricket when reaching 100 off only 44 balls – the third fastest in Twenty20 Cup history – just one more than Ben Smith's second fastest ever in 2005. Hick's eight sixes in the innings was just one less than the record held by Mark Ealham and Cameron White.

On 25<sup>th</sup> August during the game at Taunton against Lancashire Lightning in the NatWest Pro 40 League, he scored his 139<sup>th</sup> List A half century equalling the world record held by Graham Gooch.

At the end of the season, Graeme won the Sky Sports Six Hitting Award having cleared the boundary 28 times in FPT, NatWest Pro40 and Twenty20 Cup games. He was ahead of Luke Wright from Sussex with 24 in second place.

#### *PCA Awards 2007*

At the annual PCA Awards Dinner in September, both Graeme Hick and Kabir Ali were voted by their fellow players onto the Team of the Year for 2007. Kabir Ali was fifth in the overall player rankings for the season whilst Gareth Batty, Vikram Solanki and Steve Davies all figured prominently in a number of different categories.

#### **County Records**

In May, Graeme Hick became the leading first class run scorer at New Road when he passed Don Kenyon's total 13,969. He now has a total of 14,136 runs at New Road in First Class cricket.

Graeme passed 500 First Class catches for Worcestershire in the match v Hampshire at the Rose Bowl. He is now in 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall with 503.

The 143 run defeat in the Friends Provident Trophy by Durham at the Riverside on 1<sup>st</sup> June equalled the Club's worst ever 'runs' defeat in List A cricket.

Vikram Solanki (144\*) and Phil Jaques (102) put together the Club's highest ever opening partnership (223) in List A cricket at New Road during the eight wicket defeat of Warwickshire on 3<sup>rd</sup> June in the Friends Provident Trophy. It was the first time that both openers had scored a century for the County in all List A games. The 610 run match aggregate was the highest cumulative total ever seen at New Road in List A cricket.

In the first innings of the LVCC match against Surrey at New Road on 7<sup>th</sup> June, the County made the highest total in its history when declaring at 701-6, thus surpassing the 696-8d in 2005 against Somerset, also at New Road.

During the Twenty20 match at Kidderminster against Northants Steelbacks, Vikram Solanki and Graeme Hick put on a world record opening partnership in Twenty20 cricket of 175 in less than 14 overs. In the same innings, the County passed their previous highest team total in the Twenty20 Cup when scoring 227-6 batting first.

#### **Career Bests during 2007**

Significant career best figures were achieved by Worcestershire Players during the year as follows:

##### *First Class*

Richard Jones took 3-37 on 25<sup>th</sup> April in the first innings against Loughborough UCCE at New Road and scored a career best 38 in the same match during his first class debut.

Dewald Nel took 4-74 on 10<sup>th</sup> May in the first innings of the LVCC match against Yorkshire at Headingley.

Kabir Ali took 8-50 on 15<sup>th</sup> May in the first innings of the LVCC game against Lancashire at Old Trafford. It was the best return by a visiting bowler against Lancashire at Old Trafford since 1992.

Will Gifford scored 71 on 18<sup>th</sup> May in the second innings for Loughborough UCCE against Yorkshire at Headingley.

Vikram Solanki scored 232 on 7<sup>th</sup> June in the first innings of the LVCC game against Surrey at New Road.

Alexei Kervezee scored 98 on 28<sup>th</sup> June in the first innings for the Netherlands against Canada during the ICC Intercontinental match in Toronto won by the Netherlands.

Moeen Ali scored 77 on 7<sup>th</sup> September during the second innings against Hampshire in his first Championship Match for the County and followed this up with 85 against Sussex at Hove in the last match of the season.

#### *List A*

Alexei Kervezee scored 62 for the Netherlands against Bermuda in Rotterdam on 18<sup>th</sup> August.

Moeen Ali scored 100 on 9<sup>th</sup> September during the NatWest Pro40 match against Northants Steelbacks at Kidderminster. His century came off just 46 balls which is the fourth fastest domestic List A century ever.

Steven Davies scored 84 against Gloucestershire Gladiators in the title winning NatWest Pro40 match at Bristol on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September.

Daryl Mitchell scored 53 against Warwickshire Bears in the NatWest Pro40 match at Edgbaston on 16<sup>th</sup> September.

#### *Twenty20*

Kabir Ali took 3-18 against Somerset Sabres at Taunton on 3<sup>rd</sup> July as did Daryl Mitchell against Warwickshire Bears at Edgbaston on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

#### **Player awards 2007**

The end of season player awards were presented after the last home game played at Kidderminster on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

The Worcestershire Cricket Society's Champagne Moment was awarded to Kabir Ali for his opening 4-2 burst against Yorkshire at Kidderminster which left them at 10-4 in their second innings.

The Dick Lygon Award, as selected by the Captain and Coach, went to Kabir Ali for his consistent all round performances throughout the season.

The Don Kenyon Award went to Ben Smith for his match winning 98\* against Yorkshire in the LVCC at Kidderminster.

The Fans Forum Fielder of the Year Award was won by Graeme Hick.

The Apollo 2000 Brian Peters Academy Player of the Year went to Neil Pinner who represented England U16 against their Australian counterparts with such distinction.

The Premier Places One Day Player of the Year was awarded to Graeme Hick.

The Rock Lobster Player of the Year was narrowly won by Graeme Hick from Kabir Ali.

## **Second Eleven**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI came 15<sup>th</sup> in the Second Eleven County Championship, winning one and drawing five matches in an increased programme of eleven matches. Eleven full days out of a possible 34 days were lost to rain. A total of 38 players were used.

In the Second Eleven One Day Trophy competition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI came bottom of their group winning just one match and losing three to the rain out of a possible eight games. A total of 24 players were used.

The Club's policy for the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI remains that of being a vehicle to prepare emerging players, giving trials to promising players and helping players recover from injury. Individual performances take precedence over team performance which helps to account for the number of players involved.

## **The Academy**

A record 18 players were invited to join the WCCC Academy at the beginning of the year which is indicative of the potential there is within the County in the 14 to 18 year age range. Across the Country, 16% of all Academy graduates since 2001 have earned professional contracts. At the end of the Academy Year, Mehraj Ahmed secured a professional contract whilst David Wheeldon and Omar Ali are on scholarship terms for 2008. James Taylor decided to accept an offer to join Leicestershire CCC which is his home County.

During the year, four Satellite Academies were created for the elite 12 to 14 year olds within the County's catchment area. It is believed that Worcestershire is one of the first Counties to adopt such a scheme. These Satellite Academies are based in Worcestershire, the Black Country, Herefordshire and Shropshire and are run by fully qualified Coaches. The objective is not only to help identify, develop and monitor

elite young players but to introduce them and their parents to the County's ethos and structured development programme. After the first year, these Satellite Academies have received a very positive response from players, coaches and parents alike.

## **Pitches**

Four winter floods followed by a dry spring were not conducive to the preparation of good pitches during the early part of the season. Head Groundsman, Tim Packwood, reckoned a third of the grass growth was swept away during the last winter flood which partly accounted for the low and slow early wickets. The outfield was also in a poor condition during the early spate of home games.

By early June the wickets had improved to such an extent that a record one day aggregate of 610 runs were scored in the Friends Provident Trophy match against Warwickshire Bears on 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

No cricket was played at New Road after the game between England Lions and the West Indies on 21st June. Once the playing area had been cleared of the residue from the flooding, the square and outfield were fraize mowed and scarified to a depth of 7mm and 21mm respectively. 250 tonnes of top dressing and 1000kgs of seed were applied in August. The opportunity was also taken to install a new drainage system to the pavilion side of the outfield and the entire area was levelled. By the end of September the renovation of the playing area and practice facilities was completed and the warm autumnal weather ensured a very good grass growth throughout October.

It is hoped that this thorough renovation of the square will result in faster wickets with more bounce in the 2008 season.

## **Kidderminster Victoria CC**

Many people and organisations helped the Club throughout the summer but none more so than Kidderminster Victoria CC. At very short notice they were able to stage two Twenty20 Cup Matches, two LV County Championship matches and the final home game in the NatWest Pro40 League. The Club would like to extend a special thanks to all concerned at the Club for the immense amount of work they put in to enable some very important matches to be played.

The quality of the pitches at Chester Road were duly acknowledged when Head Groundsman, Mark Wakefield, was named runner up in the Outground Groundsman of the Year awards.

## **Colleagues**

Melinda Cooksey took over the role of PR and Communications Executive in February never realising she would end up having to deal with the intense media interest caused by the flooding. She was also responsible for the website being re-launched in July.

Sarah Addison spent the summer of 2006 with us on a secondment from college. She clearly enjoyed herself so much she joined the Club on a full time basis in June 2007 – just three weeks before the floods arrived! We are delighted she has chosen to return and we still believe she is the only female Assistant Groundsman on the County circuit.

### **Farewell**

At the end of the 2007 season, the Club bade farewell to Phil Jaques, Doug Bollinger, Shaftab Khalid, Roger Sillence, Ray Price, Stuart Wedge, Will Gifford, Ed Foster and James Taylor. We wish them all well and thank them for their contribution during their time with the Club. The Club would also like to thank Abdul Razzaq for his contribution as an overseas replacement for the last month of the season.

### **Bon voyage**

We bade bon voyage to PR and Communications Executive, Maria Carney, during the year when she took up a position with Cancer Relief. Amongst her new responsibilities is the organisation of the Race for Life programme which is now such a feature of the summer calendar in many towns and cities across the Country.

### **The Board**

Under the rotation system for Elected Directors, two places became vacant for the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007. Existing Elected Directors, Ms Meriel Harris and Mr Peter Jewell, both sought re-election. No further nominations were received by the closing date so a postal ballot was not required. Both Ms Harris and Mr Jewell will serve for a three year period.

### **Finance**

Following four years of financial stability and surpluses of around £50,000pa, the devastating floods during the summer of 2007 had a huge impact upon the Club's financial situation. When the floods arrived, the Club was trading at a higher level than 2006 but the figures clearly show what the impact has been. The original budget for the year was a break even situation but by June the revised forecast was showing a surplus of £35,000.

The final pre tax loss on the year was £693,211 against a surplus of £53,370 in 2006 – a turnaround of £746,581. Total costs attributable to the floods came to £1,164,114 made up of a combination of lost revenue, clear up costs and replacement of assets. Up to the 30<sup>th</sup> September, the Club had received £75,000 from the ECB, £17,254 in donations and accrued £300,000 in insurance payments to partly offset these losses. Whilst accruals have been made in all trading areas for 2008, it is impossible to tell whether the failure to deliver value for money to members, supporters, sponsors and all commercial clients in 2007 will affect sales in 2008.

Cricket costs rose by 11% whilst income from the ECB rose by 1.6%. This left a deficit in funding for cricket of £204,052 compared to a deficit in 2006 of £54,666. The main reason for this was an increase in the player salary bill which was the result

of no players leaving or retiring at the end of the 2006 season and an increased investment in the Academy structure in 2007.

On the trading side of the business, a loss of £864,159 was recorded against a surplus in 2006 of £78,108 – a turnaround of £942,267. The accounts show that all areas of the business – both income and expenditure – were hit badly by the lack of cricket after 21<sup>st</sup> June at New Road. The total loss from Cricket and Trading was £1,068,211 which was reduced by the exceptional income of £375,000 to the pre tax loss of £693,211.

The record loss had a significant affect on the Balance Sheet. From a figure of £2,271,808 in 2006, the net value of the balance sheet has dropped by 27% to £1,668,596. The cash situation at the end of the year showed a slight surplus on the year thanks to interest free loans from the ECB (£280k), and delayed payments (without penalty or interest) to HMRC (£277k). The cash situation is likely to worsen significantly during 2008 and a £476,000 cash deficit is budgeted for the year ahead.

Whilst the financial performance for the year was understandably poor, the underlying strength of the balance sheet will ensure the Club survives whilst the full recovery plan is implemented over the next few years. It is planned that the losses of 2007 will be fully recovered during 2008 and 2009. During this period, the budget for cricket will remain ring fenced to ensure the current strength of the squad is maintained and, when appropriate, strengthened.

### **Ground Development**

Planning permission for the Ground Development project was secured on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2007. In early June the Secretary of State made the decision not to call in the scheme for a public enquiry.

Unfortunately the summer floods seriously delayed the commercial negotiations with a potential hotel partner and it is expected that this aspect of the scheme will re-commence in the Spring of 2008.

### **Worcestershire Old Players' Association (WOPA)**

The Annual WOPA Day reunion became a victim of the floods and did not take place in 2007.

### **The Graeme Hick '100' Club**

The annual Graeme Hick '100' Club Charity Ball held in September raised £10,500 towards the Worcester Breast Unit at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital. Consultant in charge of the project, Stephen Thrush, attended the event.

### **Thanks**

The Club wishes to thank and give appropriate appreciation to:-

The Worcestershire County Cricket Supporters Association for their ongoing and generous support of the Club. They helped Daryl Mitchell spend the 2006/7 winter in Perth and once again arranged supporters' coaches to many of the one day away games. The work they do to support the Club in so many ways is immense and greatly appreciated.

The Volunteers in the Ladies Tea Pavilion who continue to provide wonderful cakes and tea on match days at New Road. Their season was cut short but they were still able to make a generous donation to the Club.

The WCCC Heritage Group under the Chairmanship of Tim Jones who continue to give of their time in ensuring the Club's heritage is fully documented and archived.

Our Honorary PA Announcers, Clive Fieth and Ernie Mann, who continue to provide a most informative and often entertaining service on match days. Clive missed a large part of the season as he underwent a quadruple heart by-pass operation from which he has recovered well.

The officials of Kidderminster Victoria, Ombersley, Barnt Green and Himley Cricket Clubs plus RGS Worcester for hosting 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI matches during the 2007 season and providing such good wickets, often during extreme weather conditions.

The media who always play an important role in the life of Worcestershire County Cricket Club but never more so than this year when communicating so much important information to members and supporters during the latter half of the season. They continue to support the Club and provide an excellent service to local supporters. Thanks go to Tom Guest and Michael Reeves (Worcester News), Ged Scott and George Dobell (Birmingham Post), Tim Clarke (Worcester Standard), Mike Beddow & Chris Oldnall (Freelance), John Curtis (PA), Graham Hill, Trevor Owens, Dave Bradley and Howard Bentham (BBC Hereford and Worcester), Andy Walker (Sunday Mercury), Nick Owen, Dan Pallett and Ian Winter (BBC Midlands Today), Matt Teale (ITV Central) and Wyvern FM for their superb coverage.

James Coghill at BBC Hereford & Worcester for deciding to transmit ball by ball commentary of all the Club's matches, both home and away, on medium wave radio and online. It was a service well received by thousands of Worcestershire supporters from all around the world.

Our television partners at BSkyB, in particular Barney Francis and Roger Chambers, who continue to underpin the finances of English Cricket and provide such extensive and innovative coverage of the game from here and abroad. A total of six matches involving the team were transmitted live giving valuable exposure to our corporate partners.

The ECB, particularly Chairman David Morgan and Chief Executive David Collier, who were so supportive from the time the first flood arrived in June.

Headmaster at King's School, Tim Keyes, for allowing the Club to use the John Moores Theatre for the AGM and to use their playing fields for car parking on busy days (weather permitting!)

Peter Seward who was elected the Club's new President for a two year period at the AGM in February. Peter was more than ably supported by his wife, Yvonne, and was a wonderful Ambassador for the Club both at home (wherever that happened to be) and on the road.

All the Club's stakeholders including Members, Supporters, Sponsors, Advertisers, Hospitality Clients and the Media for their understanding throughout the season. The Club appreciates the value lost by all stakeholders in 2007 was significant and thank them for their patience during discussions to correct the situation.

The non-executive Directors of the Board who continue to devote many unpaid hours of their time to the Club.

### **Congratulations**

To Sussex on winning the Liverpool Victoria County Championship; to Kent Spitfires on winning the Twenty20 Cup and to Durham Dynamos on winning the Friends Provident Trophy – their first major trophy since gaining first class status.

To Brockhampton CC on winning the Crusader Worcestershire County League and gaining promotion to the Birmingham League.

To ex-Player and Director of Cricket, Tom Moody, on coaching the Sri Lanka team to the World Cup Final in Barbados in April 2007.

To Therese Warwick on winning a 2007 NatWest OSCA for her behind the scenes work at Ross-on-Wye Cricket Club. The annual OSCA's ceremony at Lord's recognises the huge input made by the tens of thousands of volunteers involved with cricket.

To ECB Chairman, David Morgan, on being elected to the Presidency of the ICC and to Giles Clarke on being elected the new Chairman of the ECB.

To Steve Rhodes, David Leatherdale and Jodi Brandwood on completing the New York Marathon on 4<sup>th</sup> November and raising thousands of pounds for the Acorns Hospice.

On behalf of the Board may we thank all our Members and Supporters for their outstanding support of the Club and the Players during what has been a very difficult year. The Board is charged with the responsibility of ensuring the safe custodianship for current and future Members. We do so with pride and look forward to a year of progress on the field and recovery off the field in 2008.

Martyn Price  
**Chairman**

Mark Newton  
**Chief Executive**