

# Bishop's Stortford Hockey Club

Clubhouse: Herts & Essex Centre  
Beldams Lane, CM23 5LX  
[www.stortfordhockey.co.uk](http://www.stortfordhockey.co.uk)

## Men's Club Captain Report

### Review of 2020/21 season

Most of the teams had hit a run of form in their leagues when the season was called off early, with both the 1s and 2s unbeaten and top of their leagues. The 3s had been on a good run of form and found themselves in 3rd place. The 4s seemed to have been on a hangover from relegation from last season and took a few weeks to get going and had recorded back-to-back wins when the season stopped. The 5s were having a bit of a hit and miss season, losing a few games by just a single goal, and the 6s were starting to adjust to adult hockey, with back-to-back wins to finish off the season.

### First XI

A disappointing draw in the first game of the season was the low point of what would be considered a successful Division 1 campaign. Five wins in six games saw the 1XI top of the league after putting in some very impressive performances. The team's usual threat from penalty corners was still effective, but the team have improved the chances they have created from open play, and we hope they continue to improve next season under the leadership of Andy Round, Harry Carpenter and John Kirton. A couple of wins against higher opposition in some April friendlies gives the team hope that they will be competing at the top of the league next season.

### Second XI

A very impressive run of eight wins in eight games saw Fred Cooke's 2s have a 100% league record, helped by Ross Butler finding a good run of form up front. Not only were they the top scoring team in the league, they also had the tightest defence, conceding just four goals. Having been close to promotion last season they were determined to get over the line this year, and I am certain that if the league had finished they would have won the league by some distance. With restrictions lifted the 2s played a number of friendly games, and impressed, winning them all while giving some of the 3s the chance to stake their claim for a place in the team next season.

### Third XI

Having battled hard against relegation last season, the 3s had a complete turnaround of form, and found themselves sitting in 3rd place, giving Duncan Barber's team a good chance of a top 4 finish. The added energy of several young players mixed with the experience and game management of the older members of the team seemed to work well. The 3s had already won more games this season than they did in the whole of last season, and with Micheal Wilson, Jake Anders, Henry Brooks and Harry Bannister all impressing over the summer league it could be a new look team next season. The team battled well to win against a Walden side who are in the league above them, giving them hope that they can play in a higher league.

### Fourth XI

After starting slow, Stuart Paskin's 4s had recorded three wins on the bounce to finish the season. The return of Paul Round from umpiring helped to add a bit more experience and a few goals to the side who had been struggling to finish the chances they were creating until then. With the number of experienced players in the team results were going to turn around, and the addition of Alex Wilde who had been impressing in the 6s gave the team a bit more attacking pace. The team will be under new management next season as Tim Lucas takes over from Stu.

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## **Fifth XI**

James Nash's team will have been disappointed to lose four games, but all the losses were by a single goal, showing they were never out of the game and were unlucky not to draw or even win a few of those games. As always most of the team made training most weeks, helping some players make a push to be included in the 4s for some games. With few changes to last years promotion winning team, it was good to see they were all capable of being competitive in the higher league.

## **Sixth XI**

Under the guidance of Bourke, Carr and Wallace the 6s had started to find their feet in men's hockey. Alex Wilde had impressed in several games and a home hattrick saw him shipped off into the 4s. This led to several other players stepping up their game, and the team continued to improve and record a number of wins. It was great to see a couple of father-son combinations within the team, and it won't be long before the sons are moving up the teams. With a number of players impressing the 5s captain over summer league, we will hopefully see a few players moving into higher teams, and those who remain in the team will be hoping for another good season next year.

## **Outlook for 2021/22**

With the restructuring of the leagues it might be a tough season for a couple of the teams. The 1s will be in the newly formed Division 1South, and will be hoping to push towards promotion into Prem A. The 2s will be looking to close the gap between them and the 1s by winning 3SW, and if they continue to listen at training there won't be much between them soon. The 3s have also been promoted into 3SW and will be hoping to continue their good performances from this season. The 4s are in for a tough season having been put into 4SW and so will be hoping to start quicker than they did this season. The 5s will be in 6SW, so should be looking for promotion while the 6s will be hoping to push for promotion out of 7SW league now they have a bit more experience in adult hockey.