



# SHROPSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

## 2022

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## Sam Whitney



It was a very proud moment to be chosen to captain Shropshire, my home county, in the NCCA Championship last year.

Having played for Shropshire from under-10s through to the first team, I always enjoy representing the county, so to have been given the added responsibility of leading the side in three-day cricket means so much to me.

We ended the 2021 season as runners-up to Herefordshire in Western Division Two, which was a good effort after losing our opening match of the season.

We showed plenty of resilience to then come away with a draw against Wales before following it up with victories over Cornwall and Devon.

With Shropshire, just like all the other NCCA clubs, having not played any competitive matches since 2019 because of the pandemic, it was a case in some ways of almost trying to find our feet at the start of last season.

To ultimately finish second was pleasing and it has given a lot of the young lads valuable experience of playing three-day cricket. It means they will be more confident going into this season.

The players who scored their first fifties or took their first three-wicket hauls will approach the new season knowing they belong at this level of cricket and that they can do well for Shropshire.

Looking back to our 2021 NCCA Championship season, it started with a tough match against Herefordshire at Shifnal.

As proved by their subsequent results, Herefordshire had a really good side last season, which included a lot of Birmingham League players, and they performed very well to win the division and achieve promotion.

After Herefordshire had enforced the follow on, we batted much better in the second innings, with half centuries from Graham Wagg and Simon Gregory, before Herefordshire completed a seven-wicket victory on the final afternoon.

Despite the result, there were some positives to build on, and that's what happened as the season developed.

A shoulder injury prevented me from playing in the Herefordshire game, but I was able to return for the next match against Wales at Abergavenny, such a stunning ground for my first game as captain, and it was a huge honour to lead the side.

On the pitch, Wales had the better of the game, but we showed real fight to come away with a draw.

Graham Wagg scored a fine century in our first innings and, after Wales had established a lead at the halfway stage, Sam Ellis and myself put on an unbroken stand of nearly 100 to help save the game.

That we then managed to follow up that battling draw with two wins to end the season on a bright note was excellent and an impressive achievement from everyone involved.

The first victory, against Cornwall at Bridgnorth, my home club ground, was a great team performance as we won by six wickets.

Graham made another important contribution by taking 10 wickets in the match and a lot of other players also stepped up. Xavie Clarke hit pretty much a run-a-ball 78 in the first innings and Ben Lees scored 50, his maiden Championship half century.



When Graham was out, in some ways it was a case of almost looking round and thinking who's going to score the runs now, but Xavie and Ben both played well to keep us in contention, after Ollie Westbury's century had helped Cornwall build a lead at the end of the first innings.

Xavie, having come in at No 6, played like we know he can. Everyone knows he's such a good player, and it's the same with Ben, another really good player with a lot of potential. To see them both perform impressively on the county stage was pleasing.

That's what I want to see happen throughout my captaincy, young players coming into the team, and making the most of their opportunity.

# Shropshire v Cornwall

## NCCA CHAMPIONSHIP

15th-17th August 2021 at Bridgnorth CC

Shropshire won by 6 wickets  
Shropshire 22 points Cornwall 7 points

### 1st Innings

Cornwall		Shropshire	
O. Westbury run out Ellis	124	R. Lockley b Sturgess	14
C. Gibson st Lees b Simmonds	15	G. Hargrave lbw b Sturgess	13
C. Kent c Lees b Wagg	1	J. Shaw lbw b Ellis	0
S. Harvey+* b Wagg	0	S. Gregory c Robins b Snell	5
M. Robins c Lees b Wagg	73	G. Wagg b Ellis	18
P. Smith c Lees b Shaw	31	X. Clarke c Smith b Robins	78
K. Snell b Wagg	22	S. Ellis run out Whiteford	3
T. Sturgess c Simmonds b Wagg	25	B. Lees+ c Westbury b Whiteford	50
B. Ellis b Wagg	1	M. Simmonds b Whiteford	19
C. Johnson c Lees b Whitney	8	S. Whitney* not out	15
E. Whiteford not out	1	B. Parker c Robins b Johnson	3
Extras 1b 9lb 6nb	16	Extras 9b 1lb 1w 14nb	25
Total (All out, 89.2 overs)	317	Total (All out, 71.4 overs)	243
Fall of the Wickets		Fall of the Wickets	
43 46 50 164 211 262 302 307 315 317		35 36 38 60 64 102 173 217 232 243	

### Bowling

S. Ellis	16	5	46	0	T. Sturgess	16	2	69	2
B. Parker	14	4	59	0	B. Ellis	16	4	39	2
G. Wagg	20.2	6	53	6	K. Snell	7	2	22	1
M. Simmonds	10	2	31	1	C. Johnson	9.4	1	37	1
S. Whitney	17	0	62	1	E. Whiteford	13	1	37	2
J. Shaw	12	1	56	1	M. Robins	10	0	29	1

### 2nd Innings

Cornwall		Shropshire	
O. Westbury lbw b Wagg	19	R. Lockley c Robins b Johnson	16
C. Gibson c Gregory b Parker	3	G. Hargrave not out	101
C. Kent c Lockley b Parker	0	J. Shaw c Gibson b Johnson	18
S. Harvey+* c Gregory b Wagg	30	S. Gregory b Whiteford	33
M. Robins c Simmonds b Wagg	42	G. Wagg c Westbury b Robins	39
K. Snell lbw b Wagg	20	X. Clarke not out	11
E. Whiteford lbw b Shaw	0	S. Ellis did not bat	
T. Sturgess c Wagg b Whitney	21	B. Lees+ did not bat	
B. Ellis c Shaw b Whitney	0	M. Simmonds did not bat	
C. Johnson not out	6	S. Whitney* did not bat	
P. Smith c Gregory b Whitney	1	B. Parker did not bat	
Extras 3lb 4nb	7	Extras 1b 2lb 6nb	9
Total (All out, 76.2 overs)	149	Total (4 wkts, 50 overs)	227
Fall of the Wickets		Fall of the Wickets	
12 14 43 68 116 117 131 141 144 149		35 73 127 195	

### Bowling

S. Ellis	6	2	9	0	T. Sturgess	9	1	33	0
B. Parker	7	3	11	2	B. Ellis	8	1	44	0
M. Simmonds	5	1	18	0	E. Whiteford	17	0	91	1
G. Wagg	30	8	54	4	C. Johnson	8	1	33	2
S. Whitney	11.2	0	39	3	M. Robins	8	1	23	1
J. Shaw	16	8	10	1					
X. Clarke	1	0	5	0					



George Hargrave hit an unbeaten century to guide Shropshire to victory.

George Hargrave's fine, unbeaten century helped Shropshire's cricketers secure a six-wicket victory over Cornwall at Bridgnorth following an excellent recovery on the final day.

Shropshire went into day three of their third NCCA Championship match of the season trailing the visitors by 181 runs, with Cornwall having six wickets remaining in their second innings.

But an impressive bowling performance - led by Graham Wagg, who claimed 10 wickets in the match - saw Cornwall dismissed for 149.

That set Shropshire a victory target of 224 and opener Hargrave, making his first appearance in the Championship, guided the county home to end unbeaten on 101.

Shropshire coach Jason Weaver said: "It was a fantastic result and really pleasing for the players after all the hard work they put in.

"The first session on the final day was always going to be key. Our plan was to take early wickets which we did, with the bowlers doing really well as they were well supported by the fielders.

"George's hundred was a very good knock in terms of patience, good decision making, and it made a huge difference to what could have been an awkward chase."

Cornwall started the final day well placed to push on at 107-4, but their hopes of building a significant lead were dashed as the final six wickets fell for the addition of just 42 runs from their overnight total.

Top scorer Matt Robins went for 42, one of four wickets claimed by Wagg in the second innings, as he took 4-54 from 30 overs to give him stunning overall match figures of 10-107 from 50.2 overs.

"It was just a fantastic performance from Graham," added Weaver. "We're very lucky to have him, not only through what he offers with the ball, what he offers with the bat and his contribution in the field, but also the experience he has is a huge help to all of the players."

Sam Whitney, captaining Shropshire at his home club ground, also played his part with 3-39, with the other wickets in the second innings claimed by Ben Parker (2-11) and James Shaw, who bowled 16 tight overs for 1-10.