

THE HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

Patrons: John Woodcock Shaun Udal

NEWSLETTER No. 351 – February 2016

MEETINGS

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's AGM will be held at Test Valley Golf Club prior to the next meeting on **Wednesday 2 March 2016. The AGM will start at 7pm.** Any resolutions and nominations for office on the Committee, duly proposed and seconded, should be submitted to our Chairman, Susanne Marlow, by Monday 22 February. An agenda will be available at the meeting.

The speaker after the AGM will be Tony Borrington, the former Derbyshire batsman, who went on to pursue a career in education.

Wednesday 3 February 2016 – Meeting

The Society is proud to welcome James Tomlinson to this evening's meeting. Both on and off the field, he has become a firm favourite among Hampshire supporters. They have much admired his diligence, whole-heartedness and skill as a left-arm pace bowler, and his bravery with the bat. Statistically, in the modern four-day era since 1993, only Shaun Udal and Dimitri Mascarenhas have taken more than his 366 wickets for Hampshire. He is the county's leading wicket-taker in the 21st century. The tally could have been considerably higher. In recent years, no Hampshire bowler has beaten the bat more often or had so many catches dropped off him. His reaction to such incidents has always been outwardly stoical; histrionics are not part of his repertoire. He has been a phlegmatic cricketer accepting that the rough and the smooth are part and parcel of a bowler's life. He is an excellent role model, exemplifying the spirit of cricket.

JAMES ANDREW TOMLINSON was born in Winchester on 12 June 1982, and attended Harrow Way School in Andover. Hampshire cricketers from the far north west part of the county have been rare indeed. He was passed over for the Academy and so made his way in the game via Hampshire Under 19s, Southern Premier League cricket for South Wilts, Wiltshire and Cardiff UCCE. It was whilst he was at Cardiff University that he made his debut in first-class cricket for British Universities against the touring Sri Lankans at Northampton in May 2002. Jimmy Adams was doing likewise; the pair have been team-mates ever since. His first wicket was the auspicious one of Kumar Sangakkara. His first match for Hampshire in July of that year was the infamous encounter with India, when the top came off the Ageas Bowl pitch in the first hour. He claimed the wicket of Wasim Jaffer, another test player, early on. He had joined the Hampshire staff earlier that year. Though still at university in 2003, he appeared in a few matches for the county later in the season and, in the final match, claimed six for 63, including a match winning post-lunch spell of 5 for 9 at Derby. Thereafter, in the next four seasons, he played only eight matches - and none at all in 2005 - due to injury and competition for places.

In 2007, however, he gave notice of his development by giving England's Mark Butcher an uncomfortable time in the opening match at The Oval. He then lost his place to the Australian Stuart Clark but on returning to the side later in the season, took a notable five for 78 in the first innings at Worcester, dismissing both opening batsmen and Graeme Hick. Hick then fell to him again in the second innings.

Little could anybody have predicted what lay in store in 2008. He started with a regular place but bowling second change. In the third match, however, with New Zealander Shane Bond injured and Chris Tremlett and Mascarenhas on England duty, he was entrusted with the new ball at Taunton. The outcome was spectacular. His captain, Jimmy Adams, acting as stand-in for Mascarenhas, won the toss and put Somerset into bat on a damp pitch. They subsided to 23 for six, all the wickets falling to our speaker at a personal cost of 12 runs in 26 balls. He returned to mop up the tail to return career best figures of eight for 26. The match became a run fest thereafter but he chimed in with two more wickets in the second innings to claim a ten wicket haul for the only time in his career. After another impressive exhibition of swing and movement on a typically torpid pitch at Arundel two months later brought him five for 108; he bowled 27 overs on the first day running in as hard during the last over as he had in the first. It was evident that he had established himself as a genuine county cricketer.

The end of that 2008 season was similar to 2015. Hampshire needed to win matches to avoid relegation from the first division. They duly won four of their last five, mainly due to his potent partnership with Imran Tahir, with whom he often bowled in tandem. In those matches, he claimed 22 wickets and Tahir 27. He ended the season with 67 wickets, more than any other bowler in the country. He was awarded his county cap and HCS members nominated him as their Player of the Year by a landslide.

In the intervening years to 2014, his value to Hampshire was inestimable. In three seasons - 2010, 2013 and 2014, he bowled more overs than any of his colleagues - on two occasions by a very large margin (+150 in 2010 and +100 in 2013). He was leading wicket-taker in all three of those seasons with 46, 53 and 47 respectively. To use a well-worn cliché, he was often both a stock and shock bowler. He played little in 2011 because of injury. It was the year in which Hampshire were relegated; there were many reasons but his absence only served to reinforce the county's dependence on him. Significantly, his best averages were recorded between 2012-2014, partly as he had now mastered his craft and also because he received penetrative support at the other end, from David Balcombe (2012), Matt Coles (the end of 2013 and then 2014) and Kyle Abbott (2014).

In order to keep him fresh for championship matches, Hampshire have wisely mainly confined his appearances to the four-day game. He has played only 34 List A matches and just two t20 matches (taking a total of 39 wickets) during his 14-year Hampshire career.

He will always be remembered for his second innings performance in the last match of the season at Cardiff in 2014, in which Hampshire achieved promotion from the second division, as well as securing the division title. Jimmy Adams set Glamorgan

444 to win in five and a half sessions. Within just 15 overs, their innings was in ruins as James Tomlinson shot out the first six batsmen. It was an uncanny echo of Derek Shackleton's marvellous spell against Derbyshire at Bournemouth in 1961 when Hampshire became county champions for the first time. He eventually ended with figures of six for 48, and triumphantly led the side from the field.

That year was also memorable for the James Tomlinson beard! None could recall such a heavy growth of facial hair by a Hampshire player. It must have rivalled that of WG Grace and other cricketers of the late 19th century, particularly the Australian tourists.

He also wrote his name into the Hampshire record books as a batsman in that season. Left handed, he has always batted with attitude and bravery. These assets were rewarded as he registered his highest score of 51 against Gloucestershire at the Ageas Bowl. In doing so, he shared a tenth wicket stand of 125 with David Balcombe (65 not out); it was the first occasion in Hampshire's history that numbers 10 and 11 had both scored half centuries in the same innings.

Away from the playing field, he has received plaudits for his work as a summariser on Radio Solent's cricket coverage with commentator Kevan James, and his articles in the *Portsmouth News* are always very informative and readable. He has also coached Hampshire's fast bowlers.

Wednesday 14 October 2015 – Report

Stephen Chalke enthralled his audience on the history of the County Championship with his usual tour-de-force, consisting of a blend of scholastic articulacy, enthusiasm and anecdote. He framed the story through twenty key dates, starting in 1873, when the Counties met to formulate the rules of qualification for players, and finishing in 2011, when Lancashire won the title as they played all their home games in Liverpool whilst the square at Old Trafford was being turned round. In between, there were tales from the counties: Hampshire's reliance on servicemen before WW1; the Tonbridge Nursery which brought Kent four Championships between 1906 – 1913; Gloucestershire and Worcestershire in deep trouble financially in 1914; acrimony between Yorkshire and Surrey and Middlesex in 1925; Derbyshire's home grown success in 1936; Surrey's dominance in the 1950s; Leicestershire in 1975 when they won the Championship for the first time without a single player born in the county; exciting finishes in 1984, and 2010 when the Championship in favour of Essex (who had completed their programme beforehand), and Nottinghamshire respectively was decided off the last ball of the season; Worcestershire's one point victory in 1988 after a Kent supporter tried, unsuccessfully, to sabotage the pitch at New Road by pouring oil on it in the final match of the season; nine different counties winning the Championship in each year between 1968 and 1976.

In respect of players, there was: RM Poore's momentous two months in 1899; George Hirst's golden summer in 1906 at the age of 35 (2385 runs and 208 wickets); Compton and Edrich in 1947; Chris Balderstone scoring a century over two days and playing league football on the intervening evening in 1975; Mushtaq Mohammed spinning Sussex to three titles between 2003 – 2007; Chris Read, the most successful wicket-keeping run-scorer, whilst captain, in the history of the Championship; and Brian Close, the greatest character in post-war county cricket.

The 1960s was the era of profound change: amateurs demolished; taking on the Lord's Day Observance Society to enable the game to be played on Sundays; the introduction of limited-overs cricket; overseas players recruited without the need for a residential qualification and the start of sponsorship.

And, uncannily, some of today's themes echoed those expressed over a century ago; too many teams, financial ability and too many matches. In 1890, counties voted for three divisions though, at the time, there were only eight accorded first-class status. (Editor's Note – Is the clock about to be turned back?).

At the start of the meeting, members stood in silence in memory of Frank Bailey and George Kilford.

Wednesday 11 November 2015 – Report

Isabelle Duncan gave a most entertaining address on the history of women's cricket, some of the issues concerning the modern game and her own career. The first reference to a women's match was in 1745. Hampshire's first mention was at Upham in 1765. There were further 18th century references but women's cricket then entered a period of near dormancy in the 19th because of Victorian attitudes. It was revived in the 1880s and 1890s, particularly in the Universities and Public Schools. In 1890, two professional ladies' teams organised matches with many of the latter. Women's cricket was first mentioned in Australia, in a match at Bendigo, in Victoria, in 1874.

It was not until 1936, with the formation of the England Women's Cricket Association, that the sport became more firmly established. England toured Australia in 1934/35, with a 'return' tour being made by the latter in 1937.

For those ladies living in other countries the game took longer to lay down roots.

- 1934 New Zealand Women's Cricket Council
- 1952 South African and Rhodesian Women's Cricket Association
- 1973 Indian Women's Cricket Association formed, with the support of the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Ghandi
- 1975 Caribbean Women's Cricket Federation established after years of little or not support from the WICB. Like the men's counterpart game now, their real passion is t20 cricket
- 1977 Sri Lankan Women and Pakistan Women played their first international matches. The game in the latter was, though, haunted by religious intolerance until quite recently.

In Ireland, where a governing body was formed in 1982. The Joyce family (Ed not James), have produced both men and women's internationals.

Isabelle Duncan then touched upon some of the game's greats from both the past and modern eras; Myrtle McClaghan, Betty Snowball, Molly Hyde, Betty Wilson (the first woman to be inducted into the Australia Sports Hall of Fame), Rachael Heyhoe (who never lost a test as captain), Claire Taylor, Charlotte Edwards and Sarah Taylor.

She introduced her talk with a few brief details of her own life. The MCC sweater for the front cover of Wisden Cricket Monthly (see Newsletter No. 349) was borrowed from Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie. As a member of the MCC Disciplinary Panel, she has heard cases relating to members' punch-ups and stolen sandwiches! Isabelle now hoped to develop a career in broadcasting.

FORTY YEARS ON (2)

Since 1976, **One day cricket** in this country has undergone an almost bewildering number of changes, particularly since 1999. In 1976, there were three competitions: the Gillette Cup (60 overs), the Benson and Hedges Cup (55) and the John Player League (40). The former was a knock-out competition, which was much anticipated by any county's supporters. It was an event, and a sociable day out. The format gave each game an edge, now lacking in all the current one-day tournaments. Another of the attractions was that the Minor Counties were included, and they occasionally pulled off a major surprise by defeating their first-class opponents. The sport was richer for it. The Gillette Cup and its successors, the Nat West Trophy and C & G (Cheltenham & Gloucester) Trophy ceased to be a knock-out competition after 2005. Hampshire were the last winners. By then, the number of overs per side had been reduced to 50 overs. In 2006 the format was amended drastically. The Minor Counties were omitted and the 18 counties, joined by Ireland and Scotland, were divided into two leagues or conferences. The final at Lord's was contested by the two league winners. In 2007, Friends Provident took over sponsorship and a semi-final stage was added. Quarter-finals were then introduced in 2008, when the 20 teams were divided into four divisions. The format finally expired in 2009, Durham defeating Hampshire in the last final. Friends Provident then took over sponsorship of t20 cricket. The last Benson & Hedges Cup, then over 50 overs, was in 2002.

The John Player League was, of course, played on Sundays, and was 40 overs per side. There was an experimentation of 50 overs in 1993 but 40 overs remained the norm. Sponsorship changed hands four times: John Player (1969-86), Refuge Assurance (1987-91), TCCB (1992) and AXA Equity & Law Insurance (1993-98).

In 1999, the competition was replaced by a 45-over two divisional National League, sponsored by CGU; the top nine counties in the previous year formed the new first division. Three teams were relegated and promoted from their respective divisions. Each county played the other sides in their division twice. As in the inaugural JPL in 1969, Lancashire were the first winners. The "Sunday" element of the league had long since disappeared. It was difficult to remember that the original competition only saw the light of day after delicate discussions with the Lord's Day Observance Society. Due to television coverage, matches were played on virtually any day of the week. Norwich Union took over sponsorship in 2000, followed by Totesport in 2004, and Nat West in 2006; it was unsponsored in 2009. Scotland had joined the party in 2003 but did not play after 2005. There were more major changes in 2006. Only two teams were to be relegated/promoted, with a play-off being introduced for a first division place between the teams finishing third in the second division, who received a home tie, and the 7th placed side in the top league. Hampshire, thanks to a coruscating century by Chris Benham were the first beneficiaries to be promoted via

that route. From that year, counties only played each other once rather than twice. The competition also reverted to 40 overs again.

40-overs cricket morphed yet again in 2010. With a new sponsor, Clydesdale Bank, there were now three groups of seven teams. The Netherlands, Scotland and Unicorns (comprising players not contracted to counties) were given places, one in each group. The leaders of each group, plus the runners up with the most points, contested the semi-finals. Yorkshire Bank were sponsors in 2013. In the following year, the format for the competition underwent its final manifestation and became the only one-day (List A) domestic tournament in the country. Participation was restricted only to the counties, with two groups. In line with international cricket, all innings were scheduled for 50 overs. The top four in each group progressed to the quarter-finals, with the top and second placed teams having home draws against the fourth and third placed sides in the other group.

There have also been changes on the field of play, especially fielding circles, power plays and various restrictions on the number of fielders on the leg side.

One constant from all these changes is that they appeared to be driven by commercial considerations rather than strategic thinking. Thankfully, the latter was finally addressed in 2014 and it seems unlikely there will be further changes in the limited-overs format in the immediate future.

The Editor writes:-

I hope members will forgive my indulgence if I mention this Newsletter is my 300th as Editor. When I took over from Tony Mitchener in April 1982, I never imagined I would reach any kind of milestone, yet alone 300. The intervening 35 years have just flown by. I feel very privileged to have been able to record a golden era in Hampshire cricket and to write about the many wonderful players that have formed an integral part of our summers in that period. The main essence of the Society's activity is, of course, the meetings and I've enjoyed a marvellous time writing biographies of the speakers. The Society has been incredibly fortunate in being able to recruit such a varied array from all facets of the game. When recording meetings, I have always been mindful that some comments by speakers were effectively made in confidence; the reports have therefore omitted some of their more controversial remarks. Those attending meetings, though, have often received a 'fly on the wall' picture of what actually happens on and off the field.

I must also thank those who have contributed to the Newsletter; Andy and Sue Ray for keeping our various computers healthy; the Committee for their support and members for their unsolicited kind comments about the Newsletter. The final vote of thanks must go to my wife, Jennie, who has tolerated, and indeed assisted with my researches, and has typed the million or so words during my stewardship of the Newsletter, and managed the mailshot on behalf of the Society for many years.

Alan Edwards

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