

NEWSLETTER No. 230 - OCTOBER 2002

HAMPSHIRE'S SEASON

Those who decry the standard of cricket in the County Championship are doing the game a great disservice. The quality of cricket in the First Division is lessening the gap with Test cricket. The batsmen are merciless in their treatment of the wide, overpitched or short ball, as well as the one on middle and leg. It invariably finds its way to the boundary. Bowlers keep a tighter line; the fielding is extremely good. Teams run their singles better and think their way through situations more adeptly. There IS a difference between the two Divisions as many of the Hampshire squad must surely testify.

Historically, Hampshire have always been a lower-table side. Only in the heady days of the captaincy of Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie, Richard Gilliat and the early years of Mark Nicholas's stewardship have Hampshire enjoyed prolonged spells in the upper reaches of the Championship. It must be expected, therefore, that the County will oscillate between the two Divisions. Hampshire have undoubtedly improved during Robin Smith's tenure but this season has shown a worrying lack of depth in the squad.

The season had some parallels with the summer of 2000. Adi Aymes, the beating heart of the Hampshire team for some years now, missed the early part of 2000; Alex Morris was absent for over half of that summer. Both made minimal appearances in 2002. The lack of a successful opening pair ensured a cap on competitive totals in both years.

Injuries sustained by Chris Tremlett and Alan Mullally in the last few matches put Hampshire's bowling mainly in the hands of Shaun Udal and Dimitri Mascarenhas. Both responded magnificently. Udal's output was prodigious; he sent down more overs than any other bowler in the country and was the first spinner to 50 wickets. He has already been nominated by his team-mates as Player of the Year. The HCS Award must surely follow.

Providing he remains fit over the winter, and is available often enough, Shane Warne will inevitably strengthen the bowling but more support is still required.

The other priority is an opening batsman. Five men – Kenway, White, Laney, Johnson and Kendall – opened the innings during the summer. Jason Laney and Neil Johnson proved to be the most durable pair but, ironically, neither may be around next summer. The former's contract was not renewed; an announcement has still to be made on the amiable South African's future. However, the innings was rarely launched convincingly and the rest of the batting suffered accordingly. Hampshire could not have foreseen John Crawley's recall to the Test arena and his consequent absence for seven Championship games. Johnson, largely through his efforts in the final two matches, scored most runs in both forms of cricket but not as many as his

ability warranted. It is a pity for his fielding and catching are an adornment to the game. Nic Pothas also did not score as many runs as Hampshire and supporters must have hoped. Only four centuries were scored, two by the captain who enjoyed his best season for some time. Crawley (272) and Johnson scored hundreds in the run satiated first match at Canterbury.

One of the most worrying features of the season was the almost total eclipse of Derek Kenway and, more particularly, Lawrence Prittipaul. The latter has never been the same batsman since being struck on the head by Kirtley and Lewry in quick succession at The Rose Bowl last season. It does not take great insight to discern the issues associated with last year's HCS Player of the Year. Hampshire's future undoubtedly lies with its youngsters. John Francis struck an assertive century in the final NUL game; his willingness to trust in his judgement and hit over the top is gloriously refreshing. He is obviously a young man with attitude. Chris Tremlett began to take wickets with regularity just prior to his injury. He still requires careful nursing. It is easy to forget that he is still a very young man, whose body has yet to reach full development.

9 October, 2002 - Meeting

Tonight's speaker, **Ron Headley**, is the middle member of one of cricket's greatest dynasties. Indeed, the family are the only one in cricket history to produce three generations of Test cricketers. Father George was, of course, one of the greatest of all West Indian batsmen. Son Dean was a fine fast-medium bowler who enjoyed conspicuous success against Australia before injury brought his career to an unfortunate and premature end. Dean played, of course, for England.

Ron Headley played Test cricket towards the end of his career when he was called up as a replacement for the West Indies on their tour of England in 1973. He was an integral member of the Worcestershire elevens who enjoyed the most prolonged spell of success in the County's history in the 1960s and 70s.

A trim figure who never carried any surplus weight, he will best be remembered as an attractive left-handed opening batsman, and a very fine, athletic fielder both close to the wicket and in the outfield.

RONALD GEORGE ALPHONSO HEADLEY was born in Mountain View, Vineyard Town, Kingston, Jamaica on 29 June 1939. It was evident that cricket was in his genes at an early age as he played cricket with much older boys. The family moved to England when George became professional for Dudley in the Birmingham League. Ron attracted Worcestershire's attention as a seventeen year old and after some second eleven games he played three first team matches in 1958.

He was still an amateur and played as such the following season when he appeared in about half of Worcestershire's matches. He turned professional in 1960 and made swift progress. He reached one thousand runs in that season, a feat he was to achieve on twelve other occasions.

In 1961 he announced his arrival as a force in the game when he scored 2026 runs (avge. 32.67). In terms of aggregate it was to remain his best season.

Worcestershire were now on the threshold of a memorable and sustained run of success. Our speaker was injured for part of the following season but was ever present as his County finished deserved County Champions in 1964 and runners-up in 1965. 1995/96. He made important contributions with the bat and in the field. In 1964, he, Derek Richardson and Roy Booth accounted for a staggering 201 dismissals. He claimed 50 close to the wicket catches. Richardson caught 51 and the veteran wicket keeper Booth collected a landmark century of victims.

He went on making runs in the decade before enjoying his best seasons in 1970 and 1971 when he made 1670 runs (avge. 41.75) and 1805 runs (avge. 45.12) respectively. In the latter season he compiled his highest first-class score – 187 against Northamptonshire at Worcester.

1971 was another memorable one for Worcestershire. They were crowned John Player League champions and our speaker earned particular praise when he assumed the captaincy in the latter part of the season.

He also played in two Lord's Finals. He was in the Worcestershire side for the inaugural Final of the Gillette Cup in 1963 and then played in the Benson and Hedges ten years later. Norman Gifford accompanied him on both occasions. Unfortunately, Worcestershire were defeated on both occasions.

He ended his career on a high. He achieved his much cherished ambition of playing Test cricket for the West Indies when he played in two Tests for the West Indies in 1973. He partly owed his selection to Hampshire's Andy Roberts, who on his first-class debut, hit Steve Camacho in the face when the tourists played at Northlands Road, enforcing his withdrawal for the remainder of the tour.

In 1974 Worcestershire again claimed the County Championship. Our speaker batted consistently throughout. However, he left the County at the end of that season.

In a distinguished first-class career Ron Headley played in 423 matches and scored 21695 runs (avge. 31.12) including 32 centuries. He held 356 catches and took 12 wickets (avge. 49.00) with his occasional leg-break bowling.

During his career, he returned periodically to the West Indies to play for his native Jamaica in the Shell Shield. He also toured the island with the Cavaliers side in 1964/65; that winter also saw him on Worcestershire's world tour. He also played in Pakistan with a Commonwealth team in 1970/71

After leaving Worcestershire he returned to the Birmingham League to play for Old Hill as a professional. He went on to play for Stourbridge before coaching at West Bromwich, Dartmouth, Stourbridge and, latterly Aston Unity. He also played for Derbyshire in one-day matches in 1975 and 1976.

His last appearance on a cricket field was well documented in the broadsheets and cricket magazines this summer. After a gap of eight years he was called into service

when Aston Unity played at Halesowen. He came in at number eleven and batted for half an hour, before being run out for 2 whilst backing up.

The Society is very proud to welcome Ron Headley to this evening's meeting which is our second at The Rose Bowl.

RON HEADLEY v. HAMPSHIRE

Ron Headley played in 17 matches against Hampshire and enjoyed some notable moments. On his debut against the County, at Portsmouth in 1959, he was at the wicket whilst his captain, Don Kenyon, was compiling 229, at that time the second highest score ever made at Burnaby Road.

In 1962 he carried the Worcestershire side virtually single-handed at Cowes as he made 73 out of 139. The Hampshire Handbook stated that he was the only batsman to play Derek Shackleton (5 for 44 in 30 overs!) with any certainty.

He also played a similar lone hand at Bournemouth the following season when in a torpid match he made 86 out of 219 before being brilliantly run out by Alan Castell.

His best performance, however, was in that memorable – and some would claim notorious – match at Bournemouth in 1965. He batted splendidly on the first day to score his only century against Hampshire – 123 – during which he added 176 for the third wicket with the elegant Tom Graveney (104). Kenyon declared at 363 – 9 and Worcestershire took the important wicket of Roy Marshall before the close. Rain continually interrupted play on the second day when, on a deteriorating wicket, Hampshire reached 141 – 4 at the close. As the wicket dried, the County struggled to 217 – 6 just after lunch whereupon Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie then declared. Worcestershire batted one ball which was bowled by the Hampshire captain, declared, and thus left the home side with 148 runs to win. They were shot out by Jack Flavell (5-9) and Len Coldwell (5-22) for 31 in only 16.3 overs in just over an hour. No Hampshire player made double figures. The match was highly controversial at the time as Worcestershire had to win both the match at Bournemouth, and the following one at Hove, to retain the Championship.

Derek Shackleton was our speaker's bete-noir. He dismissed him on no fewer than ten occasions. Hampshire's next most successful bowler was Peter Sainsbury (5).

18 September 2002 – Report

Shaun Udall delighted his large audience in the Society's first meeting at Basingstoke Golf Club. In an entertaining vote of thanks Andy Ray mentioned that Shaun had confirmed the adage that any gossip should be shared. Hampshire's popular beneficiary took members through the main talking points and issues of the past season and was already looking forward to 2003. The announcement of Shane Warne's two year contract as captain and the appointment of Paul Terry as first team manager had been made a few hours before the meeting. At the end of a lively

evening, during which there was never any shortage of questions from the floor, Shaun was presented with the Society's cheque for his benefit.

Before his question and answer session members gave a very special welcome to Phil Lockett, who looked wonderfully well following his major surgery.

AMENDMENTS

Would members please note the following amendments to the Membership card:- Ken Blowe's telephone number is 023 9247 5683.

The meeting on 12 March 2003 will be held at Basingstoke Golf Club and not Basingstoke Rugby Club.

JACK MOORE

Members will undoubtedly wish to know that Jack is making slow, but sure progress.

Senses of Cricket

As winter days congeal the senses
Cricket memories hold fast.

Print-out from my mind, white game on the green,
storehouse of all the players I have seen;
draw from my memory glories of the past,
evocative scents, spring blossoms, new mown grass;
form into speech "Howzat?" "Good shot!" "Well played!"
translate all these to words upon the page;
come, sounds of wonder, let the ears recall
music of the contest, bat meeting the ball;
feel, fingers gentle, caress as in a dream,
the touch of willow, the patina, the sheen.

Etched deep down within the senses,
cricket, dormant, waits for spring.

Imogen Grosberg

CLUB CRICKET IN HAMPSHIRE 2002

The Society offers its congratulations to the following teams who won their respective leagues in 2002.

Southern Premier League

Division 1	Havant
Division 2	Hampshire Academy
Division 3	Purbrook

Hampshire League

County Division 1	Southsea
County Division 2	Bramshaw
County Division 3	Fair Oak
County Division 4	Compton and Chandlers Ford
East Division 1	Ryde
East Division 2	Old Alresford
East Division 3	Holybourne
West Division 1	Cranborne
West Division 2	Farley
West Division 3	Sutton Scotney

Hampshire's Academy side won the Second Division of the Southern Premier League with some ease. They were victorious in 15 of their 17 matches. It will be interesting to see how they fare in Division 1 next year.

The Hampshire Cricket Board played two matches in the C & G Competition at Hursley Park's spacious and picturesque ground at the end of the season. They defeated Minor County Wiltshire in the first round thanks mainly to BAT's Damian Shirazi (101) and Bashley's Luke Ronchi (78). The latter played a high tempo innings containing a variety of exhilarating strokes. He scored more runs than any other player in Division One and was unquestionably the best batsman in Hampshire club cricket last season. He is currently at the Australian Academy and played in limited overs cricket for Western Australia last winter. The Board side, minus Ronchi, lost to a redoubtable Staffordshire side a fortnight later. The Minor County included a galaxy of ex-first-class cricketers including Rob Bailey (Northamptonshire and England) Graeme Archer (Nottinghamshire) and Dave Follett (Middlesex), and Michael Rindel (South Africa). Despite fine bowling by ex-Hampshire off-spinner Richard Dibden and an early breakthrough by Malcolm Hobson (formerly Transvaal) the Hampshire attack were unable to contain the Staffordshire batsmen who posted 251 for 7 in their 50 overs. This total was never seriously challenged following the dismissal of Iain Brunchweiler who had earlier kept wicket brilliantly