

NEWSLETTER No. 231 - NOVEMBER 2002

MEETINGS

13 November 2002 - Meeting

It is appropriate that, at the start of a new Ashes series, the Society should welcome a member of the team that last won a series in Australia. Gladstone Small's impact on the 1986-87 rubber was dramatic and decisive. England secured a win in the first Test at Brisbane. It was a fine all-round team effort memorable for a superb century by Ian Botham. Graham Dilley (6 wickets), Phil De Freitas (5) and John Emburey (5) made telling contributions with the ball. England's powerful batting line up ensured a draw in the next two Tests at Perth and Adelaide. Chris Broad (twice), David Gower, Jack Richards and Mike Gatting all scored centuries. All this time, our speaker was waiting patiently in the wings. He had bowled consistently well throughout the tour, illustrated by the fact that he had taken 3 for 30 and 5 for 81 against Victoria at Melbourne in the match immediately following the Perth Test. However, the form of Dilley and De Freitas had precluded his admission to the Test team.

However, Dilley dropped out on the morning of the fourth Test at Melbourne with an injured knee. Gladstone Small was the logical replacement as he had prospered at the MCG only a fortnight earlier. After winning the toss, Gatting invited Australia to bat. In just four hours Small (5 for 48 in his first Ashes Test) and Botham (5 for 41) had dismissed the home side for only 141. After inducing Boon to edge to slip early on he returned after lunch to work his way through the Australian middle order. Bowling close to the stumps, and a full length, his fast medium outswing bowling accounted for Dean Jones, Steve Waugh, Greg Matthews and Peter Sleep. All were caught behind the wicket or in the slip cordon.

He was only just beginning. Batting at eleven he scored 21 not out. Relishing the contest, on one occasion he confidently took two steps down the wicket to square drive Craig McDermott to the boundary. Though Chris Broad scored yet another hundred – thus emulating Hobbs, Hammond and Woolmer as the only men to score a century in three successive Ashes Tests – England had struggled with the bat, but the 60 runs added for the last two wickets proved to be psychologically devastating for the Australians.

Our speaker again took the wicket of Boon, as well as the crucial one of captain Allan Border as Australia folded for 194 to leave England victors by an innings and 14 runs and thus retain the Ashes. Just for good measure he took the catch that secured victory. It was small wonder that he was nominated man-of-the-match. Few men could have made such an accomplished debut for England in an Ashes Test.

He then took 5 for 75 in the final Test at Sydney. However, Australia eventually ran out winners in a pulsating match by 55 runs. England have scarcely had a look-in since. In the meantime Mike Gatting and his men revelled in, and reflected on, a triumphant tour during which they also won two one-day series which involved Pakistan and Viv Richards' West Indies. Our speaker had played a very full and vital part in the proceedings capped by his heading both the Test and tour averages.

GLADSTONE CLEOPHAS SMALL had come a long way since his birth in St. George, Barbados on 18 October 1961. An article in Wisden Cricket Monthly in October 1986 revealed that his forename emanated from a combination of his parents' christian names Chelston and Gladys. The derivation of Cleophas was less easy to identify but it was also the second Christian name of Conrad Hunte, the great West Indian opening batsman. Gladys was, of course, to become his nickname throughout the cricketing world.

He was nearly sixteen years old when his parents came to Birmingham, where his father found a job in a car components factory. He quickly made a mark as a schoolboy cricketer. He was originally an off-spin bowler and batsman when he was invited to a trial at Edgbaston; noticing that the indoor pitch was bouncy he decided to bowl quick. He then made rapid progress through colts and second XI cricket to the Warwickshire first team for whom he made his debut against Hampshire at Northlands Road in 1980. It was a satisfactory baptism. He claimed his first wicket when he bowled Trevor Jesty. He bowled economically with figures of 13 – 2 – 29 – 2 in the first innings (he also bowled Mike Bailey) before claiming the wickets of Nick Pocock and Mike Taylor in the second.

He went on to become one of the most respected new ball bowlers in the country in the 1980's. His opening partner, Bob Willis, and Warwickshire manager David Brown were enormously helpful to him as they gave advice on fielding placings, where to bowl and the weaknesses of opposing batsmen. He absorbed this university-type tuition to great effect as he went on to claim 50 wickets in a season on six occasions between 1982 and 1989. His most productive season was in 1988 when he took 80 wickets (avge. 20.06) and returned his best bowling figures of 7 for 15 against Nottinghamshire at Edgbaston. He also made his highest first-class score in that summer – 70 against Lancashire at Old Trafford.

He won all the major honours in the domestic game. He played in five Lord's finals, winning two Nat. West Trophy medals in 1989 and 1993 before adding a Benson and Hedges Cup Winners medal in 1994. He was also an integral member of the Warwickshire side that carried off the Sunday League in 1980 and 1994.

Towards the end of his career he played in the two County Championship winning sides of 1994 and 1995.

Very little escaped him at international level either. He never repeated his level of performance in those two Ashes Tests but he went on to appear in 17 Tests for England. He would have played more if injury had not intervened at crucial times. He will remember fondly, though, England's great victory at Sabina Park in 1990 when after heroics by Allan Lamb (132) and Robin Smith (57), he (4 for 58) and Devon Malcolm (4 for 77) ensured there was no escape for the West Indies. He later

relished his homecoming to Barbados where he returned figures of 4 for 109 and 4 for 74. However, in yet another memorable Test, West Indies won with 12 overs to spare. He bowled with great heart throughout that tour, playing in all four Tests and eventually taking 17 wickets (avge.29.70).

He will also recall an innings of 59 against Australia at The Oval in the preceding season.

He also wore an England sweater in 55 limited overs internationals. He played in 13 World Cup matches including the 1987 Final against Australia at Calcutta's Eden Gardens. He was somewhat unfortunate to be left out of England's side in the 1992 Final against Pakistan at Melbourne, having previously played in the semi-final and the preceding group games.

When he left the game in 1997 Gladstone Small had played in 315 first-class matches, scoring 4407 runs (avge. 14.36), taking 852 wickets (avge. 28.62) and holding 95 catches. He also graced the field in 356 limited-overs matches, in which he took 430 wickets (avge. 26.60).

He is now a commercial executive with the Professional Cricketers' Association.

The Society is proud to welcome such an outstanding and distinguished cricketer to this evening's meeting.

9 OCTOBER 2002 – Report

Ron Headley produced one of the most memorable and rewarding evenings in the Society's history. His address, and response to questions, were full of astute, stimulating and fascinating insights. His love and passion for the game was evident throughout.

He recalled the panache, on and off the field, of Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie and spoke in awe of the prowess of Derek Shackleton. He referred to Worcestershire's match at Bournemouth in 1965 when he confirmed that after two cloudy and sometimes wet days the sun came out during the lunch interval on the last afternoon and changed the complexion of the pitch completely. It turned into the archetypal "sticky" and was impossible to bat on. He often feared for the safety of the Hampshire players, especially the tail-enders.

He also revealed that Clive Lloyd wanted him to play for the West Indies in the 1975 World Cup but he persuaded the West Indian captain to look to the future and play Gordon Greenidge instead. The rest is history.

Another surprising revelation was that his father turned down the opportunity to play for Hampshire. After his orgy of run-making for Jamaica against Tennyson's side his Lordship sounded out George Headley about whether he would like to play for the County. What a coup that would have been.

He felt that the game had improved considerably since he first played county cricket in the late 1950s. Many sides carried passengers in the field. This was no longer the case; runs were therefore harder to come by and hundreds were taking longer to score.

He touched on his own life since leaving the game. He had become a born-again Christian. An eye test had detected a long-standing defect in his left eye which made his achievements in the game even more remarkable. He now specialises in giving one-to-one coaching to batsmen. He also spoke very fondly of his son Dean.

WORCESTERSHIRE v. HAMPSHIRE at NEW ROAD - 10 JULY 1996

It is ironic that Hampshire's and perhaps England's greatest player in limited overs cricket should have decided to play only fleetingly in that format last year. Robin Smith still holds England's highest score in international cricket when he made 167 not out against Australia at Edgbaston in 1987. His amazing exploits for Hampshire in one-day cricket, including his match-winning contributions in their one day finals merit an extended article in themselves. The editor has therefore looked through his notes and reproduces below his notes on Judge's last great one-day innings for the County. Indeed, his 158 in this innings remains his highest score in one-day cricket for Hampshire. The piece is also poignant in that mention is made of Jason Laney's important contribution in this match. He never repeated his form of 1996 but the editor recalls his quick-footed mastery of the Indian spinners during his excellent innings of 100 at Southampton in that year. He repeatedly danced down the wicket to hit them over the top. However, his knock was largely overlooked because of Kevan James' world record performance. The left-handed all-rounder also left his impression on the match described below:-

Nat. West Trophy Second Round at Worcester. The forecast was for fine weather and, though there was fine drizzle and fog in the Cotswolds, Worcester was dry and by the start of the match, sunny and extremely warm.

Before the match we pondered on the wonderful array of "golden oldies" on the ground. In the middle at various stages were, in batting order, Boycott, Gavaskar, Gower, Graveney, Lewis (A.R.), Botham, Benaud, Marshall, Willis and Allot. We agreed that Richie Benaud should captain and that Mark Nicholas should be added as final member of the team. We would ask Tom Graveney to keep wicket. It was a team which would have stood its own with many Test sides.

Hampshire dominated the game. Jason Laney batted beautifully, once again peppering the leg side boundary but also demonstrating an ever widening range of shots. He drove well and towards the end of his innings, planted a glorious on driven six way over long on. He was equally assured against swing and spin. He also nursed Robin Smith through a sketchy start. However, once in his stride, Hampshire's finest-ever big-match player, dominated the Worcestershire bowlers. Robin is now batting with a new maturity, thinking his way through an innings more rather than relying purely on his instincts. His placement was really quite special. The power of his shots off the back foot, especially when driving, was quite astounding. It did not matter that a fielder was placed for the world-famous square cut. He has now increased his armoury widening his scoring options in the process. Ivo Tennant in The Times wrote that it was the sort of innings that a man would play only once or twice in his career. He clearly does not watch Robin Smith in important one-day matches too often. His basket has accommodated Hampshire's - and England's -

Lord Harris, emerge with very little credit. Unfortunately, the same must be said of Hampshire's former secretary and long-time President, and Roman Catholic priest, J.G. Greig. His questioning of umpire's decisions, almost wholly motivated by the desire to retain colonial supremacy, smacks terribly of racism and would almost certainly earn him a long-term suspension had he been playing today. However, Greig's duels with the Hindu's ace left-armed S.P. Baloo form the centrepiece of much of the early part of the book and makes for compelling reading. It is just about the only cricket book the editor started reading again as soon as he finished it. It is a magisterial and epic work in which cricket is shown firmly to be interwoven with the social and historical fabric and development of both India and indeed Pakistan.

More Changes

Let's decimalise all of cricket
(there's nothing much else left to change!)
we'll round up or cut down all measures,
don't worry, it won't be too strange.

The pitch we will call twenty metres,
the ball will be one-fifty grammes,
a metre long bat? yes, we've stretched it
(but drinks we'll still measure in drams!).

The width of a bat, for convenience,
will be the same size as a bail,
they'll both measure ten centimetres,
It's all right, the ball's shrunk as well!

The girth of the ball, width of wicket,
point two of a metre (yes, both!),
the popping crease now – shall we stick it
a metre off, is that too close?

The wicket we've narrowed, but bats have
been lengthened, so stumps must be, too,
let's say point seven five of a metre –
And shall we have four stumps or two?

If batsmen stand rooted, defensive,
they'll knock down their stumps (what a shame),
these changes will make for bright cricket -
we must attract youth to the game!

Imogen Grosberg