

## NEWSLETTER No. 239 - OCTOBER 2003

### MEETINGS

#### **8 October 2003 – Meeting**

Tonight's speaker, **FRED RAFFLE**, is a well known figure among those who travel abroad with England each winter. Blind since birth, he has "watched" his country play abroad for the past decade, having previously listened to radio commentaries on MCC's tours overseas since 1953.

Born in Northumberland he attended a boarding school for the blind in Worcester. It was here that he developed his love of cricket, and began to follow the fortunes of Glamorgan. He later went to the University of Wales in Swansea before becoming a schoolteacher in Surrey.

One of his great achievements during his academic career was to introduce young blind boys to the game. In 1968 he helped establish a league for blind cricketers, which later took on a nationwide dimension.

He has featured in Wisden and he has also received mention in the autobiographies of Hugh Morris and Jack Russell. He comes highly recommended by Robin Smith. The Society is proud to welcome him this evening.

#### **24 September 2003 – Report**

Robin Smith was greeted warmly by an audience of nearly 100 as he started off the Society's winter programme as entertainingly as his batting. Accompanied by his parents he took members through his career, from his early days in Durban to his retirement. He emphasised his father's part in his development as an all-round sportsman; John used to wake Robin in the early morning in order to take him to rugby, athletics and cricket coaching. He recalled fondly his early days with Hampshire. The team spirit and camaraderie made a big impression on him, as did the practical jokes. On one occasion, conned into believing he needed a passport to cross the Severn Bridge into Wales, he travelled the last few miles into Cardiff in the boot of a team-mate's car. He touched upon his international career and reminded his spellbound audience of his encounter with Malcolm Marshall on his Test debut. The great "Macko" promised him one to get off the mark; his first ball was not much slower and different from the others and Robin failed to take advantage. Reminded that he had been given his chance he was then put through the mill (he went on to score 57). He also spoke appreciatively of Shane Warne and gave members

interesting insights of that remarkable victory over Steve Waugh's Australians at the Rose Bowl in 2001. He particularly remembered his duel with Brett Lee. Having been pounded in the ribs by the young Australian on the Saturday, he sought a chest protector from the Hampshire dressing room to shield them as they were still sore next day. However, none was available. He therefore went to the Australian dressing room to be greeted by Warne. The latter surreptitiously procured Lee's chestguard but when our speaker unwittingly spilled the beans as he took the field, the Australian fast bowler spared no quarter when called upon. Our speaker then talked of his future plans, one of which was to regain his Southern League batting record (see elsewhere in this Newsletter)

Robin then took a number of questions from the floor before being presented with a cheque from our Chairman Susanne Marlow for his testimonial.

### **STEVE WAUGH ON "THAT MATCH"**

In his book **Ashes Diary 2001** (published Harper Sports) Steve Waugh sportingly gave great credit to Hampshire for their victory in 2001. He wrote:-

"Four games are often dull, one-sided affairs, mainly because counties these days put out second-string teams. To Hampshire's credit, they put out the best side available and covered themselves in glory, competing tenaciously and believing in themselves to the point where it seemed that they almost expected to win."

Of Robin Smith, he commented:-

"One player who still looks the goods was Robin Smith, a player who got pensioned off by the England selectors far too early considering he averages in the mid-40s in Tests and relishes a tough battle. Today, he played with increasing authority and to me is still a better player than half the current incumbents in the England XI."

The Australian captain also mentioned that Shaun Udal was a victim of Shane Warne's "Gatting ball" in Hampshire's second innings:-

"Warney also turned back the clock, producing a ball equal to the famous one Mike Gatting could do nothing about back in 1993. This time, Shane ripped out Shaun Udal with a ball that pitched outside leg stump before gripping, turning and fizzing past his blade and knocking his off stump out.

For members not acquainted with Steve Waugh's books they are thoroughly recommended. He personifies the art of positive thinking and that in itself is uplifting to the reader. It also makes one appreciate why the Australian side has been so successful under his command and why Waugh himself is enjoying a career beyond the natural span of Test cricketers.

## CLUB CRICKET IN HAMPSHIRE 2003

This summer's glorious weather, especially in the latter stages, meant that many clubs were able to spend more time than usual on the field of play in their respective leagues. The Society extends its congratulations to the following league winners:-

### Southern Electric Premier League

Division 1	BAT Sports
Division 2	OTs and Romsey
Division 3	Alton

### Hampshire League

Division 1	Bournemouth II
Division 2	Locksheath
Division 3	South Wilts III
Division 4	Mottisfont
Division North I	Twyford
Division South I	Mudford
North East 2	Holybourne
South East 2	Brading
South West 2	Lyndhurst
North West 2	St. Cross Syms III
South West 3	Wellow
North East 3	Burghclere
North West 3	Whiteparish
South East 3	Curdridge
Division 4 West Central	Cranborne II
4 North	Great Durnford
4 New Forest	Hythe and Dibden II
4 South East	Brading II

BAT gained their second Southern League Premier League title in three years. They owed much to their opening batsman, New Zealander Neal Parlane. He rewrote the Southern League record book as he stormed past Robin Smith's long-standing previous best run aggregate (1015) in a season. He finished with 1064 runs at the staggering average of 106.40. This tally included no fewer than 4 centuries and 8 fifties.

After a very shaky start, the Hampshire Academy side recovered to finish third in the table, behind BAT and Bournemouth.

Havant gained some consolation for their disappointing fourth place by winning the SEC Cup.

Four sides remained unbeaten during the season, viz:- Alton, Brading, Brading II and Cranborne II. The Brading Club therefore never lost a league match – a most creditable achievement.

Their Isle of Wight rivals, Ventnor, finished runners-up in Division 3 of the Southern Premier League and are now awaiting confirmation of promotion. The club hosts the Isle of Wight Academy which is located in their magnificent pavilion complex, opened by Lord McLaurin in July.

BAT also gained a notable win over the all-star Lashings team in a charity match in August, the only occasion the latter were defeated during the season. After a superb 106 in 90 minutes by Mark Waugh, BAT were set 221 runs to win in 50 overs. They reached their target with one ball to spare thanks to some spectacular fireworks by Dan Goldstraw who hit three sixes off the last seven balls. It was a wonderful victory for the Hampshire side and illustrated the high standard of club cricket in the County. Their opponents included eight internationals in the side, in Waugh, West Indians Jimmy Adams, Richie Richardson, Sherwin Campbell and Stuart Williams, Zimbabweans Grant Flower and Stuart Carlisle, and the New Zealander Chris Harris.

Among former and current first-class cricketers to appear in the SPL during the summer were Toby Radford (Andover), Richard Scott (Bournemouth), Jason Laney (South Wilts), Richard Hindley (Havant), Lee Savident (Portsmouth), Andrew Sexton (Bashley), Richard Dibden (BAT) and Adi Aymes (Hursley Park). The most distinguished to appear, however, was Billy Taylor who turned out periodically for Winchester KS when he was not required by County Champions Sussex. The Hampshire-born fast-medium bowler performed with much distinction in Sussex's final run-in, none more than when he dismantled the powerful Lancashire top-order, including Stuart Law and Carl Hooper, at Hove. Taylor has, of course, now signed for Hampshire, and will be featured in a future edition of the Newsletter.

## **CRICKET IN THE SOLENT**

The most eccentric fixture played each year in the area is the annual Brambles cricket match. It is contested by the Hamble and Island Yacht Clubs who race to the middle of the Solent, and begin to play as soon as the sea recedes enough to allow them to pitch stumps. The Brambles sandbank usually appears only once a year, and allows play for about an hour. The Yacht Clubs even provide their own Inn for the occasion, erecting a table and a few chairs for the doughty spectators. The participants in this surreal event are allegedly scarcely aware of the passing ferries and oil tankers!