

NEWSLETTER No. 240 - NOVEMBER 2003

12 November 2003 – Meeting

The Society is particularly pleased to welcome Tim Tremlett to this evening's meeting. He has always been very supportive of the Society and he is assured of the warmest of welcomes. Tonight will be his third visit, his previous appearances being in October 1981 and September 1993. He therefore becomes the first man to address the Society in three different decades. On the first occasion he was accompanied by his father Maurice. We were hoping that he would be accompanied by son Chris this evening but he is in Australia as part of a rehabilitation programme following his recent hip operation.

TIMOTHY MAURICE TREMLETT was born into a sporting family at Wellington, Somerset on 26 July 1956. Maurice, was of course, a fine all-rounder for Somerset and their first professional captain. The latter was a role he fulfilled with great distinction, despite the permanent snipings from the Committee room where blinkered men, trapped in a time warp, were unable to come to terms with their County being successfully captained by a professional cricketer. Maurice took Somerset to third position in the Championship in 1958, the highest position they had yet attained. He also played in three Tests for England in the late 1940's when he burst upon the county scene with such elan.

Tim was naturally coached and advised by his father in his early years. He has lived in Hampshire since the age of three and it is his adopted County who have benefitted from his prodigious labours, both on and off the field. He made his second XI debut in 1973 and has therefore been associated with Hampshire for the past 30 years. He developed into perhaps the finest fast medium-pace bowler of his generation. No bowler was more accurate. He simply wore away a length, moving the ball this way and that. At the end of an innings an inspection of the wicket would reveal a patch where the grass had been worn away in the spot where the ball had pitched continually. If our speaker had not bowled on a sixpence he had certainly pitched the ball in an area of the proverbial handkerchief.

For years in Playfair, where the book listed in order of average, the leading bowlers playing county cricket at the time, Tim Tremlett was invariably the foremost English pace bowler. In 1986 for example, he was only headed by a phalanx of the great fast bowlers of the era – Malcolm Marshall, Garner, Hadlee, Clarke, Le Roux, Imran Khan, Daniel and Rice – and Derek Underwood. Such was his accuracy that one can only speculate on the devastation he would have caused if he had played on uncovered wickets. If he had been a yard faster he would surely have played Test cricket in the mid-eighties. He eventually had to be content with two overseas tours with an English Counties team to Zimbabwe in 1984/85 and an England A tour to Sri Lanka in 1985/86.

Tall and erect, his run up was smooth and rhythmical. His large feet enabled him to absorb the pressure of long bowling spells though his face told of the effort he would put into each delivery. At the end of an over he was virtually drained of colour.

He was also a talented batsman whose career figures did not reflect his true value. He allegedly occupied every position in the Hampshire batting line-up during his career. He was sound technically and in the dreadful summer of 1980, when the County won just one match, he stoically opened the innings throughout. In that one victory against Worcestershire he made 76 and 67 not out, and in the final game of the season, he worthily carried his bat for 70 out of 182, against Leicestershire, in Hampshire's first innings. He had only just begun to bowl with any regularity that year and when his workload increased he dropped down the order. He was unfortunate in that he was preceded by possibly the most powerful batting line-up in the County's history and so usually had limited opportunities to shine. Nevertheless, he could shore up an innings, or move the score along as the occasion demanded.

He bowled economically in one-day cricket and was leading wicket taker (26) in the Hampshire side that carried off the Sunday League title in 1986. However, his playing career was curtailed by a double stress fracture of the back just before Hampshire embarked on their winning sequence of Lord's finals in 1988.

He enjoyed his best career figures against his father's former County. He recorded his highest score in first-class cricket when he made 102 not out at Taunton in 1985, during which he shared a County record eighth-wicket partnership of 227, in even time, with Kevan James. The pair rescued their side from a perilous position after they had lost their first seven wickets for 107, in response to a Somerset total of 298 (Ian Botham 149). After some glorious strokeplay by Viv Richards (186) Hampshire were set 325 in 66 overs. They reached their target with three balls and five wickets to spare. Our speaker had also played his part in that splendid game with the ball. His match figures were five for 79 (off 29 overs); he dismissed Richards for a first innings duck as well as claiming his wicket second time round.

Two years later, he returned figures of six for 53 at Weston-Super-Mare.

Tim Tremlett played in 207 matches scoring 3864 runs (avge. 21.00), taking 445 wickets (avge. 23.44) and holding 73 catches. He took a further 252 wickets for the County in one-day matches.

Upon his retirement he became County Coach. One of the tasks he set himself was to reorganise and expand the entire coaching structure and network in Hampshire. He unobtrusively worked long hours in ensuring that raw schoolboy talent was identified and nurtured. He established Centres of Excellence and then the Hampshire Cricket Academy. He also brought the Hampshire Schools Cricket Association and Hampshire Cricket Association closer together prior to the formation of the Hampshire Cricket Board. These changes spoke volumes of his diplomatic and organisational skills.

Within only a few years Hampshire's representative schools sides were able to compete with any in the country. A number of youngsters were taken onto the staff and some eventually made their way into the first team. Derek Kenway, James Adams, Iain Brunnschweiler, Simon and John Francis, Lee Savident, Richard Dibden, Laurence Prittupaul, Charlie van del Grucht and son, Chris, all emerged from the career pathway established by our speaker.

He became Director of Cricket upon the formation of Hampshire Cricket in 2001.

CHRIS TREMLETT ON LIFE AT THE ENGLAND ACADEMY

As mentioned earlier, Chris Tremlett is unable to attend this evening's meeting. He played cricket in his formative years with Hursley Park, first as a colt before becoming a first-team regular at the age of 16. He wrote a piece for the Club's 2003 handbook on his experiences in his first year at the English Academy in Australia. Members will undoubtedly find the article interesting and it is reproduced below:-

"I have to admit my initial introduction to the National Academy came as a shock to the system. Fitness training and team-building sessions at Sandhurst under the guidance of some tough, no-nonsense drill instructors was not how I imagined I would be spending my first week.

It soon became apparent that the object of the exercise was not only to work and learn how to work together as a team, but what we would learn about ourselves would stand us in good stead for the rest of our careers. Six am starts were the norm and towards the end of the week we had a night exercise that started at 1am in the middle of a forest, with nothing but a compass, sleeping bag and a dummy corpse to carry back to base over 20 miles away before earning our breakfast!

Despite the tough training regime, life became more bearable as a routine was established and we experienced the many facets of Academy life. In addition to coaching sessions, which included a visit from Ian Chappell who discussed captaincy and how to play spin bowling, there were lectures and one-to-one talks with Steve Bull, the ECB's sports psychologist, on the mental side of the game.

There were very few matches before Christmas which allowed time for further instruction on the importance of a good diet and lifestyle management. These were particularly relevant as, in the New Year, we toured most parts of Australia staying in apartments where we had to fend and cook for ourselves.

On the playing side, the highlight for me was playing at the MCG and beating the Victoria Second Eleven which included several notable players including Damien Fleming, the former Australian Test player. We won most of our matches as expected, but there were times when we did not perform well and our coach, Rod Marsh, was never shy in telling us what he thought. Having said that, he was always fair and encouraged you to voice your opinion.

Despite picking up a calf strain towards the end of the trip I felt I learnt many valuable lessons. I gained a coaching qualification, did some public speaking and above all, went a little way towards learning what it takes to reach the top”.

8 October 2003 – Report

Members will long remember Fred Raffle’s address as he amused them with an endless fund of stories which exemplified his great love of cricket. He began by musing that the last occasion he was at The Rose Bowl was for Hampshire’s famous victory over Glamorgan – the first time his County had ever lost a match after asking a side to follow on.

Our speaker was born in Northumberland and asked members to name the two players born in that County to play Test cricket since the Second World War. (Answers are on the back page of the Newsletter).

He took his audience through his early life and school days before describing how he formed the first national cricket league for people who were partially sighted or blind. Starting in 1962, the League eventually grew to run teams; there was also an England Test side. The Test match ground was in Regents Park. In 1982 the first televised game between blind people was played, thanks to the efforts and enthusiasm of the late Colin (Lord) Cowdrey. Fred Raffle himself played for England for a number of years.

He then went on to outline the rules of the game. Eleven-a-side matches could include a maximum of 4 people who were partially sighted. The wicket is 18 yards long and there are 35 – yard boundaries. Players who have partial sight must hit the ball on the first bounce; those who are blind on the second. The ball has a bell inside. Bowlers must always ask the batsmen if they are ready and the wicket-keeper claps in order to give the bowler an additional point of reference.

His great hero was Glamorgan’s Don Shepherd and it was the latter, with Edward Bevan and Andrew Hignell (who will visit the Society in February), who introduced him to the commentary box for Radio Wales. He mentioned earlier that blind people had sat in the commentary box to monitor the quality of radio commentaries since their inception in the 1920’s and the practice had continued.

He was also an ever present supporter of England on their overseas tours since his retirement from schoolteaching in the mid-1990’s and was now a regular on Sky Television, monitoring the quality of the commentators’ output. Among his many humorous anecdotes was one concerning Robin Smith. His first appearance on Sky was in New Zealand and it coincided with Daniel Vettori’s Test debut. Robin was so

nervous he continually referred to him as Frankie Dettori! “Judge” had since become a boon companion.

The evening in Fred Raffle’s company was yet another very entertaining evening for members.

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY WEBSITE

The Hampshire Cricket Society’s website has had to move from its current site, in the wake of Wisden’s takeover of the Cricinfo site. The Society’s website address can now be found at hcs.cricketarchive.co.uk (please note that it does not include the starter www).

NEVILLE ROGERS

At the start of the Society’s last meeting on 8 October, members stood for a minute’s silence in memory of Neville Rogers who died earlier that day. For those who watched the County’s cricket in the years following the Second World War, it often seemed that he was Hampshire’s batting. A friend once remarked that “Rogers opened the innings and then the tail started”. This comment was obviously an exaggeration as Rogers often played second fiddle in his early years to John Arnold and Neil McCorkell and, thereafter received support from Jimmy Gray in the early 50’s. However, the statement showed the high esteem in which Neville Rogers was held by Hampshire supporters.

NEVILLE HAMILTON ROGERS was, in many ways, an unlucky player. It was often said that had he played in a stronger batting line up he would surely have appeared in Test cricket. The nearest he came to a Test cap was selection as 12th man in a Test against South Africa in 1951.

He was technically correct against pace and spin alike but more often than not had to subjugate his attacking gifts in the interest of his side. Nevertheless, he remained a most consummate stroke player. He was born in Oxford on 9 March 1918. He was one of a most distinguished sextet of cricketers from that county to give yeoman service to Hampshire. The others were Alec Bowell, the uniquely talented George Brown, “Lofty” Herman, John Arnold and Alan Castell. War delayed his debut until 1946 but he announced his arrival with an innings of 90 against Worcestershire at Southampton, sharing a fifth wicket stand of 209 with Jim Bailey. It was during this innings that the latter recorded his highest score (133). Strangely, given his talent, a century eluded him until the following year. He was dismissed four times in the 90’s before he made 103 not out against Cambridge University at Portsmouth. Once overcoming that psychological barrier, two further hundreds quickly ensued. Neville Rogers reached 1000 runs for the first time in 1947 and went on to complete that milestone in every season until his retirement in 1955. His best year was in 1952 when he made 2,244 runs (avge.40.80). In “Hampshire County Cricket” Desmond Eagar wrote “that he made only two hundreds and for the first part of the season had no satisfactory opening partner made his performance even more praiseworthy. His consistency was admirable and in match after match he carried our batting.” His

immense contribution to Hampshire's batting in one of its direst periods is illustrated by the fact that he carried his bat on no less than five occasions (three times for the County), four times in 1954 alone. This latter feat has been bettered only once in the history of first-class cricket. He also scored a century before lunch against the West Indians at Southampton in 1950. It was during this game that Roy Marshall first played in Hampshire. It was hoped that, when he had qualified in 1955, Marshall and Rogers would form a potent force. It was not to be. After just one season, when Hampshire achieved their then highest position in the Championship (3rd), Neville Rogers left the game.

His departure was a sad and somewhat controversial one. He sought the security of a three year contract and a benefit, which he had undoubtedly earned. However, Hampshire offered only one year and by the time they revised their offer he had joined his old friend Jim Bailey in business.

He played in 298 matches scoring 16,056 runs (avge. 32.04) and 28 centuries in all first-class cricket – remarkable figures for one who often played a lone hand. His highest score was 186 v. Gloucestershire at Portsmouth in 1951.

He later played for Trojans and, after some 20 years away from Hampshire cricket re-established contact via the Radio Solent commentary box, and supporting Jimmy Gray in his role as cricket chairman. He was a penetrating analyst of a batsman's technique. He was also often seen accompanying his great friend Jim Bailey on strolls around Northlands Road, and was a regular supporter of the now annual players' reunion. He will be sadly missed.

NEVILLE ROGERS IN FIRST-CLASS CRICKET FOR HAMPSHIRE

	M.	I.	N.O.	Runs	H.S.	Avge	100	50	ct
1946	27	45	4	696	90	16.97	-	1	11
1947	28	48	1	1722	178	36.63	3	9	10
1948	29	54	3	1311	108	25.70	2	4	24
1949	29	56	1	1691	107	30.74	2	8	27
1950	31	53	2	1857	137	36.41	5	10	29
1951	29	47	1	1934	186	42.04	5	10	17
1952	29	53	3	2020	119	40.40	2	15	15
1953	28	54	5	1447	156	29.53	2	8	15
1954	29	51	2	1529	172*	31.20	3	4	24
1955	26	45	3	1085	121*	25.83	2	4	22
	285	506	25	15292	186	31.79	26	73	193

Answers: Northumberland born Test Players - Tom Graveney and Steve Harmison.

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