

# THE HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

**Patrons: John Woodcock Shaun Udal**

**NEWSLETTER No 364 – OCTOBER 2017 (1)**

## MEETINGS

### **Wednesday 4 October 2017 – Meeting**

The Society warmly welcomes Kevin Emery to this evening's meeting. Many will remember his remarkable first season in 1982, when he claimed 79 wickets (avge. 23.94) for Hampshire. No other bowler in the County's history, being new to first-class cricket, had taken so many wickets in his initial season. Honours came his way with selection for England B against the touring Pakistan side, when he took a further four wickets; he was also awarded the Commercial Union "Young Bowler of the Year" prize; and was voted Hampshire Young Cricketer of the Year. He was also tipped for a place on England's forthcoming tour of Australia.

Tall (six foot three inches), bearded and broad shouldered, he was a right-arm genuine fast-medium seam bowler, whose movement off the pitch consistently troubled batsmen. He made his debut in the first match of the season against Leicestershire at the County Ground, and claimed the notable wickets of David Gower and Brian Davison. He was a first choice for the remainder of the summer. He formed a formidable new ball partnership with the great Malcolm Marshall at the other end. Marshall was irresistible all summer with an astonishing 134 wickets (avge. 15.43). Our speaker went from strength to strength. He took five for 80 at Bath in late June, six for 51 (10 for 101 match) against Glamorgan at Portsmouth towards the end of July and six for 67 at Chelmsford, when he dismissed Graham Gooch, Keith Fletcher and Ken McEwan - a redoubtable triumvirate - in mid-August.

Still aged 23, he seemed destined for a long career. Cruelly, a knee injury and the consequent loss of form and confidence resulted in him playing only three more matches in 1983 and he left the first class arena in the following season.

**KEVIN ST.JOHN DENNIS EMERY** was born in Swindon on 28 February 1960. He was originally an off-spin bowler. He played for England Schools and reached the final of a national newspaper's competition for young spinners. He turned to pace bowling whilst at Bristol University and proved an immediate success for Wiltshire, for whom he had made his debut as a spin bowler two years earlier in 1978. He played for Worcestershire 2<sup>nd</sup> XI in 1980, before impressing, both as a bowler and a batsman, for Hampshire 2<sup>nd</sup> XI.

He attempted comebacks with Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, but further injuries meant he never played first-class cricket again. He did, though, return to play for Wiltshire between 1985-1988, and also appeared in club cricket in Bournemouth, Bath and Bristol. Latterly, he has attended the Hampshire Players' Reunion.

## **FIRST HCS PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD 1982**

The Society's Player of the Year was inaugurated in 1982. Despite Malcolm Marshall's taking a record tally of wickets in the modern era, the first winner was Trevor Jesty, who struck eight centuries, which remains the most by any Hampshire batsman since 1933 (since equalled by Gordon Greenidge in 1986).

## **HAMPSHIRE IN 2017**

### **(1) THE ROYAL LONDON CUP**

Despite some notable batting performances, Hampshire were unable to progress from the group stage in the Royal London Cup. They finished sixth, having won three of the eight matches. The pivotal game was against Glamorgan at the Ageas Bowl. Batting first, Hampshire were in the ascendancy after posting an imposing 332 for six. James Vince scored a majestic 178, the highest ever individual score for the County in List A matches. However, Glamorgan went on to pass that total with three wickets in hand, off the penultimate ball. Their match winner was the left handed South African Colin Ingram with a calculating 115 off 78 balls (five 4s and seven 6s). Whenever he needed to clear the boundary to keep his side up with the run rate, he did so. He scored three centuries in the competition, and was the leading runmaker for the second year in a row.

One disturbing feature of a very fine match was that exactly half of the participants originated either from Southern Africa (8) or Australia (3). The signing of so many South Africans by Glamorgan has caused ructions in the valleys. Hampshire supporters are also not that enamoured. The signing of Kolpaks has surely gone too far, so much so that with three batting places in the England side still unresolved, pundits are struggling to name potential candidates, such is the narrow range from which to select.

In the other matches, Tom Alsop scored 112 not out to take the County to victory at Canterbury, Rilee Rossouw raced headlong to a match winning 156 off 113 balls at Taunton, and George Bailey made a stirring 145 not out at The Oval.

The spin pairing of Mason Crane (14 wkts) and Liam Dawson (9 wkts) were Hampshire's most penetrative bowlers. Vince (463runs, avge. 77.16) was the leading run scorer, though Bailey finished with a slightly higher average (78).

## **JAMES VINCE AND GORDON GREENIDGE COMPARED**

Whoever would have thought it? Gordon Greenidge's record of 177 in a List A match being surpassed? The great opening batsman, and one of the most destructive players of all time, came to Hampshire via Berkshire Bantams, but went on, of course, to play in 108 tests for the West Indies. However, Hampshire supporters always regarded him as one of their own.

He, too, posted the previous highest score against Glamorgan, at the County Ground in a Gillette Cup match in 1977. It was an innings of two halves. He was content to let his opening partner, Barry Richards, who was at his omnipotent best, to dominate the pre-lunch session. The latter sped to his own century in even time. When he was dismissed for 129 shortly after lunch, with the score at 219, Greenidge moved up a gear. He simply tore into the Glamorgan bowling; he had hit seven sixes by the time he was dismissed.

Greenidge played his innings in glorious sunshine. James Vince's was generally played under a cloudy sky and in windy conditions. From the outset, he struck the ball commandingly. He is renowned, of course, for leaning on the ball, caressing it to the boundary. Is there a more watchable batsman in county cricket? On this occasion, his strokeplay was immensely powerful; he hit the ball extremely hard. Greenidge and Robin Smith would have approved. He rarely played and missed and there were few miss-hits. A diagram of his innings in *The Times* on the following morning showed that he made his runs all around the field. It was largely a risk-free innings. He dabbled with a reverse sweep but otherwise it was a display founded on orthodoxy. He demonstrated that it was possible to score runs quickly without resorting to the unconventional. Besides the power of his strokes, his placement and timing were masterful. He never allowed his concentration to wander. He was clearly "in the zone". Indeed, throughout the summer, he batted with an almost ethereal calmness. If he bats similarly again, a double century in 50 overs cricket is clearly within his compass.

His 178 was scored off 138 balls in 169 minutes, and included five 6s and 18 4s).

## **(2) THE T20 BLAST**

Hampshire reached finals day for the sixth time in seven years, a quite remarkable achievement. Alas, the Edgbaston hoodoo prevailed yet again. They have now lost four semi-finals there.

The semi-final against Nottinghamshire was representative of their performances in the competition during the summer. Notts started rapidly but were pegged back by the leg spin duo of Mason Crane and Shahid Afridi, and Liam Dawson's second spell. However, as had been the case all season, rather too many runs were conceded off the final four overs. The Notts total of 169 for seven, seemed at the limit of Hampshire's range. And so it proved. Hampshire again put all their eggs in James Vince's basket. Throughout the previous weeks, the longer he stayed, the greater were Hampshire's chances of winning. His dismissal, irrespective of the stage in the innings, invariably prompted a considerable loss of momentum, or collapse, or both. After departing for 56 (off 32 balls; five 4s and three 6s) with the score at 120 and 34 balls remaining, wickets fell like ninepins. They lost their last five wickets for 26 runs. They were eventually dismissed for 146 in 18.4 overs. As with the bowling, the final four overs of Hampshire's innings were a conundrum that was never solved, even after Shahid Afridi's pyrotechnics at Derby. In the semi final, he holed out to mid wicket off the first ball of the innings, falling for the bait which had cleverly been laid for him.

Vince scored a season's aggregate of 542 runs; only Kent's Joe Denly (567) and Notts' Riki Wessells (559) made more. As in the Royal London competition, George Bailey (301) acquired the next highest for Hampshire. Of the bowlers, Mason Crane claimed the most victims (18), followed by Kyle Abbott (17), Liam Dawson (14) and Shahid Afridi (13).

Though t20 cricket does not appeal to the purists, there is usually one shining moment in each match. The editor's pick was the slowest of leg stump yorkers with which Matt Coles dismissed James Vince at the Ageas Bowl. It was a magical delivery, requiring enormous nerve and skill.

### **(3) THE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP**

At the time of writing, Hampshire have just batted out the last day against Warwickshire at Edgbaston to avoid relegation. It seems scarcely credible that they eventually finished fifth in the table. The competition started nearly six months ago on 7 April. In the intervening period, Hampshire's fortunes have fluctuated wildly. The second relegation place appears not to be fully determined. Last season's champions, Middlesex, currently stand in eighth position, but Somerset's pitch in the final match – against Middlesex – is under an extensive review. There will be more on Hampshire, and the Championship, as a whole in the next Newsletter.

### **OBITUARIES**

#### **(1) RALPH DELLOR**

The sports journalist and broadcaster, Ralph Dellor, died on 1 September, aged 69. He addressed the Society at their meeting on 9 April 1987, when he gave a biographical account of his career in cricket, which included preparation of the early editions of *The Cricketers' Who's Who* and tours of the Isle of Wight, Barbados and India. On the latter he made an appearance against a Press team, which included Indian test greats Chandu Borde and Bishen Bedi. He also recalled some hairy, but humorous moments, when he presented BBC TV's "Grandstand".

The meeting was notable in that it was the last to be held in the grand surroundings of Royal Southampton Yacht Club in Northlands Road, which was demolished shortly afterwards. It represented a passing of part of Hampshire's cricket heritage as, when known as The Court Royal Hotel, teams used to stay there for their matches at the County Ground. The Society held some of their Southampton meetings in the building between 1985-1987; they also met at the Polygon Hotel during this period. The latter building has also been demolished, and replaced by apartments.

#### **(2) BOB ELLIOTT**

Society member Bob Elliott was a familiar face to those who have watched Hampshire cricket, home and away, for many years. Bob died on 15 August. A short time before his death, which was unexpected, **Dave Allen** interviewed him. Dave has written the following piece as a tribute to Bob. It is reproduced in full, as Bob's life in cricket – a very full one - will be of interest to all those who follow both Hampshire and the club game in the county.

## **ROBERT (BOB) ELLIOTT**

Bob was born in Shawford, Hampshire, in September 1943. The family had been evacuated when war broke out but moved back from New Milton to Southampton in 1946, eventually to Cobden Avenue, a semi-derelict detached house with a large garden on the corner of Midanbury Lane, opposite St. Mary's College.

In 1948, Bob started school at Bitterne Park Infants and before his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday he had been to see his first match at Northlands Road. He played lots of impromptu cricket in those early days and remembered the famous British dance band and jazz trumpeter Nat Gonella, who lived nearby, and offered tips on how to bowl leg-breaks – but Bob just wanted to bowl fast.

1953 was a key year as he played cricket for Bitterne Park Juniors first XI who played home matches on a coconut matting wicket, behind the school on the recreation ground. That season he also saw the Australians play at Northlands Road – the year that England won back the Ashes. In the following year at The Oval he saw his first Test Match against the new tourists from Pakistan.

In the first two games of the 1955 season Bob took 6 – 8 and 8 – 6, and a total of 37 wickets for the season. Then, having passed the 11-plus, he went to Taunton's School and played more cricket although he also had visits to hospitals to examine his curved spine (Congenital Scoliosis). He said "it had never bothered me, and I really didn't know why I was there" and since "there was nothing that could be done that was not a gamble, I refused to experiment".

At Taunton's he was picked to play for the Under – 13s v Bournemouth Grammar School but his team were well beaten and he was never picked again, which mystified him. He did however captain his House team.

He left school in July 1960 and started work at the Hampshire Aeroplane Club as a detail draughtsman, on £3 a week. In May 1961, he moved to John A Smith Ltd, in London Road, as a Junior Draughtsman – and to enjoy jazz. He was also invited to play cricket and appeared for Redbridge (Sunday friendlies), Terminus (Evening League), and Caledonians (Saturday Parks League). In 1967 he won his first medal for winning the Evening League, although he neither batted nor bowled in any of the games.

In late December 1963, he worked on some drawings for IBM Hursley and eventually stayed there for many years, initially as a contractor, then on the full-time staff. He began playing for their cricket team from 1964 and made his first half century for them, and in 1965 was twelfth man for the prestigious Laboratories versus IBM UK game which was played at the Royal Greenjackets ground in Winchester. He joined Hampshire CCC as a full member, paying three guineas, and a couple of years later took the MCC's Youth Coaching Badge at Calshot, with Arthur Holt. He played some 'soccer' too, including a couple of years in the Sunday League, for Old Tauntonians. On a few occasions, Bob and Tim Tremlett were twin centre-halves.

In May 1973, IBM won their first ever match in the newly-founded Hampshire League, and in August Bob scored his first league half-century. Three years later IBM won the Conder Cup Final. In August 1977, he captained IBM v Lord's

Taverners at Hursley, and sat on the top table at lunch with Eric Morecambe and Dickie Davies (Taverner's skipper). Their team also included cricketers Denis Compton, Colin Milburn, Mickey Stewart and Jim Standen, the actors Robert Powell and Denis Waterman, and Radio One DJ Ed Stewart. Bob recalls "after the game, there was much drinking, and the following morning I got a phone call from Tim's Mum, who wanted to know if I knew where his kit was? Tim had been picked to play for Hampshire!"

In July 1978 IBM won the Sports Centre Final v Road Sea by ten wickets and around that time, Bob also played for Southampton Touring Club, where he met and played with, and against some of the very best club cricketers in the area. In the 1980s he played also for the Mariners and went on a couple of tours with the Rams – one to Paris.

Then Bob decided he wanted to learn to fly and in December 1992, he received his Private Pilot's Licence, but three years later he became seriously ill, spent time in intensive care and at Papworth Hospital Cambridge, after which there was just one last cricket match (June 1996) and no more flying. He was able to umpire for a while however and then became the IBM scorer. Of that illness, he said ...

*I had had a close call and I took the opportunity to retire from IBM at 53, and spend the rest of my life watching cricket!! I would watch Hampshire at every County, and at as many outgrounds as possible. I had already done quite a few,*

There were even longer-distance trips to watch cricket abroad, including South Africa in 1999, Australia in 2007 and Dubai and West Indies in 2012. In 2001, along with the other Hampshire supporters, he had transferred his watching to the new ground and by 2012 he had seen Hampshire play away at all the other 17 counties. He also started a project to photograph all the pavilions in Hampshire and began writing the 'History of IBM Cricket'.

Around 2008, at the annual former Hampshire players' reunion, Mike Barnard introduced him to a fellow pilot Jim Buchanan who lives in Prague, and had a Citation jet in which he used to come over to watch Hampshire occasionally. Jim had a full set of Hampshire autographs that went back to 1900, and Mike kept him up-to-date with new players each year. The following year Bob was recruited to keep the collection up-to-date. When Jim Buchanan sold his jet and decided he was unlikely to make use of his Millenium Membership any more, he passed it to Bob.

Bob was a lovely man, a very loyal supporter of the county's first and second teams, and a great collector of autographs, scorecards and other memorabilia. In his last few years he realised another ambition, becoming a published cricket author, initially with a well-researched piece for the Hampshire Handbook about all the post-war players who appeared once for the county, then with his first book *Changing Rooms*, with a photograph and description of all the county's main grounds, then finally *Changing Rooms 2* which listed and described similarly all the cricket pavilions of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It survives him as a testament to his commitment and enthusiasm for the game he loved, and to which he devoted a great deal of his life.

