

NEWSLETTER No. 247 - SEPTEMBER 2004

Wednesday 29 September 2004

The Society extends a warm welcome to **NEIL RIDER** to this evening's meeting. At the time this winter's programme was being prepared our speaker was Hampshire's Cricket Development Manager but he is now joining the County's commercial organisation.

Neil Rider played Minor Counties cricket for Suffolk and Berkshire, as well as for Hungerford in the Southern Electric Premier league.

Holder of a degree in Recreation Management from Loughborough University he became Cricket Development Officer for the Berkshire Cricket Board in July 2000 where amongst his achievements was designing and implementing a Primary Schools Roadshow, which led to more than 10,000 boys and girls playing cricket. He has been involved in coaching the Berkshire Minor Counties team, county youth squads in Berkshire, Leicestershire and Suffolk, and the England Women and South West Region women's teams.

He succeeded Mark Garaway as Hampshire's Cricket Development Officer in February 2002.

Our speaker therefore has a rare wealth of experience in all aspects of the game.

HAMPSHIRE'S TRIPLE CENTURIANS

On 24 July **JOHN CRAWLEY** became the third Hampshire player to score a triple century in first-class cricket for the County. His 301 not out against Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge was made off 442 balls and included thirty-five 4's and two 6's. His innings occupied 565 minutes and is therefore probably the longest innings, in terms of time, ever played for the County.

It is interesting to compare his innings with those of his two predecessors.

The first to the landmark was, of course, **ROBERT MONTAGU POORE** when he struck 304 not out off the Somerset bowlers at Taunton in 1899. In an article in The Cricket Statistician (Issue 50) in June 1985, Geoff Wilde outlined the product of his reconstruction of Poore's innings from the original scorebook. Wilde calculated that his innings lasted between 418 to 425 balls. Poore's epic contained forty-five 4's. However, the latter's innings was made in only 415 minutes, two and a half hours less than Crawley's. This difference in time is explained by the respective over rates. Somerset bowled 20 overs an hour; Nottinghamshire 16. John Crawley is not

regarded as a fast scorer but his innings is an indication that the speed of scoring of contemporary players is on at least a par with that of their often more-lauded predecessors. The most notable component of Poore's innings was his record partnership with another army officer, E.G. "Teddy" Wynyard, of 411 for the sixth wicket. This might imply that both batsmen dominated the bowling totally, but Wilde's researches showed that Poore took a breather just after passing 200, and again as he approached the magical 300.

R.H. "DICK" MOORE made Hampshire's record score of 316 against Warwickshire at Dean Park, Bournemouth, in 1937. Opening the innings, he struck 316 out of 509 in a day lasting 380 minutes. He hit forty-three 4's and three 6's. His percentages of runs in boundaries (60%) therefore just surpassed that of Poore (59%). Crawley's boundaries accounted for just over half of his runs. General Poore was present on the following day to congratulate the new record holder. The number of balls received by Moore is not recorded. Warwickshire bowled 761 balls in the day (21 overs an hour). Given Moore's dominance it is conceivable that the scoring rate of all three batsmen may well have been similar.

Whilst three men have scored triple centuries for Hampshire in first-class cricket, another did so in a "minor" County match. Hampshire were not regarded as a first-class County when **FRANCIS (later SIR) LACEY** rushed headlong to 323 not out against Norfolk in only four and a half hours at Northlands Road in 1887. Batting at three, he hit four 6's, two 5's and thirty-seven 4's.

As far as the Editor is able to trace, four other batsmen who have played for Hampshire reached a triple-century elsewhere. Two were in first-class cricket in Australia and are both famous in their own right. The incomparable **BARRY RICHARDS** compiled a sublime 356 when playing for South Australia against Western Australia at Perth in 1970-71. 325 of those runs came on the first day. He batted in all for 512 minutes and hit one 6 and thirty-eight 4's. The sheer quality of that innings is illustrated by the fact that he dismantled a bowling attack which included the legendary Dennis Lillee and Graham McKenzie. Richards was, of course, a Hampshire batsman at the time.

MATTHEW HAYDEN enjoyed a run-satiated summer for Hampshire in 1997 but without suggesting that he would go on to impose a psychological stranglehold on bowlers similar to that of Viv Richards a decade or so earlier. His dominance reached its apotheosis when he rendered the Zimbabwean bowlers helpless as he plundered 380 for Australia at Perth's WACA ground in October 2003. The innings lasted 622 minutes, was made off 437 balls, studded with thirty-eight 4's and no fewer than eleven 6's and was described variously as awesome and brutal. He surpassed Brian Lara's previous record highest score of 375 but, of course, Lara regained the accolade in May of this year when he became the first man to amass 400 in a Test match. Hayden's eleven 6's was only one short of the Test record held by Wasim Akram who, of course, played fleetingly for Hampshire in 2003. Hayden also exceeded Barry Richards' innings mentioned above as the highest score at the WACA. Such has been the powerful left-hander's domination of Test attacks in the past few years one can only wonder if he might have made more triple centuries had not his creaking knees prevented him from playing any domestic cricket for some time now.

Two men who have played for the County have scored triple centuries in club cricket. The most recent instance featured **SHANE WATSON** who made such favourable impression on his few appearances for Hampshire last summer. In the last Australian season he delivered a performance which even transcended Soberesque proportions. Playing for Lindisfarne in Tasmania he made precisely 300 not out, and then, apparently riled by the opposition's tactics to deny him his triple hundred, took 7 for 29. Watson will be returning to his native Queensland this winter. However, his state appearances may be restricted as he has been chosen, alongside Shane Warne and Michael Clarke, for the Australian's much anticipated tour of India next month.

The County's final triple centurian was **Captain (later Major-General) JAMES SPENS**. He compiled the highest score ever made by a Hampshire player in any form of cricket when he racked up 386 for United Services against Nondescripts at Portsmouth's Burnaby Road ground on 8 and 9 August 1882.

Batting at four, on the first day (Wednesday), he was undefeated on 318 after five-and-a-half hours at the crease when he was finally dismissed on Thursday he had struck 4 sixes, 2 fives and 33 fours. The Portsmouth News described his opponents' fielding as being "remarkably good". "Lillywhite" stated that the innings was the fourth highest ever made at the time.

Born in India in 1853, he played in the Haileybury XI of 1868 and 1869. He scored heavily in Army cricket, but was never able to devote much time to Hampshire. He top scored with 60 against Kent at Gravesend on his County debut in 1884, and achieved a unique place in Hampshire's history as Major Spens when he compiled 118 not out against the Philadelphians in 1897. It was made in the inaugural first-class match at Bournemouth's Dean Park and was the first century there. Described in Wisden's obituary as being above medium height, of good physique and a free-hitter he played in only 10 matches for the County between 1884 and 1899, scoring 546 runs (avge. 28.73).

Finally, no survey of triple centuries connected with Hampshire would be complete without reference to an astonishing innings played on the Isle of Wight on 27 August, 1874. Playing for Northwood against Freshwater at Cowes, W.E.W. Collins made 338 not out – the first recorded triple century anywhere in the world. Scores and Biographies mentions he batted four hours and that the innings was made up of one 9 (!), two 7's, six 6's, twelve 5's, twenty-five 4's, seventeen 3's, eighteen 2's and thirty-three singles (sic). (The more eagle-eyed of members will note that this adds up to 339). Collins was captain at Radley School and a year later played soccer for England and Ireland. Thereafter he remains an enigmatic figure but with his place in cricket history secure.

(The Editor would be pleased to learn of any other individual scores of 300 or more in Hampshire club cricket).

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THE HAMPSHIRE LIBRARY

E.G. Wynyard – His Record Innings-By-Innings by Keith Warsop (pub. Association of Cricket Statisticians and Historians)

This book is No. 80 in the ACS's Famous Cricketer Series. Wynyard is the second Hampshire cricketer to be featured, the first being Malcolm Marshall (No. 52).

The book is a little gem and compulsory reading for those interested in the early years of Hampshire's history as a first-class county. Though born in India Wynyard qualified for Hampshire by virtue of the family's residence in Hursley. Making his debut for the County aged only 17 years 6 days in 1878 he was consigned to spend the majority of his career in a struggling side, and indeed, for the period 1887-1894 Hampshire were not even regarded as a first-class county.

Nevertheless, Wynyard rightly emerges as a considerable cricketer who played in three Tests, took part in eight overseas tours, enjoyed a career of 35 years and finished with a very creditable average of 33 in an era of uncovered wickets and bowlers who know how to exploit conditions to the full.

This 52-page publication is a comprehensive biography. Wynyard was, of course, an army officer and not least the most interesting part of the book is the extent to which his service duty curtailed his appearances. Hampshire were very reliant on talented service personnel right up until the 1914-18 war and the book clearly illustrates the extent to which the County's administrators must have constantly juggled with the composition of sides on almost a match-to-match basis, depending on availability.

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