

NEWSLETTER No. 266 – OCTOBER 2006

MEETINGS

Wednesday 18 October – Meeting

The Society is very pleased to welcome the popular, former Hampshire Vice-Captain, Will Kendall to this evening's meeting. The fair-haired right-handed batsman was a great favourite with Hampshire members. He was one of the most unselfish of cricketers. He always ran other batsmen's runs so well. The scoreboard never stopped ticking over whilst he was at the crease. He was also an outstanding fielder at point and cover.

Born in Wimbledon on 18 December 1973, **WILLIAM SALWEY KENDALL** was educated at Bradfield College before going on to study at Keble College, Oxford. He made his debut for the University in 1994. Though he scored 113 not out against Surrey at The Oval that season, he had to wait until the following year until gaining the first of his two Blues. His final innings for Oxford was a much treasured 145 not out in the University match at Lords in 1996.

He had already appeared for Hampshire Second XI in 1992 and, on coming down from University, made his senior Hampshire debut at Taunton. He impressed immediately scoring over 600 runs in 8 matches, which included his maiden century for the County – 103 against Nottinghamshire at Northlands Road – in the final match of the season. He topped one thousand runs that year and went on to repeat the feat in 1999 and 2000. He was the Society's Player of the Year for his achievements in the latter season when he was easily Hampshire's most productive player.

He received his county cap on the same day as he made his career best score of 201 to save the game against Sussex at Northlands Road in 1999. It was an extraordinary match. Hampshire followed on after being bowled out for 76 in reply to their opponent's 375. The County went on to make a monumental 570 for six declared. It was the largest disparity in innings total since their famous victory at Edgbaston in 1922. Kendall (404 balls; 32 fours) shared century partnerships with Robin Smith, Giles White and Adi Aymes (111 not out). He made his only one-day century – a fluent 110 not out against Middlesex - at the Rose Bowl in 2002.

He proved a most popular and supportive vice-captain to Robin Smith, often being seen to give on-field advice and assistance, and standing in for a few matches in 2001 and 2002. In 2004 he led the County to an outstanding victory over Yorkshire at Headingley, in Shane Warne's absence, making 50 in Hampshire's first innings in bowler-friendly conditions in the process. It proved to be his final half-century.

He was one of the many batsmen on the Hampshire staff who never really came to terms with the Rose Bowl wickets. He endured a torrid time in 2001 when he seemed to be on the receiving end of more than his fair share of unplayable shooters and lifters. Nevertheless, he saw the County to an important victory in the first match

against Durham in 2004 with a gritty 31 not out, and remained committed to Hampshire's cause to the end.

He left first-class cricket having played in 140 matches and scored 6822 runs (avge. 33.27) including 10 centuries, and a further 2113 runs in limited overs matches.

He wrote an articulate and insightful weekly piece for the Hampshire Chronicle during the season for six years, which was reproduced in the Hampshire Handbook.

NOVEMBER MEETING

Members are reminded that the next meeting, on 8 November, is scheduled to be held at Test Valley Golf Club, near Overton, a ten-minute car journey south-west of Basingstoke. The speaker will be writer and broadcaster David Rayvern Allen. He, of course, wrote the definitive biographies of our late patron, John Arlott, as well as E.W. Swanton.

DECEMBER MEETING

The Society's Celebratory Anniversary Dinner on 6 December to be held at the Rose Bowl, will be a more substantial menu than the usual Buffet Supper:-

Crofters thick vegetable soup

Pan fried breast of chicken on a bed of peppered crushed new potatoes with sauteed red cabbage, baton carrots & a red wine & tarragon jus

Fresh cream filled profiteroles smothered with a warm Tia Maria chocolate sauce

Coffee and Mints

The event is usually very well attended and Chairman Susanne Marlow will be managing the ticket arrangements. Attendance will be by ticket only and the application form is included with this Newsletter despatch. Those attending the October meeting will be mailed at the same time as all other members.

The speaker is, of course, Shaun Udal, who will be in discussion with David Allen.

2006 - A REVIEW OF THE COUNTY SEASON

2006 was a year when some romance returned to the County game. Mushtaq Ahmed twirled away to charm spectators and bewitch batsmen with his concoction of leg-breaks, googlies and top-spinners. A second Championship victory for Sussex followed in his wake. Shane Warne was again Hampshire's most successful bowler, despite missing three matches. Monty Panesar was allowed to play for Northamptonshire after the Test series and gave County batsmen a taste of the magic that had tested the Pakistanis in the preceding weeks.

It was in conservative Yorkshire, however, that the story of the County season evolved. Leg-spinners in that County have been a rarity, usually regarded as an expensive luxury that could never be quite trusted. And yet they had the courage to play not one, but two leg-spinners. It was largely due to their efforts, when they

bowled in tandem towards the end of the season, that Yorkshire retained their First Division status. Adil Rashid, an 18 year old who learned his cricket in the Bradford League, and Mark Lawson, aged 22, from Leeds, were unlikely saviours. Rashid in particular earned rave reviews for his all-round performances for England Under 19s against India and for his bowling in his debut season. He took 6 for 67 in 28 overs in his first match against Warwickshire at Scarborough and scarcely looked back thereafter. The pair made such progress that Yorkshire released off-spinner Richard Dawson, who toured Australia in 2002/03, at the end of the season.

It was also in Yorkshire that another fairytale unfolded at the end of the season. Tennis experts often commented that John McEnroe's racket was a natural extension of his arm. That remark applied equally to Darren Lehman's bat. He was undoubtedly one of the most intuitive batsmen of this, or any other generation, and he bade farewell to his adopted County with 339 – a record score at Headingley – against Durham in his very last innings for them. A most glorious swansong. He was only 2 runs short of George Hirst's highest ever score for Yorkshire but given so many County records are now held by overseas batsmen perhaps it was appropriate that the status quo was maintained.

Justin Langer, of course, hit a County record 342 in his only first-class match for Somerset at Guildford, an innings which one shrewd observer described as a "net". Another Australian, Chris Rogers of Northamptonshire, also scored the season's other triple century – 319 against Gloucestershire, a feat which would have somewhat surprised those who saw him play for South Wilts in the Southern Premier League last year.

As mentioned earlier, Sussex won the County Championship. It was a deserved victory founded on the bowling of Mushtaq, a rejuvenated Jason Lewry, enjoying a splendid Indian summer, the wonderful early season form of Rana Naved-ul-Hasan, who with Mushtaq topped the season's averages, and dramatic and timely interventions of Rana's replacement, Yasir Arafat. Sussex have obviously created a prolific pipeline of talent from Pakistan. The batting usually held firm, particularly when Murray Goodwin and Michael Yardy, were at the crease. They enjoyed several long partnerships together, never more so than when they batted throughout the final day of the first match of the season against Warwickshire at Hove.

Hampshire's season was, ultimately, a disappointment. They often punched far below their weight and experienced a number of inexplicable collapses. Crucially, in two of their defeats against Sussex and Warwickshire – both at the Rose Bowl – the inspirational Warne was absent. There were compensations for the future. Chris Benham and James Bruce emerged as real talents. Benham of course was largely responsible for the County's promotion in the Pro 40 league with an exhilarating 158 in the play-off against Glamorgan. It is desperately important for future generations of cricketers in the County that both of these players, who, if not Hampshire-born, learnt their cricket in the County, become firmly established and perhaps go even further in the game. James Adams, born in Winchester, cemented his place with a patient, unbeaten 168 as Hampshire chased 404 to beat Yorkshire at Headingley and then followed it up with a mammoth 262 not out at Trent Bridge. Only Dick Moore of Hampshire-born batsmen has played a higher innings for the County.

Nic Pothas was cruelly denied of an opportunity to become the first Hampshire wicket-keeper to score a thousand runs for the best part of sixty years by Lancashire's shameful refusal to declare on the final afternoon of the season. He, like Warne, also missed the defeat at Warwickshire's hands, though Pothas' was through injury.

Bestriding the season, however, were Warne and John Crawley. The latter was a model of consistency and reliability throughout, exemplified by his scoring more runs in the First Division than any other player.

Of the others, Michael Carberry enjoyed a good opening season with the County, making two centuries and only missing the one thousand runs landmark through injury. Dimi Mascarenhas enjoyed some vivid purple patches. Chris Tremlett bowled with pace, and gave the County's attack a real cutting edge when fit, but his ongoing injury record must now be giving genuine cause for concern. Sean Ervine, recovering from a horrific knee injury, was only a shadow of the force he was in 2005, but did extremely well to finish the season. Dominic Thornely left the County in debit.

There is little doubt that Hampshire's momentum was interrupted by the 20/20 competition which continues to give the season a lop-sided look. The new format of the C&G Competition was widely condemned and rightly so. It's predecessor was cricket's equivalent of the FA Cup; it is now the interminable Champions League. The sooner it returns to its original and long-cherished knockout format the better. The Pro 40 League was generally played out to sparse crowds, even under floodlight. Cricket's managers have much to ponder about the format of one-day cricket for the future. It clearly needs reforming.

Towards the end of the season a review was instituted of the two Division Championship. Much of the clamour for amendment seems to emanate from Wales. One hopes the English element in the England and Wales Cricket Board resist the call for change. English cricket is immeasurably stronger for the current format and it would be counter-productive to change it. The biggest, and most critical, difference is the standard of bowling and, consequently, batting. The gulf between the two Divisions is growing each year.

SIR CLYDE WALCOTT

Clyde Walcott, who died on 26 August, played against Hampshire on both his tours to England, in 1950 and 1957.

The West Indian match at the beginning of July in the first of those years produced probably the most brilliant day's cricket ever seen on a Hampshire ground. Those who were there on the first day still remember it vividly. Before an alleged crowd of 10,000, Roy Marshall (135) and Everton Weekes (a coruscating 246 not out – his fourth double century of the tour) were the major contributors to a staggering total of 539 for four declared. The big, powerful Walcott, batting with a runner because of a pulled thigh muscle, struck 58, which included one 6 and five 4's. He added 155 for the fourth wicket with the effervescent Weekes. Walcott had come into the match having made 168 not out in the previous match – the second Test at Lord's. The West Indies gained their first-ever Test victory in England in that game, which ended in a

joyous pitch invasion and the composition of that most famous of calypsos - paying tribute to those little pals of mine – Ramadhim and Valentine. The pair had taken 18 of the 20 wickets to fall. However, Walcott's innings, only one short of George Headley's highest score by a West Indian at that time, also passed into cricket folklore.

Rain washed out play on the Monday but on the following day, Neville Rogers made a cultured century (106) before lunch. Unfortunately, his innings has been overlooked over the years, due to the extraordinary and luminescent strokeplay of Hampshire's opponents on the first day.

The West Indies were comprehensively outplayed by England in 1957, yet they fared well against the Counties. On a bowler-friendly wicket Hampshire became the first County to lead the tourists on first innings. In the absence of John Goddard, and despite the presence of Frank Worrell, Walcott was captain for the game. He made only four as Derek Shackleton (3 for 31), Malcolm Heath (4 for 58) and Jimmy Gray (2 for 20) hustled out their opponents for just 110. It was a wonderful performance as, with the exception of Rohan Kanhai, the West Indies fielded their strongest batting side. Everton Weekes, the hero of 1950 made 12, being one of the only three men to reach double figures. Top scorer, and confirming his prodigious talent, was Gary Sobers. Coming to the wicket upon the dismissal of Walcott, he remained undefeated on 37.

Jimmy Gray then made a superb 83 to steer Hampshire to a first innings lead of 49. The next highest scorer was Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie, with 12. Sobers affirmed his status as an all-rounder with 3 for 40 although it was the tall, Trinidadian fast bowler Tom Dewdney who did most to curtail the Hampshire lead. He performed the hat-trick on the Monday morning dismissing Shackleton, Heath and Mervyn Burden. With Hampshire enjoying a lead of 17 with half of their wickets in hand at the end of Saturday's play, they also became the first County to dismiss the tourists twice, but not before the latter had made 387. Bruce Paireudeau made a somewhat fortuitous 163 (two 6's and twenty-nine 4's in four hours and ten minutes). Weekes – batting higher up the order – 62 and Worrell batting at 8, marshalled the tail with 56 not out. Walcott made the next highest score (34) before being bowled by Shackleton for 34. Both Weekes and Walcott shared century partnerships with Paireudeau. The master fast-medium bowler finished with 7 for 103 in 37 overs. All his victims were top-order batsmen. Besides Walcott, he also dismissed Collie Smith, Weekes and Paireudeau. Only Sobers – caught Eagar bowled Burden – eluded him.

Hampshire, chasing 339 in five hours, set off with a vengeance – Marshall and Gray adding 43 off only 7 overs – but rain ruined the prospect of an interesting finish.

This was not the end of Walcott's appearance at Northlands Road. He later came as a manager of West Indian tours. His influence was most visible during the Clive Lloyd era when he gave his captain unstinting support in the use of the formidable four-pronged fast bowling attack which led to the West Indies' domination of international cricket for some 20 years.

Calling Over

Yan, tyan, tethera,
Ned the shepherd lad counts
how often Old Seth hurls the ball of fleece
through the wicket gate into the fold
before Dad, with his cricce, skilfully deflects it.
Sheep huddle together, bleating.
The crook is large, so Dad makes Ned a bat,
cutting and shaping a branch from the thicket.
Methera, pimp, sethera. Ned connects,
sweeps the ball along the ground,
runs to his coat and back as Old Seth
rheumatically stoops to field it.
Lethera, overa, dovera, dick; counting runs.

Wooden balls, bound with strips of hide,
or cork encased in leather, vie with curved bats,
oak or alder, sometimes beech, not yet willow.
Two trustworthy friends, sticks and sharp knives in hand,
sit on a mount nearby, scoring the sticks.
Tich and turn! Slash, nick, notch; recording runs.

Now at a table, still on the field of play,
with pen and paper to set down runs scored,
the scorers closely link with those knowledgeable
arbiters, the umpires, who shout the notches to them.
Pitches improve and measurements creep in,
size of the bat, weight of the ball, three stumps.
The scorers prudently retreat beyond the boundary,
too far to shout and umpires invent signals.

Progress, the game rushes on,
scoresheets become scorebooks, overs are recorded,
bowlers, to their chagrin, learn how many runs they cede,
who caught the catches, individual scores.
There are scoreboards, scorecards, score boxes
and suddenly that modern scourge – statistics.
Wisden and Lillywhite publish almanacs.

Averages abound, runs in a season, an innings
ducks, dismissals, centuries, sixes, fours.
Yan, tyan, tethera, long forgotten, lost in the mass of figures.
Methera, pimp, sethera lost in the lap-top.
Computers store the figures and lose the beauty.
Lethera, overa, dovera, dick.

Imogen Grosberg