

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

Patrons: John Woodcock Shaun Udal James Tomlinson

NEWSLETTER No 393 – July/August 2020

OBITUARY

DAVID HARRIS

Members will be sad to learn that David Harris died in June. He was one of the Society's earliest members. Before the days of computers, and hence email, David arranged for the posting of all the Newsletters for many years. He attended virtually all the early meetings in Basingstoke, travelling from his home in Reading by rail. He never drove a car and so, as the Society's venues became more dispersed, he became more and more reliant on a lift, which reduced his attendance. However, he was able to come to the Society's first Day at The Cricket four years ago. David was always splendidly entertaining company. He possessed a wickedly acerbic wit, based on a healthy cynicism of the world, and his own high intelligence. His irreverent one-liners were priceless. Speaking personally, to spend a day with him was one of the year's highlights. He had a view on every subject. David was a collector of autographs. He was also a member of the Cricket Memorabilia Society for many years and attended most meetings, which often involved an early start and convoluted rail journeys. He was a Hampshire supporter, loved to attend the first day of the season in Oxford's Parks, followed London Irish home and way when they moved to the Madejski Stadium in Reading, and was a lifelong Portsmouth fan. He also played Bowls for Berkshire. David was a one-off; a true original, who left a treasure trove of joyful memories.

HAMPSHIRE'S FIRST - CLASS FIXTURES 2020

The ECB have now confirmed this year's first-class County programme. The Counties will play for the Bob Willis Trophy. The teams have been split into three zones, with the two best sides progressing to a final, which will be played over five days. Each team will play the other sides in their zone once, ie five matches. Unfortunately, all matches will be played behind closed doors, though there will be live streaming on television for all of them. The editor understands that Radio Solent are also investigating coverage.

There will be some amendments to the playing conditions. There will be 90 overs per day, instead of 96. The first innings will be a maximum of 120 overs. The follow-on can be applied if the side batting second is dismissed 200 runs behind, rather than 150. The new ball will be taken after 90 overs, instead of 80. Part of the rationale for the changes is to protect fast bowlers who are unlikely to be as match fit as normal,

and who are likely to carry a heavy workload with all the matches being played over a six-week period. It would be good to think that, as a consequence, spin bowlers will be given more opportunity.

As The Ageas Bowl is required for international cricket, all Hampshire's matches will be played outside of the County. Arundel, where the club has been training during July, will stage their two "home" matches.

Hampshire's fixtures, with venues, are as follows:-

1-4 August	Sussex	Hove
8-11 August	Middlesex	Radlett
15-18 August	Surrey	Arundel
22-25 August	Essex	Arundel
6-9 September	Kent	Canterbury

RADLETT

Only one first-class match has previously been played at Radlett, and that was last season when Middlesex drew with Glamorgan.

Hampshire have played there before in a List A match in 2016, when they defeated Middlesex by five wickets in the Royal London Cup, which was decided by Duckworth/Lewis.

ARUNDEL

Hampshire have played six first-class matches at Arundel. The first was in 1990, which was the inaugural first-class fixture played on the ground. The match was notable in that Shaun Udal and Rupert Cox made their Championship and first-class debuts respectively. The game was drawn.

The other games were played in 1992 (W), 1996 (D), 2007 (L), 2008 (L) and 2009 (D).

The highest score by a Hampshire batsman on the ground is 132* by Chris Smith, in 1990, and the best bowling figures 6-48 by John Stephenson in 1996. Our Patrons will have good cause to remember the ground. Shaun Udal made his Championship debut there in 1990, taking 4-142 on a blisteringly hot day, and James Tomlinson returned figures of 5-108 in 2008, in a long, lion-hearted spell of bowling.

In *Cricket At The Castle - 100 years of Cricket at Arundel Castle* by Sir Michael Marshall, the editor found reference to our other Patron, John Woodcock, keeping wicket there in the 1960's. Among the many other snippets of information contained in the book is that Derek Shackleton opened the bowling with Sir Learie Constantine, for the Duke of Norfolk's XI against George Cox's Sussex XI in 1951. Desmond Eagar was also in the Duke's side in that match, as an opening batsman.

COVID TESTS (2)

Bed, training, cricket, meal, bed – every day. All in the same location. No scope for real relaxation. No friends or family. The West Indies and England players deserve the highest praise. To be quarantined for so long was a huge sacrifice, demanding great fortitude. The England players had been locked down for at least 8-10 weeks not long before. The West Indies squad had travelled to England from a largely Covid-free environment. Coach Phil Simmonds and captain Jason Holder warrant special recognition for their leadership.

To play in such a sterile environment requires very special motivation. There is no doubt that, as far as the players were concerned, it was "proper cricket". There were many highlights. The bowling of Shannon Gabriel and the all-round performance of Holder dominated at the Ageas Bowl in the first test; Ben Stokes produced a display for the Ages with bat and ball in the second at Old Trafford; Stuart Broad embarked on a roll, as only he can, in the third at the same venue, claiming his 500th test wicket and ten in the match, whilst Chris Woakes, often a thorn in Hampshire's side at the start of his career, took his 100th test wicket. In the end, the West Indians seemed to run out of steam, which given the circumstances mentioned above, was perhaps not surprising. England overturned defeat in the series opener – the first time they had lost a test on Hampshire's ground, to win the rubber 2-1.

What of the television viewing experience? Whilst there was much to admire, the matches lacked atmosphere. It was a sharp reminder that cricket is a spectator sport and something is lost when there is no audience. But it is expected that the virus will be prevalent for some time yet. Unique challenges still lie ahead.

IRELAND AT THE AGEAS BOWL

By the time members read this Newsletter, Ireland will have made their first visit to the Ageas Bowl as a full member of the ICC in three One Day international matches. Ireland's progress in the current Millennium is exemplified by the fact that their first List A match at The Ageas Bowl was in the Cheltenham & Gloucester Trophy 2nd Round in September 2001, when they played the Hampshire Cricket Board. They ran out winners by 32 runs. In the Board XI that day were Richard Hindley, who played such a heroic part with the bat in Hampshire's remarkable victory over

Glamorgan in the County Championship two years later (his only game for the County) and Richard Dibden , who made five appearances for the County in 1995.

Ireland later played twice more on the ground, in the Friends Provident Trophy in 2007 and 2009. Hampshire won both matches comfortably, by eight wickets and 77 runs, respectively. In the latter match, Sean Ervine (167*) and Michael Carberry (121*) shared an unbeaten partnership of 260 for the second wicket. Ironically, Ervine had qualified for Hampshire by virtue of being an Irish passport holder!

PAKISTAN AT THE AGEAS BOWL

England will play Pakistan in two tests at The Ageas Bowl, from 13-17 August, and 21-25 August.

Pakistan have appeared in five ODIs at the ground, as follows:-

2004 v West Indies	Lost by 7 wickets
2006 v England	Won by 2 wkts
2010 v England	Lost by 121 runs
2016 v England	Lost by 44 runs
2019 v England	Lost by 12 runs

That first match, in the semi-final of ICC Champions Trophy, was memorable for a vivid duel between Shoaib Akhtar and Brian Lara, which ended when the Pakistan fast bowler forced Lara to retire hurt after he felled him with a bouncer.

Hampshire supporters will have another opportunity to watch the gifted Babar Azam make 102 not out off just 55 balls for Somerset at The Ageas Bowl in last season's Vitality Blast. Notwithstanding that rate of scoring, *Wisden* described him as a mainly orthodox stroke maker! He understandably gathered an admiring fan club in the West Country.

PITCH PUBLISHING ZOOM SESSIONS

A Corner of Every Foreign Field by Tim Brooks

In many ways this was the most informative of all these sessions. Tim Brooks gave a fascinating account of the development of cricket from its origins as well as a contemporary report of the ICC Associates - all in 45 minutes!

He felt there was no distinctive start date but the catalyst to its development was as a team sport with parish versus parish. Betting then intervened; personalities were

always important and these two factors conjoined in Single Wicket Competitions, which were a huge attraction.

The author then took his audience on an absorbing world tour. War, Empire and Transportation were the main factors in spreading the game. However, cricket then became a closed shop and growth became inhibited. In many countries, cricket clubs became football clubs, eg AC Milan in Italy, and a few in Argentina.

There has always been tensions between the ambitions of the ICC to create a global game, and the “box office” appeal of the major test playing teams. The Indian influence has been difficult to resist because of their financial clout. Kenya, Ireland and Holland are not drawcards and, domestically, cricket is a minority sport. In the USA, the game is run by entrepreneurs seeking a monetary “quick fix”, which is not a good scenario for putting down roots, though there are signs that it is stabilising. He queried whether Scottish cricket, which does have a history and roots, has underperformed.

In the other Associates, the largest influence is immigration from South Asia. The main issue is obtaining interest from their own populations. There has been an explosion in the number of clubs in Germany because of an Afghan influx. In China, cricket was never an expat game. They wanted to get the sport into schools and the universities but never achieved the cultural threshold to develop it. Of some of the other Associates, Nepal is developing fast and Malaysia “has a lot going for them”. Mr Brooks was concerned about the impact of the Coronavirus on those countries where the game was already fragile.

He stated the women’s game is crucial to its development. Often, women’s teams in some countries are stronger than those of the men, eg in Thailand. However, the ICC has difficulty in funding both men’s and women’s cricket.

If Not Me, Who? The Story of Tony Greig, the Reluctant Rebel by Andrew Murtagh.

Former Hampshire cricketer, Andy Murtagh, wrote this book as he felt Tony Greig’s reputation needed to be dusted down. He thought that his subject had been rather forgotten as an all-rounder as he played at the same time as Ian Botham, Imran Khan, Kapil Dev and Richard Hadlee; however, aspects of his record were comparable to those four men.

His father, Sandy, was a decorated war hero in Bomber Command. A navigator, rather than a pilot, he became a Squadron Leader by the age of 21 and flew 54 missions, a phenomenal number. He survived physically, but suffered mental health problems and became an alcoholic. His wife, Joyce, held the family together. Nevertheless, he maintained a good relationship with his father, though it broke down with the Packer Affair. Happily, they eventually made up.

He was coached by the Sussex opening bowler, Tony Buss, in South Africa, who recommended him to his County. Greig had to qualify for a year, but on the strength of his total commitment and 2nd XI performances, he was awarded a three-year contract. He launched his first-class career in sensational fashion at the start of the next year, 1967, by scoring 156 against Lancashire. He came to the wicket after his side had lost four wickets cheaply. Tall, blond-haired and charismatic, his progress thereafter was inexorable. He was voted Young Cricketer of the Year, made his debut for England in the Rest of the World Series in 1970, and made his test debut against Australia two years later. When he was made Sussex captain in 1973, he backed his younger players, engendered trust and embedded the same values that had driven him - to be competitive, to entertain, and try their best.

He was appointed England captain in 1975. His courage was never questioned. He never backed down. He had incurred the wrath of Jeff Thomson and Dennis Lillee in Australia in 1974/75 by signalling his own fours. The later batsmen suffered through his actions but they never criticised him. After his famous "grovel" remark in 1976, he had no qualms about crawling in front of the West Indian section of the crowd at the end of the series at The Oval in 1976. He was adored by the crowds on his successful England tour to India in 1976/77.

He was approached by Kerry Packer after the Centenary Test in 1977 (not before or during as has often been claimed) that followed the Indian tour. Packer found himself pushing on an open door; in relation to the lucrative test match gate receipts, players were very poorly paid. Greig recruited the England players and those others who were not either Australians or West Indians. He sought and received from Packer a guarantee that the Australian magnate would give him a job for life, a promise that was fulfilled. Andy Murtagh felt that Tony Greig was ahead of his time and today's richly paid test cricketers, as well as those elsewhere, owed him a great deal. He was, of course, vilified in England at the time. Australians received diametrically different treatment.

After his playing career, he became a broadcaster and pioneered a number of the technological developments that are now common place today. In line with his philosophy, he saw it as entertainment. He remained a charismatic figure and became known once more to the English cricketing public with his work on Channel 4 in 2005. His partnership with Geoffrey Boycott became legendary. Nearly 30 years on from Packer, he became accepted.