

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

Patrons: John Woodcock Shaun Udal James Tomlinson

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PRINCE PHILIP, THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH

The saddest news since the last Newsletter was produced was, of course, the passing of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, on 9 April, aged 99 – just a few weeks shy of his 100th birthday.

This Newsletter recalls the Duke's cricket connections with Hampshire, particularly his appearance on the field of play at Dean Park, Bournemouth, in September 1949.

Among the many tributes were photographs of him playing cricket. There was one of him in the nets whilst practising for the Royal Navy. His very high backlift, towards third man, suggested he was an aggressive batsman. The Times published a fine photograph of him wearing a cap and sunglasses playing a robust pull shot off his front foot. The caption denoted he was batting at Highclere Castle in Hampshire, but it was actually at Arundel in August 1953.

He first met the Hampshire side on 1 August 1949, during the tea interval on the second day, a Monday, of their match against Kent at Canterbury, during the Festival Week, always a great social gathering. The Duke was accompanied by Lord Harris, President of HCC, and Lord Cornwallis, Lord Lieutenant of Kent. Hampshire must have regarded his presence with some misgivings as they lost 20 wickets for an aggregate of 362 runs during the day. The County were comprehensively defeated by an innings and 28 runs.

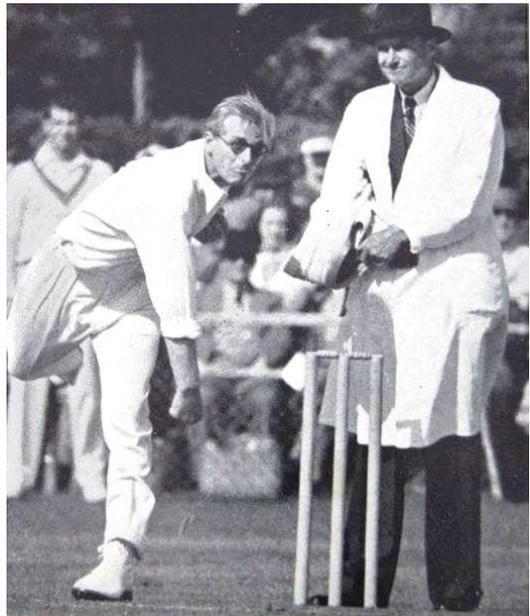
Some seven weeks later he made his most famous appearance on the cricket field in Hampshire on 19 September 1949 when he brought a strong side, officially labelled HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's XI, to play a full strength Hampshire side at Dean Park, Bournemouth.

The match attracted a crowd of over 10,000. Desmond Eagar, Hampshire's Secretary and captain, averred "that it was the biggest crowd ever seen at Bournemouth and that they gave the Duke a magnificent welcome." Richard Mockridge, *the* Bournemouth cricket historian, saw the match. He was only seven years old but recalls "the crowds lining the boundary and the excitement of my family". It was clear that the Duke, who married Princess Elizabeth and future Queen, in November 1947, was a hugely popular and, indeed, charismatic figure with the British public. At the time, he was both President of MCC and of the National

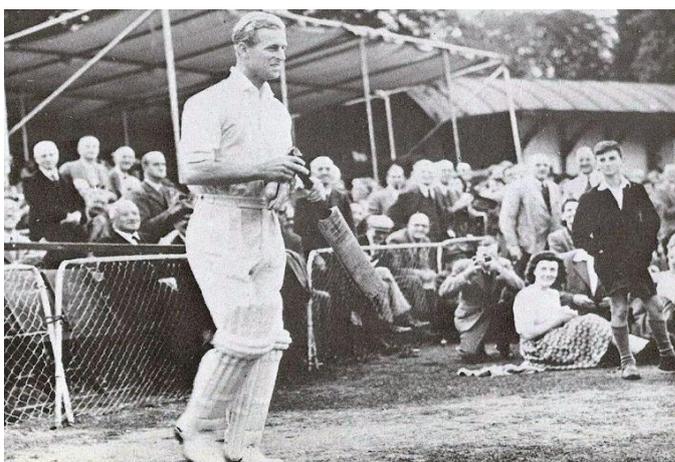
Playing Fields Association. The Association benefitted from the substantial proceeds from the match.

He had flown down to Hurn from Balmoral for the all-day match. He captained his team, which included Gubby Allen, Freddie Brown, and Walter Robins – all Test captains, as well as four other test players in Denis Compton, Errol Holmes, Tom Goddard and Billy Griffith. The side was completed by former Hampshire captain, Geoffrey Lowndes, Stan Squires, a prolific run scorer for Surrey, and Leslie Compton, wicketkeeper and brother of Denis.

He won the toss, put Hampshire into bat and, wearing his I Zingari cap, proceeded to direct operations from slip and mid-on. He put himself on to bowl, as fifth change, just before lunch, and took the wicket of Gilbert Dawson who mistimed an off-drive to be caught at mid-off. From two paces, and wearing dark glasses, he bowled quickish off-spinners from around the wicket. You tube footage reveals there was much vim in his body action. Umpire Frank Chester commented that “he was not a bad off break bowler”. His view was echoed on the few subsequent occasions that he played in the company of first-class cricketers. Prior to matches, he practised assiduously, and never let himself down. His talent must have been quite innate as he never played the game until attending Gordonstoun School in his teens.



When the Duke batted, he scored 12, which included two crisply struck off-drives to the boundary off Gerry Hill. As at Arundel, he wore a cap and sunglasses. Many of the obituaries mentioned he was a man years ahead of his time. It seems this was the case in his cricketing accoutrements.



In the best traditions of charity matches, the end of the match was close and perhaps contrived. Robins won the game with a lofted hit for a single to the deep where Desmond Eagar, was fielding. In *Hampshire County Cricket* (by HS Altham, Eagar, John Arlott and Roy Webber), Eagar wrote: “Robins hit the ball a tremendous height into the air in my direction and I dropped it”! Eagar was normally the most reliable of catchers. A fine example of diplomacy? The

game ended one ball later when Goddard was bowled. The crowd had enjoyed a memorable match, and watched much attractive cricket, with 509 runs being scored in the day. Neville Rogers (93), Hampshire's best post-war batsman until the advent of Roy Marshall, Squires (80) and Denis Compton (52, including three sixes) also made important contributions to the entertainment.

NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION										
OFFICIAL SOUVENIR SCORECARD — 6d.										
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th, 1949										
HAMPSHIRE										
VERSUS										
H.R.H. THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S XI										
COUNTY CRICKET GROUND, DEAN PARK, BOURNEMOUTH										
RESULT: H.R.H. THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S XI WON BY 1 WICKET										
HAMPSHIRE										
1	McCORKELL, N.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	c Holmes b Robins	22
2	ROGERS, N. H.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	b Allen	93
3	DAWSON, G.	---	---	---	---	---	---	c Brown b H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh	31	
4	BAILEY, J.	---	---	---	---	---	---	st Griffith b Allen	16	
5	E. D. R. EAGAR (Capt.)	---	---	---	---	---	---	c Robins b Allen	14	
6	ARNOLD, J.	---	---	---	---	---	---	not out	31	
7	WALKER, C.	---	---	---	---	---	---	c and b Brown	13	
8	SHACKLETON, D.	---	---	---	---	---	---	c Holmes b Brown	7	
9	HILL, G.	---	---	---	---	---	---	c L Compton b Robins	20	
10	HARRISON, L.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
11	C. J. KNOTT	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
									Extras	7
									TOTAL	8 wkts (dec) 254
Fall of Wickets 1-49 2-150 3-158 4-180 5-181 6-199 7-229 8- 9-										
H.R.H. THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S XI										
1	S. C. GRIFFITH (Sussex)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	lbw b Walker	6
2	G. O. ALLEN (Middlesex)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	c Harrison b Shackleton	27
3	SQUIRES, H. S. (Surrey)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	c McCorkell b Bailey	80
4	COMPTON, D. (Middlesex)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	b Knott	52
5	E. R. T. HOLMES (Surrey)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	c McCorkell b Bailey	3
6	R. W. V. ROBINS (Middlesex)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	not out	35
7	H.R.H. THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH (Capt.)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	b Hill	12
8	F. R. BROWN (Northamptonshire)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	b Hill	18
9	W. S. LOWNDES (Oxford and Hampshire)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	b Knott	11
10	COMPTON, L. (Middlesex)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	st Harrison b Knott	1
11	GODDARD, T. (Gloucester)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	b Knott	0
									Extras	10
									TOTAL	255
Fall of Wickets 1-11 2-57 3-131 4-191 5-191 6-207 7-210 8-243 9-248										
Scorer: L. A. Sprankling * Wicketkeeper Umpires: E. Potheary & F. Chester										
Printed and Published by the Hampshire County Cricket Club										

Desmond Eagar went on to write "After the match, there was a never-to-be forgotten scene outside the King's Arms Hotel at Christchurch. Both teams were present at a Dinner held in his honour and the crowds gave his Highness a tumultuous reception when he appeared on the balcony of the hotel. This was a very proud day in our lives."

The Duke again brought his own side to the County Ground in Southampton on 11 September 1954. However, he did not play. Again, the proceeds were in aid of the National Playing Fields Association. The summer of 1954 was described by that felicitous writer AA Thomson as “the wettest since Noah”, but a full day’s play was possible. His side included three men who played at Dean Park five years earlier: Allen, Holmes and Griffith, all venerable gentlemen. Indeed, it was a team of veterans. The other members – all former test players – were Lawrie Fishlock, Jim Parks Snr, Bob Wyatt, the New Zealander Roger Blunt, Jas Langridge, Jim Sims, Arthur Wellard and “Hopper” Read. All were comfortably over the age of 50. Nevertheless, an entertaining match ensued, with Hampshire winning by three runs.

Scores:

Hampshire 224 – 6 declared (Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie 66 no, David Blake 45, Alan Rayment 41, Read 3 – 38)

Duke of Edinburgh’s XI 221 (Griffith 72 not out, Charles Knott 5 – 105)

However, the result was immaterial as the crowd had the opportunity to watch players whom they would have remembered fondly from either side of World War Two. Indeed, it must be wondered whether their appearance may have been, in effect, recognition for their long service to the game.

There is an interesting passage in the book ***In Cricket At The Castle – 100 Years of Cricket at Arundel Castle*** by Sir Michael Marshall in which the Duke recounted a number of aspects regarding his cricket appearances.

He had enjoyed cricket at Gordonstoun and the odd game in the Navy. But his main sporting pursuit was polo. However, Errol Holmes, the former Surrey captain, persuaded him to play in matches for the NPFSA, and he agreed to do so, provided he could obtain some practice beforehand. When asked how it felt to play before the inevitable large crowds, “I can only say that it was best to have practice but also, in those days, people were much more deferential”.

How good was the Duke? No less a critic than the great CB Fry, once said of him that he had a natural aptitude for the game.

He enjoyed playing in these matches but in 1957 he declared: “Playing at that level you could, for a while, kid yourself that you could keep up with the good players. But once they needed to put on the pressure in a tight finish then the whole thing changed gear and you realised what a vast gap there was between the part-time and first-class cricketer”. He made his final appearance in a match for his side against the Duke of Norfolk’s XI at Arundel in that year.

The Duke also met Hampshire’s Championship winning teams of 1961 and 1973 at Buckingham Palace. In the former year, he presented the team with the Championship Pennant. When asked if they would be repeating the famous recipe

of “wine, women and song” for the following season, “Butch” White is alleged to have responded that they may forgo the singing!

In 1973, he presented the team with their Trophy.

The Duke also visited the Rose Bowl, as it was then named, in September 2004, to be presented to the Indian and Kenyan teams in the ICC Champions Trophy.

The Editor would like to thank Dave Allen and Richard Mockridge for unselfishly sharing their files for this article, and Sue and Andy Ray for the formatting of this Newsletter. Their help has been invaluable and much appreciated.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE SEASON TO DATE

LEICESTERSHIRE at Grace Road

Hampshire’s victory was founded on an imperious innings of 231 by James Vince. Though playing his first red ball match since September 2019, he carried on in the same vein as his form in this winter’s BBL in Australia (see the last two Newsletters). It is now virtually impossible to create new adjectives to describe his batting. Statistically, he batted for five hours 24 minutes. He scored his runs off only 220 balls; he would have scored even faster had he not allowed himself the occasional breather, particularly towards the end of the first day. Those who watched those Australian innings on television will have been familiar with his command, power and yet elegance and timing as he peppered the boundaries all around the ground with drives, cuts, hooks, pulls and shots off his legs. There really was no place to bowl at him. It is doubtful, unless he plays it, whether a more appealing lengthy innings will be seen on England’s grounds this summer.

Tom Alsop’s century (119) was also welcome. Too often in the past he has surrendered his wicket through indiscrete shot selection but this was not the case on this occasion. And, at the end of the innings, Liam Dawson’s blitzkrieg as he moved from his century to 152 not out off an indecently low number of balls may have even surprised himself. One instinctively recalled that marvellous century in bowler friendly conditions against Somerset at the Ageas Bowl in that penultimate match of the 2019 season. Like Vince, he seems to have moved to a new plane. In his one innings in 2020, he had batted with little trouble on a tricky wicket before succumbing to a serious Achilles injury.

With the ball, Mason Crane bowled one of his magic spells on the third morning just before lunch, when for a few overs he was unplayable, founded on a good length, pace and bounce and an indecipherable googly. He took three wickets in each innings (for a total of 151 runs). Kyle Abbott (five wickets), Brad Wheal (four) and Mohammed Abbas (three) completed a fine all-round bowling display. The remaining wicket to fall to a bowler was a controversial stumping off Liam Dawson in the second innings, which prompted an ECB enquiry at Leicestershire’s instigation.

The Editor never saw the incident; it seems to have involved a claim for a catch, followed by a stumping, though Lewis McManus apparently had the ball in one hand and flipped the bails off with his other. In the final analysis, however, the square leg umpire should have ruled whether it was a bona fide dismissal. It all appeared very strange. The ECB later ruled that McManus was culpable and he was fined three demerit points.

Elsewhere, Darren Stevens, at the age of 45, scored 116 not out, for Kent against Northamptonshire at Canterbury. Somerset overcame a first innings deficit defeat to Middlesex at Lord's, and Gloucestershire surprisingly trounced Surrey by eight wickets at Bristol. It snowed at Headingley, Edgbaston, Old Trafford and Canterbury.

MIDDLESEX at The Ageas Bowl

The next match against Middlesex at the Ageas Bowl will always be remembered for a remarkable bowling performance by Mohammad Abbas. Making his home debut for the County (he had previously played on the ground for Pakistan), he dismissed Matt Holden and Nick Gubbins with the last two balls of his first over and then completed the hat-trick off the first ball of his next when Eskinazi edged to McManus.

At that stage, there was some highly entertaining by-play in the commentary box. Both Kevin Hand of Radio London and Kevan James himself were willing Abbas on to record a four – in – four, to equal Jamo's famed record against India in 1996, but it was not to be.

Nevertheless, Abbas still wasn't finished. He claimed two more wickets by the fifth ball of his third over and eventually finished with the symmetrical figures of 11-6-11-6. Middlesex were routed for 79. Earlier, Hampshire had won the toss and decided to bat, on a wicket with tinges of green. They made their way to a disciplined 319 by the end of the first hour on the second day thanks to resourceful batting by Ian Holland (64), Sam Northeast (63) and Kyle Abbott (58). And then came the Abbas show. Vince could have enforced the follow-on but chose not to. Hampshire then lost their first two second innings wickets quickly before Holland (a career best 146) and Northeast (118) completed fine match doubles. Hampshire declared 290 for four leaving Middlesex the unlikely target of 531 in five sessions. Abbas, Abbott and Holland, who took three wickets each, bowled Hampshire to victory by 249 runs on the stroke of lunch on the last day.

Elsewhere, Sussex's Ollie Robinson, took 9 for 78 against Glamorgan at Sophia Gardens; Essex, after being bowled out for 96 in their first innings at Chelmsford eventually overcame Durham by 46 runs; Gloucestershire beat Somerset at Taunton for the first time in 28 years; and the evergreen Stevens made 47 and 52, as well as taking four wickets in the first innings, against Yorkshire at Canterbury, but was unable to prevent Kent falling to a 200-run defeat.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE at The Ageas Bowl

The third match against Gloucestershire, at the Ageas Bowl, was an engrossing affair. On a slow wicket, not conducive to strokemaking, Holland (114) and Alsop (149) scored their second centuries of the season in adding 228 for the second wicket in 69 overs. Vince (52), though unable to cut loose, and Dawson (65) guided Hampshire to 470. Abbas took an early wicket but then the Gloucestershire batsmen dug in: the West Indies captain Kragg Braithwaite (60), the talented James Bracey (65) and the normally pugnacious Ryan Higgins (73) took them to 320. Of the Hampshire bowlers, Abbas (4 – 41) was again to the fore, aided by Dawson (3 – 80) in a marathon spell of 41.1 overs, and Crane (3 – 70). The leg spinner took his wickets during a short mesmerising spell as he had at Leicester. When James Vince enforced the follow-on, the two sides entered a war of attrition over the remaining four sessions of the match. Gloucestershire's batsmen were bent on survival; Hampshire's bowlers and their captain tried to wrinkle them out. When the ninth wicket fell at 161 with seventy minutes remaining, it seemed as if Hampshire would record a third consecutive victory. However, the pitch had now completely gone to sleep and Josh Shaw (23 not out) and Dominic Goodman (9 not out), still a student at Exeter University, thwarted all of Hampshire's attempts to remove them. One wondered at the time whether the physical and psychological impact of being so close to victory and yet so far, would affect their performance in the next match at The Oval. Credit has to be given, though, to the Gloucestershire side, who have prospered under the guidance of Ian Harvey and Mark Alleyne from that trophy-laden one-day team at the turn of the Millennium.

The most surprising result in the other matches was Essex's defeat at the hands of Warwickshire at Edgbaston, their first defeat since Hampshire over-ran them by an innings at the Ageas Bowl in the first match of the 2019 season. For the Bears, Danny Briggs (66 not out) recorded a career best, before bowling Porter to seal victory at the end of the match. He has made a promising start to his time with his third county.

SURREY at The Oval

And so, to the debacle at The Oval. After James Vince lost the toss for the first time, Hampshire were never in the hunt. Rory Burns chose to field on a wicket offering the medium pacers some assistance, Hampshire were shot out for 92, with ex-Lancashire player Jordan Clark taking six for 21. Only Lewis McManus (31 not out) and Holland (22) batted for longer than an hour. The pitch then seemingly eased. Burns (80), Hashim Amla (215), Ollie Pope (131) and Jamie Smith (78) were the main contributors to the Surrey total of 560 for seven declared. Significantly, four of those wickets fell on the third morning. Scott Currie, from Poole, and still then only 19 years old, bowled manfully for a career best four for 109 in 27.5 overs. He bowled more overs than any of his colleagues. It was a most noble effort. Strangely, Hampshire's two senior bowlers – Abbott and Abbas – bowled the least

number of overs. Were they carrying injuries? When Hampshire batted again, four further wickets had fallen by lunch time. The West Indian fast bowler, Kemar Roach, simply swept them aside taking eight for 40 in 18.3 overs of sustained pace, aggression and accuracy. As in the first innings only McManus (51 in just under three hours) held up Surrey. It was a match from which Hampshire could take few crumbs of comfort. They lost by a mammoth innings and 289 runs – their biggest defeat since WW2 and gained only one point. The two positives were the performances of McManus and Currie. Given his young age, it must be hoped that the latter's workload is managed sensibly. After dominating their first three matches and playing such competitive cricket, Hampshire's lack lustre performance came as a surprise. It was Surrey's first win of the summer. They had taken sweet revenge for their innings defeat against Hampshire at Arundel last season.

In Hampshire's group, Gloucestershire defeated Leicestershire by four wickets in an exciting run chase at Bristol to head the table. Somerset came from behind again to record victory by the same margin against Middlesex at Taunton. All three Conferences have produced much compelling cricket and provided a wonderful advert for the County game.

INTERMISSION

The editor would like to thank members of the Committee, Les Bone and Dave Allen for their support over the past 12 months. This is the editor's 350th Newsletter since the first in 1982. In so many ways, including cricket, it is a far different world now.

Now that county cricket has resumed, and as Hampshire members will be admitted to the Ageas Bowl for the Championship match against Leicestershire on Wednesday 19 May, the editor will be taking a rest from keyboard and screen until later in the summer. Members will be informed of the Society's plans for the forthcoming winter, as soon as we know more about availability and cost of our traditional venues, and social distancing rules. We have already formulated a provisional programme of speakers.

In the meantime, the Society wishes all their members good health and an enjoyable summer of cricket watching.