

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

Patrons: Shaun Udal James Tomlinson

NEWSLETTER No. 405 – OCTOBER (2) 2021

MEETINGS

Wednesday 27 October – Meeting

The Society extends a warm welcome to this afternoon's speaker, **RICHARD ELLISON**. Members will remember him as a very fine right-arm fast-medium swing bowler, and a buccaneering left-handed batsman, who enjoyed two vivid tests against Australia in 1985. In the first, at Edgbaston, he claimed six for 77 in the first innings, bowling long economical spells (31.5 overs and nine maidens). It was in the second innings, though, that he sent England supporters to their evening meal in ecstatic mood. The Australian top-order were simply unable to cope with his late swing as they collapsed to 36 for five. Coming on to bowl as first change he took 4 wickets for 1 run in 15 balls. The last of those wickets was the key one of Allan Border, trimmed off stump. He also had a hand in the first wicket to fall, that of Andrew Hilditch – dubbed the “happy hooker” – whom he caught off Ian Botham. He eventually finished with match figures of 10 -104 as England won by an innings and 118 runs.

In the next test at The Oval, the final and sixth one of the series, Australia were again unable to counter him in their second innings as he (five for 46) and Botham (three for 44) systematically dismantled their batting. As at Edgbaston, he removed Border (for 58); the Australian captain was the only man to offer any prolonged resistance. Our speaker topped the England bowling averages; he took his 17 wickets at the scarcely credible average of 10.88.

He was an automatic selection for the tour to the West Indies in the following winter. He began as he left off in the previous series, claiming five for 78 in the first match at Sabina Park. However, England lost in three days on an infamous pitch of which John Woodcock wrote “I think I have never felt it more likely that we should see someone killed”. It was a series dominated by some brutal, genuine fast bowling, and he played in only two more tests in that rubber. In the last, he was unfortunate to have to bowl to Viv Richards when the latter hurtled to a 56-ball century in his home island of Antigua. Apart from one test against India at Lord's in 1986, that was the end of his test career. Nevertheless, he had enjoyed a stellar few months. *Wisden* recognised his achievement against Australia by selecting him as one of their Five Cricketers of the Year in 1986.

RICHARD MARK ELLISON was born in Willesborough, Ashford, Kent on 21 September 1959. He attended Tonbridge School, where he was a contemporary of Chris Cowdrey, before going to Exeter University. There was some cricket in his genes. Two of his ancestors were briefly acquainted with the game at a high level in the East Midlands; his brother played for five years whilst at Cambridge University, where he was also chosen for the Combined Universities. His own son played for Oxford MCCU in the current Millennium.

Our speaker made his first-class debut against Hampshire in Canterbury Week in August 1981. He attracted the headlines immediately with 55 not out, during which he shared a ninth

wicket partnership of 108 with Derek Underwood. He would have undoubtedly scored more runs during his career had Kent's immensely strong batting during the 1980's not limited his opportunities to play a long innings. His highest score in Championship cricket was 98 against Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge, a month or so before those Australia tests. It was a most distinguished knock; against a bowling attack which included Richard Hadlee and Clive Rice, he played a lone hand as he nursed the Kent tail, making his runs out of 132 whilst he was at the wicket.

Initially, in partnership with Underwood, he was to become the bane of Hampshire's batting, especially in limited overs cricket. Underwood, of course, had plagued Hampshire for two decades previously. The editor particularly remembers a Benson and Hedges Quarter-Final at Canterbury whilst he was on holiday in 1983. The match started in fine weather, but by mid-afternoon it became cloudy, and then showery. Kent were bowled out for 198, Ellison making 28, the value of which only becoming apparent on the next afternoon. When play resumed the next morning, in warm, sunny weather, which lasted all day, Hampshire moved, though probably too slowly, to 159 for one, but they were still favourites to win. Underwood, however, dismissed Trevor Jesty and Mark Nicholas, before our speaker finished the Hampshire innings with a hat-trick, dismissing Malcolm Marshall, Nigel Cowley and Bob Parks. Kent had run out winners by 5 runs. He was duly nominated Man of the Match. His influence was such that he was to finish on the losing side against Hampshire only once in List A matches. His frizzy mop of hair and moustache became implanted in our minds.

He played in three Lord's finals, but suffered the misfortune of being on the losing side – once by two runs (against Middlesex in 1986) - on each occasion.

He toured Sri Lanka and India in 1984/85, where his captain David Gower thought he was desperately unlucky not to take more wickets, so often did he beat the bat without capturing the edge. However, Gower filed his performances away in his memory and it was through his influence that Richard Ellison was chosen for those two momentous Ashes tests in the following summer. He also enjoyed a successful winter playing for Tasmania in the Sheffield Shield in 1986/87 but returned home with a back injury. He consequently missed the whole of the 1987 season. Though he took 71 wickets on his return in 1988, which was his most productive summer, he was unable to force himself back into England reckoning. He went, as did last month's speaker, John Emburey, on that controversial tour to South Africa in 1989/90. He still, though, experienced one further noteworthy and memorable moment. In 1991, he returned his career best bowling figures of seven for 33 against Warwickshire at Tunbridge Wells.

After he retired in 1993, he spent a long career, coaching and then teaching, at Millfield School.

Wednesday 6 October 2021 – Report

John Emburey's talk was an absorbing one. Skilfully interviewed by our Secretary, John Hooper, members were informed of his early days when he started playing cricket in the street. He attended a state school and began life as a medium pace bowler. A coach advised him to bowl spin; he found he could turn the ball naturally, and bowl straight and accurately. His cricketing ambitions began when he was a nine year old; he played for London Schools at the age of 13. He was recommended to Surrey but found they had

enough quality spinners. The Surrey coach Arthur McIntyre suggested he apply to Middlesex. Hailing from Peckham in South London, he could not bring himself to do so. In the event, Middlesex wrote to him and so began a 25-year career.

He recalled what should have been his first-class debut at Dover. However, having missed a train, he arrived late. To teach him a lesson, the senior pros had him running errands up and down steps to the pavilion at The Crabble, which is located on the side of a hill. He was never late for a match again.

Middlesex always played two spin bowlers. Phil Edmonds was Best Man at his wedding. He spoke extensively about the leadership and captaincy prowess of Mike Brearley, and his application of psychology to bring out the best in his players. It wasn't always successful. One batter was a bag of nerves so Brearley suggested he take whisky before going out to bat. He did so, and was out first ball!

The highlight of his career was Edgbaston 1981 (see previous Newsletter). Sydney in 1986/87 provided mixed emotions. He felt he could steer England to victory; he was last man out, playing a cross bat shot. He always played straight thereafter. He spoke about the perils of touring India. His first tour to South Africa was prompted by both those off field experiences in India as well as turgid wickets, negative tactics and biased umpiring. He was at a low ebb.

His second tour to South Africa was intimidating in a different sense. FW de Klerk had informed the players beforehand that Nelson Mandela was going to be released during the tour. The matches were played out against a forbidding atmosphere. He was glad the tour was never completed.

He ended by describing the current situation at Middlesex. There was no shortage of questions from the floor thereafter.

Members were extremely complimentary about the afternoon. We had enjoyed the benefit of a first-class speaker. Warm thanks were expressed to the staff at Romsey Golf Club, who had made us very welcome. It was also wonderful to meet so many members after an 18 month gap. 48 members were present at the meeting, one of the highest attendances for a non-Christmas meeting in the last decade.

Wednesday 6 October AGM

The Society held their first AGM for just over two years before John Emburey's talk. The business was conducted with the minimum of fuss. Our Treasurer, John Grapes, reported a healthy financial situation; 100 members had rejoined, with more expected to do so in the coming weeks. All officers were re-elected en bloc. Our Chairman, Garry Lane, reported on the changes to the Society's meeting venues and times, and the reasons behind the changes. He mentioned that a PA System had been purchased. Subscriptions have continued at £10 for 2021/22 but this will need to revert to our usual subscription of £20 next winter. Garry also mentioned that the Society had provided access to the Pitch Publishing and Simon Hughes Zoom sessions during lockdown. He asked members to consider joining the Committee, which was light on numbers.

REMAINING MEETINGS FOR 2021

The next two meetings will be held on:-

Wednesday 17 November at Test Valley Golf Club, starting at 2pm. The speaker will be **IAN GOULD, universally known as “Gunner”, the former Middlesex and Sussex wicketkeeper.** He also captained Sussex in 1987, and kept in 18 ODIs for England. He was on the ICC Elite Umpire’s Panel between 2009-19, standing in 74 tests and 140 ODIs.

As might be expected from such an ebullient character, he proved to be a highly entertaining speaker when interviewed on last winter’s Pitch Publishing Zoom sessions, following the publication of his autobiography *Gunner. My Life In Cricket*. Copies of the book will be available at the meeting, when he will be interviewed by Garry Lane.

Would members please contact John Hooper (secretary@hantscricsoc.org.uk) if they would like a meal before the meeting.

Wednesday 8 December 2021 at Romsey Golf Club. This will be the occasion of the Society’s Christmas Lunch, which will start at 1pm. Detailed arrangements regarding the lunch, including menus, will be circulated to members in early November. Our speaker will be Mike Selvey, who will commence his address at approximately 2.30 pm. Members will be aware that he enjoyed the majority of his career with Middlesex, where he was a key member and serial trophy winner in that great side of the Mike Brearley era. His playing days were book ended by brief appearances for Surrey, Cambridge University and Glamorgan. He played for England in three tests, two of which were against the powerful West Indies side of 1976. He went on to enjoy an even longer career in the print media, for *The Guardian* and *The Cricketer*, and on radio as a summariser on *Test Match Special* and *Talksport*. Mike Selvey will be talking on Team Selection.

AWARD OF COUNTY CAPS

Seven players were awarded their County Caps at the Annual Awards Dinner in October: **Tom Alsop, Keith Barker, Mason Crane, Ian Holland, Lewis McManus, Joe Weatherley and Brad Wheal.**

HAMPSHIRE WIN 2nd XI CHAMPIONSHIP

Hampshire won the 2nd XI Championship for the second time in three years last summer. In effect, they have now won the competition twice in succession, as Covid prevented it being played in 2020. Prior to 2019, Hampshire were previous winners in 1967, 1971, 1981, 1995 and 2001.

SOUTHERN VIPERS

The Southern Vipers retained the Rachel Heyhoe Flint Trophy in 2021. **EMILY WINDSOR**, whom members will recall spoke to the Society in the company of Charlie Dean and Bob Parks in March 2018, took the Vipers to a three wicket victory against the Northern Diamonds at Northampton. She scored a measured unbeaten knock of 47, in a partnership of 78 with Tara Norris (40 not out). She was nominated Player of the Match. She also played five matches for Trent Rockets in The Women’s Hundred. She achieved all this in between

her stints as a commentator on Radio Solent, studying at Sheffield University and her day job with the NHS. Some multi-tasker!

More on Charlie Dean, whose career has developed at an even greater pace, next month.

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