

HAMPSHIRE CRICKET SOCIETY

Patrons: Shaun Udal James Tomlinson Kevan James

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MEETINGS

Wednesday 13 March 2024 – Meeting

The Society is pleased to welcome Derek Pringle to this afternoon's meeting. His 15-year career from 1979 to 1993 was one of distinction and high achievement. Whilst at Cambridge University, he gained three Blues, scoring a century in the University match in 1979. He would have gained a fourth, but, in 1983, became almost certainly the last man to be selected for England whilst an undergraduate.

He went on to play in 30 Tests, taking five wickets in an innings on three occasions against the formidable West Indian batting line-up. In the infamous series against the Windies in 1988, when England were captained by four different men, he actually became the fifth when he stood-in for the injured Graham Gooch on the last afternoon on the final test at The Oval. Perhaps his finest innings was when he accompanied his county captain in a seventh wicket partnership of 98 against the West Indies at Headingley in 1991. Though he made only 37, it was stand that turned the match. Gooch carried his bat for a courageous 154 not out, as England recorded a 115-run victory.

He represented England in 40 ODIs and played in the World Cup Final against Pakistan at the MCG. He was undefeated at the end, but was unable to prevent England slipping to a 22-run defeat.

In county cricket, he was an integral member of the Essex side which enjoyed the most successful period in their history. With him in the team, they won five Championship titles between 1983 and 1992. He also played in five Lord's finals; for some strange reason Essex transpired to lose four of them. There were compensations, however, with three Sunday League successes and another in the Refuge Assurance Cup.

After leaving the game, he has become a much respected journalist for *The Independent* and then *The Daily Telegraph*. He has also written a highly entertaining autobiography *Pushing the Boundaries: Cricket in the Eighties-Playing Home and Away*, which is considered to be one of the best in recent years.

Wednesday 14 February 2024 – Report

Simon Mann attracted an audience of exactly 100, the largest gathering since the Society decided to hold all its meetings at Romsey Golf Club. Members were treated to a delightful afternoon as, via an interview with our Secretary, John Hooper, he talked about his career in broadcasting, various facets of Test Match Special (TMS) and two memorable matches between his County, Gloucestershire, and Hampshire in 1977, in which Mike Procter (who sadly died shortly after our meeting) figured prominently.

He progressed from Hospital Radio to TMS, via Cricket Call (where one of his contemporaries was the prominent South African commentator, Neil Manthorp), a Journalism Course, local radio and national radio. When he graduated to BBC radio, his memories were of such famed broadcasters as Peter Jones and Bryan Butler. He worked his way up on the national scene bit by bit, taking advantage of whatever opportunities came his way. One of the challenges of broadcasting on radio was player recognition, especially those with similar build. The commentators look at the field some way off, whereas those on television work from a screen. He talked about his colleagues, and the countries he had visited. The West Indies was a particularly favourite location.

As regards 1977, he recalled the renowned Benson and Hedges Quarter Final at the County Ground, when Mike Procter claimed four wickets in five balls to send Gloucestershire on their way to victory. However, if there was one match in his life where he would have liked the result to have been different, it was Gloucestershire's final Championship match of the season, against Hampshire at Bristol in the same season. Victory on the final day, before an immense crowd, would have meant that his team would have been crowned County Champions for the first time in their history. The Glos faithful were convinced they would win but their hopes were crushed by Gordon Greenidge who scored 94 and led Hampshire to a seven wicket victory. He also recalled a memorable incident in the Nat West Trophy at Bristol in 1993. Malcolm Marshall bowled a bouncer to tail ender John Childs; the latter took evasive action but with his bat outstretched and being held in one hand, the ball took the edge, and flew up the hill for six over third man. The editor saw it all happen also. Marshall's reaction was class. He was laughing so much that he took some time before being able to bowl again.

Simon Mann answered every question put to him by an attentive audience before our Chairman Garry Lane, thanked him appropriately.