

ETON RAMBLERS

NOTICE 2017

I would first like to express a huge thank you to Peter Lowndes who as a player, match manager, Cricketer Cup captain, Hon Secretary, President and organiser of epic tours (Yorkshire, Middle East, Australia and South Africa to name a few) has been unstinting in his efforts to promote and support Rambler Cricket. His counsel will be sought in the years ahead as he remains a Trustee of the Club.

2017 Season

Of a scheduled 45 matches played the Ramblers won 18, lost 13 and drew 8, with 6 matches abandoned or cancelled because of rain. This has been our best season in terms of wins/losses since 2011.

Finn O'Brien was our leading run scorer with 305 at 76.25 but top of the averages is Josh Ballantine Dykes with 166 runs at 166! We had 4 Rambler centurions in the season: Tom Shaw 123*, Harry Blake 114, George Loup 103 and Finn O'Brien 100.

Freddie Fox was our leading wicket taker, bowling 166 overs with an outstanding 49 wickets at 14.55. Can he better the 55 wickets taken by Dick Bluett in 1982?

And looking further back, our archivist tells me that in 1933 Buns Cartwright took 68 wickets in his 453 overs and in 1894 Godfrey Foljambe bowled 647 overs (in 34 innings) of which 228 were maidens taking 114 wickets for 1128 at an average of 9.8.

Top of the averages however is Chris Horne (age 72!), with his 9 wickets at 12.11. This exceptional achievement has won Christopher the Methuselah Award, given to a 50 + year old coming top of the bowling or batting averages.

New to 2017 was a quadrangular Twenty20 competition featuring the Harrow Wanderers, Marlborough Blues and the Old Wellingtonians. The tournament was a great success, particularly as we managed to defeat the Wanderers in the final.

Another first was our hosting of the Icelandic National Team on Upper Club, where victory looked on the cards but the Icelanders managed to hang on for a draw.

The Cricketer Cup

Drawn to play Clifton (a) in the first round we lost by 13 runs.

The Ramblers won the toss and elected to field, bowling well to restrict the Cliftonians to 181 – 6 from their 50 overs.

With a strong Rambler batting line up this was not a daunting total but chasing a lowish total is never easy and so it proved. A bitterly disappointing result for the team, particularly after the bowlers had done so well.

We play the Old Brightonians in Brighton on June 17th and all support is most welcome.

Lords

I am afraid to say that Harrow were too good for us this year, although I am sure that the recognised Eton batsmen would admit to underperforming. Our numbers 3 to 6 made 14 between them.

On a lovely day at Lord's Eton won the toss and elected to bat. Our young opener Billy Lowther (D Block) made a very good 62 before falling caught behind shortly after the lunch interval. Tom Loup, 29 not out, with contributions from Kit Penny 18 and Jamie Gammell 13 grafted Eton to 169 from the 55 overs.

Harrow deployed 7 bowlers in the innings, with each of them picking up a wicket. The pick of the bowlers was the spinner Rishi S Wijeratne, 11 overs 1 for 17, whose control of the ball was exceptional, drying up runs from the Pavilion end.

Early wickets were required by Eton and Jamie Gammell did take 2 wickets in his opening spell, leaving Harrow 30 for 2. The two Wijeratne brothers steadied the ship for Harrow, putting on 59 before George Pearson's leg breaks undid Rishi Wijeratne and then the Harrow wicketkeeper (103 – 4) to keep Eton hopes flickering. But it was too much to ask of the bowlers and a classy 67 not out by Rahul Wijeratne eased Harrow over the line in 31.3 overs.

Extraordinarily the XI has been without a dedicated Master in Charge for the past couple of years. Great credit must go to Tim Roberts, the Eton cricket professional, for managing the XI in addition to coaching and organising the coaching of the younger age groups so well. Thanks must also go to Ralph Oliphant-Callum who helped Tim with the XI when his House duties allowed. This unsatisfactory situation has now been resolved with the reappointment of Richard Montgomerie as MIC for the XI .

I have been to watch the last 5 or so matches and have been surprised by the intensity and quality of cricket on display. It is well worth watching, so do come along this year to support if you can - Saturday 23rd June. 11.00am.

Rwanda Tour

Freddie Fox reports:

In October, a squad of fifteen young Ramblers (well, mostly!) took part in Cricket Builds Hope's inaugural Twenty20 competition in Kigali. The week-long tournament, culminating in the opening of The Gahanga Stadium, comprised teams from the UK and East Africa, as well as celebrity players, including Michael Vaughan, Herschelle Gibbs and Sam Billings.

The Ramblers were placed into Group 1 alongside Kenya U19s, Cou tts and Rwanda. We managed to win all 3 Group games with a particularly exciting and hard fought 6 run victory over the Kenyan U19s. An epic T20 tussle against the Christopher Shale XI followed, ending in the opposition managing to score the one run required for victory off the final ball of the match.

Off the field, the touring party were kept extremely busy with gorilla trekking, trips to Agakera National Park, drinks at the British High Commission, a visit to the Genocide Memorial Museum as well as a memorable morning taking part in Umuganda – Rwanda’s community work day. As part of this community-wide coming together, the Ramblers spent several unforgettable hours shifting top soil and lifting bricks in a bid to help build a school nearby the site of the new stadium.

A memorable week both on and off the pitch, helping to raise much-needed funds for “The Lord’s of East Africa” and work towards a better future for Rwanda. In total, the Ramblers raised £10,390.32 towards the project.

Finances

The Club’s finances remain in good order despite showing deficits on both the Club and Cartwright Legacy Funds. These deficits were primarily due to subsidising the cost of the dinner so as to ensure tickets remained affordable. The Club also purchased framed photos and scorecards of our 1992 and 2001 Cricketer Cup winning sides, now hanging in Upper Club.

Our investment income and membership fees continue to fund the running of the Club but in recent years the number of school leavers joining the Club has been lower than usual. I will be working with the Hon Sec and Treasurer to improve the take up.

Club Dinner

Just over 100 Ramblers attended an enjoyable Dinner at Queens. The Head Master enlightened us about the School’s plans for a new indoor sports complex and swimming pool. An indoor cricket facility is a possibility and the idea would be to redevelop the grounds barn, behind Agars pavilion, which we think used to be two indoor cricket nets at the turn of the 20th century.

John Cloughton then entertained us with his amusing, perceptive and poignant thoughts on the extreme highs and lows experienced by us all in this great game.

RIP

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To close

As a Club we are dependent on young players joining the Ramblers. Each year we invite leavers from the XI, XXII and XXXIII to become members, but please do let our Hon Sec know of anyone you would like to put forward who we might have missed. Membership fees are either a one off £200 for life, or £20 pa direct debit.

And finally can I encourage you to apply to the match managers to play. Those who have left the School in the summer pay no match fees, students pay £10 and others £20. We have a fantastic fixture list so please do make the most of it.

Floreat Etona

M H Brooks
President