

ETON RAMBLERS

NOTICE 2007

2007 SEASON

The improved results achieved in 2006 were not carried forward into the 2007 season. However, it was a most inhospitable summer with 10 of our 41 matches being lost to the weather. It is worthy of note that, of the 8 matches that were won, half had a combined run total in excess of 500 runs in the day and, in a fifth, 498 runs were scored. Allied to this, in the drawn game with the Midnight CC, 661 runs were scored. I do not know whether this run feast was due to good pitches, good batting or poor bowling – perhaps a combination of the three.

In the game that we won in one of our longest standing fixtures against the Grannies, the club scored 400 runs. I am not aware that such a total has been reached before, certainly in recent years. Tim Hawk scored 181 and James Redmayne 174, in that match and again these are remarkable performances.

We have traditionally produced the Clubs statistics divided into three categories for both batting and bowling. These categories have been “more than 5 innings”; “2-4 innings”; and 1 innings. So few members now come into the 5+ category that I think we will have to review this format in future years, as it has now become rather meaningless. Nevertheless, whatever method one uses, the indefatigable Fergus Boyd should not be denied plaudits for his remarkable bowling figures in terms of economy, number of wickets and that much used modern term “strike rate”.

The 2007 season will be the last during which we will have had the services of Piers Inkin as our Assistant/Fixtures secretary. Piers has carried out this fairly thankless task in exemplary manner for 11 years, with only the odd moment of irritation surfacing! He will continue to be involved with the Club as a Trustee and he has cleverly found a high class replacement in Fergus Boyd.

Before next season commences our oldest member, Col DNG Farquharson, who has lived for many years in New York, will have celebrated his 100th birthday on March 11th 2008. I sent him a Birthday Card from myself and the membership of the Club. Our next oldest member, Maj LB Alexander, is also due to reach his century this year, but neither our records, nor those of the OEA, have an address for him. If anyone is aware of his whereabouts, I would be most grateful if they would let me know.

CRICKETER CUP

In recent years I have had the pleasure of both watching and writing first hand about some notable performances in this competition. Sadly 2007 was a year when I can do neither, as I was unable to go to the first round and that was as far as we got. I have mentioned in this notice before, that the first round is, in many ways, the most difficult and something of a lottery, as we, along with others, seem to struggle to get our best players out.

I have heard second hand from a number of Rambler supporters who went to Sherborne. They all felt that we put up a disappointing performance and failed to adjust to a particularly slow and low pitch. I don't think the players would disagree.

A year to forget, but, as a result, the Captain and his team will be keener than ever to put matters right in 2008 when we have a difficult first round draw at Malvern – a place where I recall myself dropping Brian Richardson on 0 (albeit not a sitter). He went on to make 130!

I am delighted to report that Hugo Loudon will continue as captain.

The date of the first round is Sunday, June 15 and support is hugely appreciated by the players.

FUTURE TOURS

There are plans for the Club to descend on South Africa again. It is hoped that there will be sufficient interest for a 2 week tour to take place in March 2009, visiting Cape Town, Namibia and ending in Johannesburg. Regular playing members will be kept informed of the progress made and, if any member, whose playing days are in the past, is interested in a supporters role, they should let the Hon Secretary know.

LORD'S

The 2007 Harrow XI was one of the strongest that they have fielded since the Pigott/Fosh era of the mid '70s. There was much debate during the course of the day regarding the efficacy of the make up of the Harrow side. Apparently a number were beneficiaries of sporting scholarships and certainly there were some extremely accomplished players, some from overseas. I would hope that most people would consider this to be a matter for Harrow itself and it is most certainly not the job of other schools or, more particularly, their Old Boy clubs to tell them how to run their school. We must concentrate on producing sides to win regardless of the opposition.

Harrow batted first and soon lost Balance, who I had previously seen bat when he played for Derbyshire in a televised limited overs County match at the end of the previous

season. His demise brought Northeast to the wicket and he played beautifully for a well deserved century. Harrow ended up with 274 for 5 off their 50 overs, which proved to be too many for an albeit combative Eton side, who closed on 179 for 8 off their 50 overs.

The date for next year is Saturday June 14.

FINANCES

Last year's loss of £2,894 was turned into a surplus of £1,856. That single sentence does not tell all, as we were the beneficiaries of a very kind £3,000 Legacy from J O E Hood. Whilst in accounting terms it is correct, I am assured, to show this as income, it must not let us lose sight of the bigger picture which is that we made a "trading loss" and in a year when our Cricketer Cup expenses were low.

We have been very fortunate that for many years, and on many occasions, we have received legacies in Members' Wills and, perhaps, I could give further encouragement to members to continue this practice. However we must have an overall review of the way the Club is financed. Some years ago we gave up Annual Subscriptions in favour of Life Membership in order to save on administration. Whether our current level of Life Membership fee at £150 is sufficient, I am not sure. On the basis that a member could well enjoy 20 years cricket, perhaps, a higher figure could be justified. Certainly, compared to some other similar Clubs, it looks to be good value.

Members will note from the accounts that we continue to hold a stock of ties and sweaters. These are offered for sale at very advantageous prices compared to any retail outlet and I would strongly urge fathers of new members to use this facility by contacting the Treasurer. Surely the ideal Birthday or Christmas present!

CLUB DINNER

Our last dinner was held in 2004 and in recent times we have held these events every 4 years. The date for the 2008 dinner is **Thursday, October 30th**. It will be held at The Inner Temple where we have been looked after so well for our last three dinners. The Headmaster has kindly agreed to propose the health of Cricket.

Please put this date in your diary now.

RAMBLER HISTORY

I appreciate that this has been a long running saga. Christopher Horne has been keeping both John Farmer and myself updated regarding the work. In the early part of 2008 it looked as though real progress was being made, but, in early March, Christopher was admitted to hospital for some fairly major surgery. The original supporters of this project will be kept informed as matters become clearer.

OBITUARIES

I have had notification concerning 8 members who have died since the last notice. Only 3 of those were in the XI, one of these being the youngest. Ned Metaxa was in the XI for 3 years being a more than useful wicket keeper and he was captain in 1981. One way to judge the success of captains of the XI is by the number of members of their side who continue to play the game in earnest after they have left and more particularly whether they have supported the Ramblers. Ned's side had a very high number who did both and this leads one to think that he led a side that enjoyed itself under his command. He was almost certainly an even better footballer than he was a cricketer and won a blue for soccer at Cambridge. How many amateurs (or, indeed, professionals) have played at both Lord's and Wembley?

SMA Banister played under John Mann in the 1937 XI, while JMN Rankin played in the 1948 side under Tom Hare. Both Col RB Gosling and RVC Montgomerie-Charrington were leavers in 1933, but were not Rambler players of note. Maj IM Calvocoressi, who left in 1938, had a distinguished military career in the Scots Guards winning the MC in the Middle East in 1942.

EJ Frazer left in 1953 and, whilst not a particularly distinguished cricketer himself, was secretary of the Googlies CC, which was a most entertaining club to play for and against during the '60s and '70s.

Simon Pease was a great deal better known on the shooting field and salmon rivers than he was on the cricket field. He died while fishing the River Helmsdale last June.

Floreat Etona

PG Lowndes
President