

ETON RAMBLERS

NOTICE 1996

Congratulations to Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie on becoming President of MCC. It is very good to see a Rambler back in the job for the first time in eight years. He said at the time of his appointment that he hoped to influence the return of a true amateur spirit to a first-class game where other interests had come too much to the fore since the days when he had led Hampshire to the County Championship. He has set himself a daunting task, but all power to his elbow.

RESULTS

While still far from good, the 1996 results were much better than the previous year's - 11 wins in place of 5, against 14 losses in each case.

The individual performances were very similar to last year's, with Rory Macleay joining the number of those Ramblers who have finished a season with an average of over 100: I believe the last was Victor Cazalet in 1980. His nearest contenders, both in aggregate and average, were Jonathan Larken, Charlie Redmayne and Guy Dunning.

Tom Blake narrowly edged Andrew Hussey into second place in the bowling averages by virtue of conceding one less run; Tom Fleming was the leading wicket-taker, ahead of these two and Rupert Gouriet. It is good to see that 6 members achieved a bowling average below 20.

Of those who batted in less than five innings - this has long been the number required to qualify for the averages proper, just as to have bowled in five innings is the bowling requirement no less than eight members averaged 40 or more. Match managers should note their names and persuade them to play for the Club more often.

CRICKETER CUP

Our sad record of not surviving the first round since we won the Cup in 1992 has, I regret to say, continued for another year. We batted first against the Charterhouse Friars on Agar's and, thanks largely to a splendid stand of 102 between Rory Macleay and Tom Simpson, a newcomer to our team, and despite a horrible collapse near the end which gave one of the Charterhouse opening bowlers the remarkable figures of 5 for 18 from his 12 overs, our score of 202 for 9 looked pretty good when they were 1 for 2, 45 for 5 and even 91 for 6. But it was not to be and we only took one more wicket, with T Bristowe, who had only been included as a last-minute substitute, making a very good 97 not out at number 7 to win the match for Charterhouse with two overs to spare.

In 1997 we are playing the Radley Rangers in the first round at Eton on Sunday 1st June and, as usual, Rambler support will be very welcome.

We are most grateful to Michael Brooks, who has held the reins for three difficult years since John Barclay's retirement. He has decided to stand down as Captain and Rory Macleay has been appointed to take his place; we wish him all possible success.

LORD'S 1996

Both sides came to Lord's with formidable batting reputations and the most likely way of getting a positive result seemed to be with the help of a declaration. Eton won the toss

and, no doubt with this in mind, fielded first.

The early honours were about even with Harrow 117 for 4 shortly after lunch, but then an entertaining partnership of 85 between Norris and Gillions enabled Harrow to declare at 238 for 8, scored at just under 4 per over and aided by rather too many wides and no balls - 21 as against the 6 which Harrow later conceded. Bailey, with 5 for 44, was by some way Eton's most effective bowler.

The match is, thank goodness, still played under the laws of cricket and not under one-day rules, so it is not possible to judge the required scoring rate precisely, but the declaration meant that Eton would have to score at a little over 4 per over for victory, and many Ramblers in Q Stand felt that there was a good prospect of an exciting finish with Eton as slight favourites.

Three quarters of an hour later, however, Eton were 23 for 3 and the chance had gone. A partnership of 87 between Lea and Bailey ensured safety but meant that the evening session was less than compelling viewing.

Ramblers were still outnumbered by Wanderers, but the Q Stand arrangement seems to suit everyone and is going to continue. The date in 1997 is Friday 27th June.

RAMBLER ADDRESS LIST

Members will have noticed the booklet in this mailing, and the Hon. Sec. has asked me to thank the many Ramblers who sent back the slips so as to ensure its reasonable accuracy. We are indebted to Julian Jenkinson for funding this enterprise, and to the Hon. Sec. and his secretary, Deborah Lonsdale, for the hours of work in producing the text in a form which kept the printing costs within reason. It is hoped to have a regular up-date, perhaps every four or five years. Notification of errors and changes, particularly telephone numbers, will be gratefully received.

ETON & HARROW AT LORD'S SINCE 1805

Many of you will have received information through the post, perhaps rather more than once, about Robert Titchener-Barrett's book on the history of the Eton v Harrow match at Lord's. It has taken the author a great deal of research and can be purchased direct from him at 8 Lancaster Place, W8 5RL. It is full of facts and figures going back to the early days of the match. It is perhaps of rather more interest to those who played at Lord's than to those who did not, as each year's match gets a brief write-up; all in all a good addition to a cricket library.

OBITUARY

Ian Lomax (XI 1948/9) was one of the half-dozen best cricketers Eton has produced since the war: some would put it higher than that. He played for Wiltshire for many years, and, rather too late, for Somerset for part of a season; had he done this ten years earlier he would assuredly have been good enough to play for them for years - but I suspect that he would not have enjoyed regular first-class cricket which would have kept him away from his horses for far too long.

Rambler cricket was always near the top of his priorities, and he played whenever he could. He seldom missed what was then the 2-day match against the XI on the Fourth of June, but there was one year when he did miss it - because he was winning the Man of the Match Award for Wiltshire against Essex in the Gillette Cup on the first day - so he played against the XXII instead. He came in when the first wicket fell just after 12.00, and was enjoying a glass of beer in the Pavilion before 1.00 having scored a hundred in between. If Ian had not hit the ball so hard it would have been even quicker as he took a fancy to an

off-spinner and the ball had to be retrieved from the Slough Road 6 or 7 times in two overs - and this was before Dutch elm disease made that feat easier.

Ian was our first Cricketer Cup Captain and, once his playing days were over, he became the Chief Caterer for our home matches when he and his wife Joanna produced what were generally agreed to be the best lunches on the circuit.

Ian was a great friend of mine for many years and I could easily fill the whole of this Notice talking about him; let me just end by saying that when my brother died ten years ago the nicest letter I received was from Ian: in it he said that, if he were ever in a tight spot, Will was a chap he would want to have on his side. May I reciprocate that feeling now.

Robin Rudd (XI 1944/6, Captain 1946)

To mark the 50th anniversary of the return of the Eton and Harrow match to Lord's after the war Robin Rudd collected together all but two of the survivors of his XI, plus their wives, and including Rose Hare, Tom's widow, for a superb celebration dinner in Election Chamber in July. The Vice-Provost, George Mann and I were lucky enough to be invited as guests. At the end of a most memorable evening Robin (who was in terrific form and seemed to be in the best of health) and Alison were talking of having a repeat to mark the 60th anniversary; but two months later, having returned to his native Zimbabwe, he was dead. We saw him all too little in England over the years, but he was always a great supporter of the Ramblers, and has left us 2 Rambler sons.

Sam Spearing was Captain of the XXII in 1951. After Eton our paths rarely crossed; but those of us who played under him that summer long ago will remember Sam with affection and his bowling with respect.

Frank Instone used to turn out quite regularly for the Ramblers in Kent and Sussex until he was well into middle age; he was a delightful man, but by the time of his last match, against Ardingly on their Speech Day, no great cricketer. It was one of those days when Ken Boles had judged the cider position exactly right and had reduced the boys to 50-odd for 7, when he decided to put all nine fielders on the off side. After the predictable 5 balls down the leg side the sixth took the edge of no. 9's bat and went straight into, and out of, Frank's stomach at 4th or 5th slip. Those who remember Ken will be able to guess his reaction: perhaps surprisingly the fixture survived. Inevitably the boy went on to make a hundred.

FINANCE

As Michael Brooks told us at the Committee Meeting in December, and as members who study the enclosed accounts will be able to confirm, the finances are in a healthy state. It is a year or two since I mentioned this, but may I remind members that, apart from the skill of Michael and his predecessors, the main reason for this state of affairs is that a number of members, following Buns Cartwright's example, have left the Club a legacy in their wills. If any member has cause to change his will, or to make a new one, in anticipation of an event which we hope will be many years ahead, perhaps he would consider giving the Ramblers a modest mention?

The Committee feels that it is important to keep the cost of playing Rambler cricket, particularly to the younger members, as low as possible, and this is a painless way in which older members can help.

COMMITTEE

John Claughton has retired after ten years as Master in Charge and has therefore left the Committee. We are extremely grateful to him for the five years he served, and the general youthful enthusiasm which is to be found among Rambler players at present is a tribute to John's interest in the continuing progress of those who had recently been in the XIs he looked after. We welcome Simon Doggart, who has taken his place.

Business commitments have caused William Russell to stand down after five years as Hon. Asst. Sec., during which time he has organised our fixtures, for which I know that the Hon. Sec. has been extremely grateful. His place has been taken by Rory Macleay, to whom we extend a hearty welcome on joining the "team". It is no secret that Peter Lowndes has expressed a wish to stand down as Hon. Sec. in the not too distant future, and it is not impossible that promotion may come to Rory before long. But for now may I thank Peter for another year's splendid work on our behalf.

FLOREAT ETONA

Cedric Gunnery
President

January 1997.