

ETON RAMBLERS

NOTICE 2012

2012 Season

It is very distressing to report that half our fixtures during last season were cancelled. The vast majority of these were as a result of the ghastly weather during the whole season and we were no different to any other club in this respect. My sympathy goes out to those organising events from our Hon Secretary to Match Managers. Those of us who have run matches will know how depressing it is to have to ring round to cancel the game.

When we did take the field we seem to have been involved in relatively high scoring games. In 7 out of 19 games we scored over 250, once in a losing cause. There were some notable individual performances with Felix Hartley Russell making 150 against Home Park, and our 2 main wicket keepers, Ed Farley and George Deedes making 137 and 126 respectively against the XI and Hurlingham. They also top the batting averages. The bowling averages are headed by the Hon Secretary with 10 wickets at 19 apiece. Hubert Brown's 6 for 46 enabled us to have a rare win at St Cross against The Rifles.

The season ended with our sesquicentenary match against MCC on the Nursery Ground at Lord's. It was, perhaps, unfortunate that MCC requested a Limited Overs game as this gives less room for "manufacturing" a close game. MCC rightly produced a strong side and set about trying to win the game by as wide a margin as possible. Their 378 for 7 in 50 overs was never a realistic total for us to chase and thus, as a contest, the day was over at half time. Nevertheless Alex Loudon and troops made a valiant attempt to overhaul this huge total and we were most certainly not disgraced in getting to 248.

Cricketer Cup

There are those who feel that the draw for the Cricketer Cup should be seeded. I am not one of those even though it would have avoided us having to play the Old Malvernians in the first round after losing to them in last year's final. As it happens the final this year was contested by two sides who have not had a great deal of recent success – Shrewsbury (winners) and Harrow.

It seems that whenever we get to the final, we suffer a reaction in the first round the following year. 2012 was no exception. We never seemed to get out of first gear. It wasn't by any means a poor performance, but nor were there many highlights, except, and most notably, a splendid century by Ajay Sangha who seemed unaffected by the regular fall of wickets all around him. 224 for 7 was neither one thing nor the other, but it was unlikely to be sufficient against a very experienced batting line up. So it proved and we lost by 5 wickets.

We have been drawn to play against the Old Whitgiftians in the first round in 2013, on Sunday, June 16th at Eton.

Lord's

Eton won the toss and batted. Abbott and James got Eton off to a good start with some excellent timing off their legs. James was out for an attractive 43 and then Hayes and Abbott progressed very well making 72 and 83 respectively in a splendid partnership of 122. The second wicket fell at 216 when Abbott was dismissed and there then followed a slight collapse during a scoreboard failure which was clearly unsettling and occurred at a particularly unfortunate time in the Eton innings, when acceleration was required. The lower order was well marshalled by Roy and his 34 not out was a good effort enabling Eton to post a very decent total of 273 for 6. The only criticism of our innings was that we allowed Fosh to bowl a variety of full tosses and long hops without getting sufficiently punished. Mention must be made of White, the Harrow wicketkeeper, who was superb throughout.

White was out quite early to what turned out to be a brilliant catch at long leg by Trugwell, having initially misjudged it. Eton bowled tidily with MacDonagh 1 for 26 in 11 overs very much the pick. Bose batted very well, although giving two chances, one a difficult leg side stumping and the other a relatively straight forward catch at extra cover, before making his 100. Wickets started to fall fairly regularly and for much of the last 15 overs an Eton win looked the more likely outcome, but it was not to be and Harrow eventually won by 2 wickets in the last over.

This was a game that Eton could and possibly should have won. I felt that they played the better cricket overall, but didn't quite have the killer instinct when it mattered.

The match in 2013 will be at Lord's on Saturday 22nd June

Finances

I am delighted to report that our Treasurer has matters well under control and the Club's finances are in good order. The situation was further helped by a generous Legacy of £5,000 from Julian Jenkinson and perhaps this is an appropriate point to remind members how valuable to the Club such Legacies are.

The Eton Rambler and Agars Pavilion Fund

The overall Rambler Fund has taken a back seat during the last 12 months while the Agars Pavilion project has been under way. Suffice to say that we have just over £60,000 in the fund and one or two small projects are being considered. I will be writing further on this matter later in the year.

The required sum of £900,000 for the restoration of the Agars Pavilion has been raised and the work is well under way. It has been a rather more complicated project than originally envisaged, but all concerned are very excited by the proposed end product. Work should be completed by early May and there will be a formal opening to which all contributors will be invited. The OEA office will be organising this aspect and it is hoped that we will have an inter club T20 match.

The Dinner

Some 165 members congregated at Lord's after our match against MCC on September 10th. The top tier of the Pavilion proved to be a magnificent setting for the pre dinner drinks and where better than the Long Room to hold such a dinner. The food and service provided by MCC were excellent and we were well entertained after dinner by The Provost, who proposed the health of cricket, and Matthew Fleming who replied in a style reminiscent of his batting.

Obituaries

I am delighted to report that we have lost remarkably few members since my last Notice. One of our senior members was **Brigadier Sir Jeffrey Darrell** who left in 1937. He was a very distinguished soldier joining the Coldstream Guards in 1939. During the early part of the war he was part of the Coats Mission which was responsible for the safety of the Royal Family during the war. He subsequently won the MC at the Normandy landings.

Michael Naylor-Leyland was also a distinguished soldier joining the Life Guards after leaving Eton in 1943 and being awarded the MC in Palestine in 1947. He was also well known in the three day eventing world winning team gold and individual bronze medals in the 1955 European Championships.

Sir Marcus Worsley who left Eton in 1946 spent most of his life in public service and running the family Estate at Hovingham where he followed in his father's footsteps by entertaining the Ramblers for many years on the first match of our Yorkshire tour. He was MP for Keighley and then for Chelsea and Westminster.

Lord Oaksey left Eton in 1947 and was best known in the Steeplechasing world as jockey, broadcaster and journalist. He would never have claimed to be a great cricketer, but he was a notable footballer, playing a telling part in a famous Eton Arthur Dunn Cup side that reached the finals.

Tim Pugh was a stylish games player in many spheres and played for the Ramblers very regularly in the 1960s and 70s. He was, perhaps a better Real Tennis player and liked to be reminded that he had led Eton 2 to the finals of the Henry Leaf Cup.

Sir Timothy Kimber left Eton in 1954 and was a true Lancastrian for all his life, serving as High Sherriff of Lancaster and President of the Lancashire Wildlife Trust.

Floreat Etona

PG Lowndes
President