

ETON RAMBLERS

NOTICE 1988

RESULTS AND STATISTICS

| | <i>Matches</i> | <i>Won</i> | <i>Drawn</i> | <i>Tied</i> | <i>Lost</i> | <i>Abandoned or not played</i> |
|----------------|----------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 1988 | 61 | 15 | 13 | — | 16 | 17 |
| 1987 | 57 | 19 | 10 | — | 14 | 14 |
| 1986 | 66 | 13 | 14 | — | 15 | 24 |

For the third year running the Summer produced very poor cricketing weather. In spite of that the Ramblers had a reasonable year with no particular triumphs or disasters to highlight.

The number of matches Abandoned or Not Played partly reflects the weather, but more sadly that we had to cancel the Border Tour because we could not get a side together.

Richard Compton-Burnett headed the Batting Averages with 57.25. His performance is better, I think, than the figures show. Peter Baring who was so close behind, managed, very cannily, to be Not Out in four of his five innings. A similar situation arose between Bruce Powell and Andy Watt in positions 3 and 4, with Andy four times Not Out in six innings. However, a glance at the Bowling Averages will show that he was keeping his energies for other things. Bruce Powell's renaissance as a run scorer, which started in 1987, flowered even further this year. He was the Clubs highest run-getter (including one of the three centuries scored for the Club), displacing our Hon. Secretary who has had a monopoly of that honourable position for a quite a few years.

Among those who batted in fewer than five innings were a number of good solid performances, and a special mention for a century by Julian Jenkins, a recent recruit.

For the second year running Anthony de Grey heads the Bowling Averages, having clearly decided that cunning, displayed in relatively few overs, is more rewarding than his former role of a willing Work-Horse who would bowl all day. Andy Watt, Tom Parnell and Tom Blake, the next three names on the list, all took 20 plus wickets.

It is interesting to note that in 1987 only one bowler (Richard Bluett) bowled more than 100 overs, and that only by a small margin. In 1988 four bowlers did so, some by a substantial margin.

Amongst those who bowled in fewer than five innings three Ramblers achieved 10 wickets a piece (not in one innings!). This is a commendable feat. In 1987 no bowler in the Under Five Innings category reached double figures.

Although, our Hon. Secretary does not feature as a bowler, in the way he used to, I would draw your attention to his performance behind the stumps in the Catching Figures.

I have already mentioned that there were three centuries for the Club. There were four against one of which was in the Wellington Cricketer Cup Match.

There were no "spectacles" either for or against.

CRICKETER CUP

We were convincingly defeated by Wellington in the Second Round, but somehow the memory of that defeat does not stay in my mind as clearly as the sweet revenge of our First Round victory over Harrow — a reversal of the 1987 result.

Our Harrow match took place on Agar's on a dull day with a wicket damp from over-night rain. Quick scoring was not to be expected and Eton, having chosen to bat, made 169 for 9 in their allotted span. John Rawlinson, with a careful 66, was the cornerstone on which a score of that size was built. When we fielded the wicket was slightly faster, but never really difficult. Fortunately, Matt Fleming, who opened the bowling with Geoff Dean was on his day, as his figures of 11-4-23-4 show. Harrow wickets fell steadily, and it was left to Mark James to give Etionian supporters a small attack of butterflies with a forceful innings, ended at 44 by a ball that lifted a little.

At Wellington the conditions were very different — a very hot day and a fast wicket. Wellington chose to bat and made 237 for 7, of which Reynolds, who was to keep wicket for Oxford a few weeks later, made a splendid 143 Not Out. His energy was exceptional. On this enervating day he was running short singles as quickly at the end of his innings as at the beginning. In a limited over match, if someone in the first innings makes a score of that size, the only hope for the side batting second is for one of their batsman to do the same sort of thing. Unfortunately, none of our batsman ever got really set. We were all out for 129 and only Rory Macleay and Harry Rawlinson looked, for a few fleeting minutes, as though they might be in for a big score.

This match was marked by what Rambler Twitchers would now regard as a pleasant and very rare sighting. By the kind efforts of Cedric Gunnery, both the surviving Hedley brothers appeared on the boundary line. Mentally they showed some signs of their former internal fires, but unusually, on past experience, got through the day without fratricidal strife, but physically they were a sad and distressing sight: poor Kenneth in a wheel-chair and Tony just not in one.

In 1989 we have a tough draw. In the First Round on Sunday, June 4th we play Charterhouse on their ground (Ramblers living south of London, please note). If we are clever enough to defeat them, we go to Oundle to meet the present Cup (or Jeraboam) Holders.

Our Hon. Treasurer has intimated that he no longer wishes to be considered for Captain of our Cricketer Cup side. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his Services as Captain for 4 years, and as a player for some years longer than that. We have been fortunate in that Jonny Barclay, no longer required by Sussex for every Sunday, has agreed to succeed him. May I wish him all luck; he has certainly a baptism of fire ahead of him in his first year.

ETON v. HARROW

The match of 1988 was, with one important difference, almost a replica of the 1987 encounter. The important difference was that in 1987 Harrow won the toss: in 1988 they were put in, which perhaps offers a little more excuse for their determination to do nothing to risk defeat.

In 1988 (1987 figures in brackets) Harrow batted till 4 o'clock (4.10) and declared at 215 for 7 (197 for 6), achieved in 80 overs (74) at a run rate of 2.7 per over (2.7). Eton had batting time for only 48 overs (44) and reached a total of 197 for 6 (169 for 5) at a run rate of 4.1 per over (3.8).

In 1988 Boralessa once again opened the Harrow innings. Within a quarter of an hour he showed, alas, that in the past year he had, like the Bourbon courtiers of Louis XVIII, 'learnt nothing and forgotten nothing'. He batted for three and a quarter hours for 42 runs, of which 8 (a snick through the slips and a boundary overthrow) were entirely fortuitous.

Around him the Harrow Captain Keey (37 – runs, not age) showed mild signs of aggression. Bourne batted very well for 67 before being exceptionally well caught by Petre at sort-of-midwicket, but it was left to Raper (24 not out) to show the only real signs of urgency by an Harrovian batsman.

There was much to admire in Eton's performance in the field. They bowled their overs quickly, they fielded and threw very well, and there were three very good catches. The burden of the bowling fell, as in 1987, on Erith and Fleming, with 3 wickets a piece. Fleming in particular with 30 overs and 10 maidens for 64 runs did a very fine job.

The Eton innings did not get the good start which was clearly needed for their task. It was entirely due to a third wicket partnership of 123 (in 100 minutes) between St. George and Carr that Eton got within striking distance of the Harrow total. Both batsman showed urgency tempered with intelligence, and the running between the wickets was a pleasure to watch. When they were parted 60 runs were still needed in 7½ overs, and although St. George kept trying, it was too much of a good thing.

The Harrow bowling was reasonably steady, but their fielding and throwing, which is normally, I regret to say, rather better than that of Eton, was on this occasion far worse. There were also two surprising missed catches which might have affected events considerably. I must confess to a certain Schadenfreude, when the second and easier miss was put on the ground by Boralessa.

The date of Lord's is becoming more and more the plaything of some very capricious deities – the Authorities at Lord's and the Examiners! A week earlier than normal in 1988, in 1989 the match is to take place on Saturday, June 10th – a week before the Eton v. Winchester.

However, I hope that we shall have our Rambler Box once again, to which Ramblers, wives, and girl friends will be welcome.

FINANCE

Last year I reported a surplus of approximately £1,000, due to a variety of favourable factors. A quick glance at this year's accounts will show a surplus of some £2,800. This substantial jump should not encourage people to think that the Club is "in the money" or that they are being overcharged for playing. A second glance will show that £2,700 of this surplus came from the profit on Redemption of a Gilt Edged Stock held in the Cartwright Legacy. On running costs only, the surplus for the year was about £100, and we might marginally have been in deficit had the summer been brighter and fewer matches been cancelled, in which case, Umpiring and Scoring costs would have been lighter.

However, no cause for alarm, I think.

The Cartwright Trustees have agreed to make a contribution of £500 – £750 towards the purchase of covers for the wickets on Agar's. If there were any covers before, I suspect that they were presented by King Henry VI.

OBITUARY

I have to record the deaths of ten Ramblers who died in 1988, and of two who died early in 1989.

The Duke of Newcastle, OBE: As a new boy in the Michaelmas half of 1925, I had, of course, to learn the various House Colours, my way round Eton, and the names of various local dignitaries. When it came to the Captain of the XI – H.E.H.P.C. Hope – I remember being amazed that any God – he was, of course, one of them – should require so many initials. Naturally his name and initials have stuck in my mind ever since, long after more important things have been forgotten. I had no idea that in the natural course of things he would become a Duke.

He was in the XI in 1925 and 1926 – Captain in the latter year. He went to Cambridge but did not get a Blue. He joined the R.A.F., was commanding a Squadron by 1938 and served with the R.A.F.