

ETON RAMBLERS

NOTICE

RESULTS AND STATISTICS

		<i>Matches</i>	<i>Won</i>	<i>Drawn</i>	<i>Lost</i>	<i>Abandoned or Not played</i>
1981	...	67	16	14	22	15
1980	...	67	16	17	18	16

These two rather similar sets of figures cover some quite substantial differences, and there were moments when the 1981 results looked as though they might have turned out a great deal worse than in fact they did. The season started, it will be remembered, with a very wet May followed by a wet June. Many of our more proficient performers had good reasons (other than the rain) for being unable to play early on, and our season started very badly. Of the first 20 matches, 11 were rained off, 7 were lost, 1 was drawn and, on June 20th, we recorded our first win of the season against R.M.A. Sandhurst; and it is with both pleasure and relief that I can record a better end than start to the season. Amongst both Wins and Losses, there were some very close results: for instance, the last two matches of the Border Week, where I happened to be present, on each occasion we won in the last over of the day.

Once again, Peter Lowndes scored most runs for the Club—623 against 770 in 1980: only two other batsmen scored over 300 runs (Palmer and Leonard), and James Leonard regained the position he has so often held before, of playing most innings for the Club:—23 innings, with Anthony de Grey, primarily a bowler, proxime accessit with 19 innings. It is hard to keep Bay Hodgson out of the news: he had a very remarkable batting record: 7 innings, 9 runs, 8 of these scored in one inninngs and 5 times not out.

Amongst those who batted in less than five innings, we had two centurions—Danny Russell and Tom Pugh, and four batsmen with averages of 40 or over. Among those who batted in only one innings are a number of distinguished names who, I trust, will be able to play more often for the Club in 1982.

Of our bowlers, the two super work horses of the year were Theo Fennell and Anthony de Grey: each bowled over 250 overs, and were our leading wicket takers (Fennell 47 and de Grey 33). Mervyn Dunnington-Jefferson, James ("Piggy") McLeod and Peter Lowndes all bowled over 100 overs each.

Of those who bowled in less than 5 innings, special mention should be made of Tim Usher who played in the Border Week: 44 overs and 14 wickets (9 of them in one innings) for an average of 9.5: would that we saw more of him in the Rambler colours.

CRICKETER CUP

I have to report that, once again—we were defeated in the First Round, by the Old Merchant Taylors—and it only remains to hope that we can do better in 1982. Our opponents won the toss, and against the usual pattern in these encounters, decided to bat on a very wet Agar's wicket: it was a wise decision. They scored 133 for 9 and the Ramblers were all out for 67. We certainly had the worst of the wicket, which got quite disagreeable in the latter part of the afternoon, and we certainly lacked (for good reasons) some players who would almost certainly have been selected had they been available—but excuses can always be

found. We are to play the Sherborne Pilgrims on Sunday, May 30th at Eton and we must hope to do a great deal better than in 1981.

Having said this, I would again like to thank Peter Lowndes for his efforts as Captain: one day things will come right, which will be a pleasure for him—and the Ramblers.

ETON v. HARROW

Lords 1981 could, for supporters of both sides, almost be described in the terms of that old definition of War—"Long periods of Boredom punctuated by moments of intense Fear".

Eton started aggressively and put Harrow in to bat on what looked a goodish wicket: with the score at 11 for 3 (Harrovians' moment of intense Fear), the decision looked a good one and there was every excuse for Harrow to score slowly. The next wicket fell at 105, as a result of sensible batting by Ford and Patrick, but the rate of scoring did not thereafter materially increase. Harrow declared at tea time at 209 for 8, having taken 90 overs to make the runs. At close of play, Eton were a comfortable 102 for 3, having also scored rather slowly. However, disaster came on Sunday. Eton were all out for 126, the last 7 wickets falling for 15 runs. With a lead of 83, the Harrovian batsmen showed no initial signs of wanting to get on with things, and it was left to Haggas to introduce some sense of urgency: they declared at 148 for 2, having taken 49 overs to get there. This left Eton 1½ hours, plus 20 overs (say 45 overs) to get the runs, a rate so much in excess of anything hitherto achieved by either side, that rather understandably the batsmen played for safety and the game ended with Eton 94 for 1.

Birch-Reynardson batted extremely well for Eton, scoring 50 in each innings: obviously a performer of class. Haggas, Ford and Patrick batted well for Harrow. The bowling on both sides was tidy without being inspired. Eton caught some splendid catches in Harrow's first innings, and the Harrow fielding throughout was very good.

I am sure that many Ramblers will be aware of the changes for Lords in 1982. The Match is being brought forward a week, so that it will occur in, rather than after, the Half/Term. It will, however, be only a one day match. I welcome the change of date, as I hope it will mean more "Boy-support" for both sides, and, particularly, for Eton, whose young supporters have been conspicuous by their absence in these recent years when the match has taken place just after the end of the Half.

I hope that, in due course, it will be possible to re-instate the two-day fixture.

There will, I hope, once again be a Rambler Box at Lord's: the date—Saturday, July 3rd, 1982.

FINANCES

Accounts are difficult to write about, unless they go wrong, which, I am happy to say, they did not in 1981. We owe thanks to our Hon. Treasurer for the unobtrusive way in which he achieves the desired results.

In 1981, we made another bulk purchase of 200 cricket balls (approximately 3 years supply). After allowing for this Capital item and the annual provision to write off the purchase over three years, the Receipts and Expenses Account was almost exactly in balance. Expenses have, in these inflationary days, been very adequately contained, without, I hope, any noticeable drop in standards. To some extent, this is due to those kind souls—Ramblers and others—who entertain our

players, either by providing the match lunch or by putting up some of our sides before and after the game. The Club owes them a considerable debt of gratitude.

For all these reasons, I think that I can say that, without being a rich Club, there does not seem to be any ground for worry about finances at the present time.

OBITUARY

Shortly after last year's Notes went out, I received a gentle reproof from Portugal to the effect that I had made no mention of the death of Nico Llewellyn-Davies. The reason, as I explained to my correspondent, was that Nico had died just after the Final Proof of the Notes had been put to bed with the printers, and any addition to them at that stage would have caused undue delay. May I make amends this year. Nico was in the distinguished XI of 1922 but did not play serious cricket later on. A publisher by profession, he was a delightful human being with a good sense of humour and a pleasant streak of unorthodoxy in his outlook. He tended to dress rather like a character from *The Boy Friend*, or *Brideshead Revisited*, and I remember that, shortly after the war, he possessed the only "Boater" in captivity, with an I.Z. ribbon. During his last years, he shared a house with his brother-in-law Hilary Bray, who predeceased him by a few months. He had an unusual claim to fame. J. M. Barrie was a friend of his parents and made up a series of short stories to entertain the Llewellyn-Davies brothers and their sister, which he eventually put together and published as "Peter Pan".

Of the 23 other Ramblers who died during the year, a number played at Lord's. J. P. Dewhurst (1920), T. A. Pilkington (1925), M. S. de C. Ward (1926, 1927), J. H. Cripps (1933). John Dewhurst, "Ackie" Pilkington and Mick Ward were all active Ramblers for many years. John Dewhurst principally in the North West where, on and off the field, he was a lynch pin of those marvellous Cheshire weeks before and just after the war. Ackie Pilkington, who enjoyed "the pulling of the leg" more than most, but in such a kindly way that seldom, if ever, was offence taken. Incidentally, he did not actually play at Lord's: he had been awarded his XI, but was staying out at the crucial time and his place was taken by J. P. T. Boscawen who justified his selection with a stalwart 66. Ackie has more than done his duty to posterity by bequeathing us three Rambler sons. Mick Ward was a tall and rather slow left hand bowler—and very good—and a good bat into the bargain. I always thought that, had opportunity offered, he might well have made quite a name for himself at least at County Cricket level. He was a most useful man to find on a Rambler side—off the field as well as on—because, behind his rather quiet exterior, there was a strong sense of humour, and a certain ingenuity in the practical joke area—though here he was not quite in the Tom Foley class.

Amongst our other losses are some who, although not great cricketers or active Ramblers, gained great distinction in other areas. Lord Boyle of Handsworth, Politician, Administrator, Educationalist and Musician. Sir Randle Feilden, Soldier and, subsequently, Senior Steward of the Jockey Club and Chairman of the Turf Board for many years. "Ruby" Holland-Martin, in spite of great physical disabilities, led an active and distinguished life in the City and was a devoted and successful breeder of National Hunt horses. And perhaps on a slightly lower level, Colonel V. S. Laurie, a man of outstanding courtesy who last attended (on horseback) a meet of his local Foxhounds when he was over eighty; and Michael Crichton-Stuart who, in spite of great disabilities from his war wounds, did a tremendous job in restoring his house, Falkland Palace. Perhaps last, but not least,

in this category, Brian Watson Hughes, a very loyal Rambler, who was very generous to the Club over a number of years.

It is a tradition of these Notes to give honourable mention to the most Senior Rambler who has died. On this occasion, I have, therefore, to record the name of Sir Richard Brooke, Bart. I never had the pleasure of meeting him; he was born in 1888, and it is a sobering thought to realise that he left Eton only a year before our late lamented President.

Since the end of last year, we have suffered two further losses, both of them so well known to many Ramblers—for very different reasons—that they compel mention.

The first, Lord Cornwallis, who might well be described as “Mr. Kent”. His home, his work, his play, and his many distinguished public services were all in, or connected with, his County. He did not achieve the XI at Eton but, after his return from World War I, he played cricket for Kent for six years, and was Captain from 1924–26. He was also one of that select band of Ramblers who, in their day, were President of M.C.C.

The second, Major George Horton-Fawkes, who, like Lord Cornwallis, died in his 90th year. After Eton (Field but not XI), he joined the 60th Rifles and returned to Eton as Adjutant, O.T.C. from 1919–21. When he retired from the Army, he came back again (1933) as a Master and stayed till 1942. He taught French and German—I believe in a very idiosyncratic way. He was also, during World War II, a locum tenens Housemaster for one of his younger colleagues who had gone to the Forces. It is reputed that, at the end of the first week of the Half in which he assumed these duties, he came into Chambers and said of his House to a group of colleagues “Ah, I think I have got them under control”. This was a claim that the proper incumbent never made for himself either before the War, or afterwards when he had returned. He was a dear and lovable man, and only four years ago was corresponding with me, expressing regret that he was too frail to manage our last Rambler Dinner.

RAMBLER DINNER

I would remind members that this Dinner, last held in October 1978, will take place on OCTOBER 19th—TUESDAY—1982. I hope that the date will be put in many diaries without more ado. Once again, it will be at the Savoy, and I shall expect a good turn out. Full details will be circulated in due course.

RAMBLER BOOKS

Since the death of our late President, who kept all the Rambler Books (and other remarkable memorabilia) in indescribable confusion in his flat, there have been discussions as to what should now happen to them. I have been in negotiation with the Powers That Be at Eton, who have very kindly agreed to give the Books house room in College Library. I hope that Ramblers will agree that this is a very happy solution. The last two or three Books will, of course, continue to come round to matches in their special case, but the older volumes will be well and safely looked after, and reasonably available to anyone who has good grounds for wanting access.

FLOREAT ETONA

J. N. HOGG,