



Past and Present Nr. 6 - 1997

James Dean was one, Joe Gribble is another. The last time Joe set foot on a fives court was in the final of the 1996 Winchester Fives tournament, played on his home courts at Sedbergh, where he and his partner lost honourably to Hebden and Fuller. Ten months later, here he was again, adding to the legend. First of all a quick game up to 11, with Joe garnering four points. When the d'Ancona brothers then pointed out in suitably caustic fashion that he had to play up to 15, Joe went back on court against the ever-running Chris Caroe and, cheered on by a gathering crowd of Sparrows and their loved ones, fought his way to 15-14. When Chris, marooned on the front wall in pursuit on a drop shot, presented Joe with a chance to finish it all with a crisp left-hand volley, Joe's kind nature got the better of him, he lolloped the ball airily towards the back wall and allowed Chris to remain in the rally. 'Killer' Caroe duly gobbled up the opportunity to pick up two more points and win the game for second time. With fifteen years to run on Joe's singles contract, what more is there in store for us in future years? The stuff of Hollywood.

Boules Trivia: It was Philip Deane (Dulwich and Emmanuel) who represented Great Britain in a team of 3 in the World Pétanque Championships in 1979 - and came 8th, a position which no other Great Britain Pétanque team has since surpassed.

Paddy d'Ancona had magnanimously inserted himself at Number One for the Singles, as befits a man who is playing himself into the record books. Congratulations to Paddy on winning his first senior title, the South West Doubles, with David Hebden, as well as the Under 25 Doubles with Ben Taberner, Paddy's 5th win and Ben's 4th. With all this high-class competition under his belt, it was no surprise that Paddy was carrying a sore shoulder, but he was still far too steady for Ed Hikmet. When it came to soreness, though, no one could touch Mick d'Ancona, who won the gratitude of the match manager and admiration of his elder brother for taking on a singles match against Charlie Scobie, the Captain. Mick had barely trained all year, just the occasional dash from his desk to the bus, and yet there he was, contributing points to the Past's cause and ensuring that the Present didn't go to the pub for lunch with too ir retrievable a lead. Mick is likely to be offered a contract even more attractive than Joe's.

Harold Chase it was who came to watch in 1996 and could recall the 1935 and 1936 teams' full names, initials and colleges. Fittingly it was he who then later unveiled the commemorative Honours Boards which Mike Mills has commissioned to decorate the Oundle Fives courts. These boards, listing players for Cambridge and for Oxford, contain some very distinguished names indeed.

The fourth singles is liable to figure in the Trivia section in a few years' time, as Robin Thompson, post-graduate and unaffiliated, stepped in at the last moment to play freshman Ben Thomas, thus becoming the first known player to play for the Past before playing for the

Present. We hope that Robin may yet become eligible to play for Cambridge before he moves on to teach at another university. Robin too did his bit in keeping the undergraduates' lead to manageable proportions. The Doubles players gathering at The Ship were not too surprised or concerned to hear that they were 15 points adrift.

Exhibition Match: While the players lunched, an exhibition match took place between Simon Kemp and his young son. Simon had last played 13 years ago before going off to sew bits of limbs back on to All Blacks, and his son is 3½. Spectators said that Simon showed promise. The Derby Mercia look forward to seeing the old Kemp skills in action at Denstone over the coming months.

And talking of the Derby Mercia: Rob Cleave has taken a break from Fives for a few months to concentrate on his umpteenth completion of the London Marathon. He's returning to Fives in April though: "It's easier on the knees."

It is traditional, of course, that the Past claw their way back in the Doubles. To this end the Match Manager always calls upon experience. Enter Professor David Arnold, who has played in more Present and Past teams than anyone. As Andy Pringle had not quite arrived (he was throwing a Lotus Elan round the Northamptonshire lanes for the hell of it) David stepped on court with Tim Wilson to amass a bonus of 6 points against Charlie Scobie and Sam Jones. Elsewhere though it was not going so well for the Past. Wilkinson and Wilkinson finished up 10 down against Townley and Townley; Gribble and d'Ancona dropped 5 against Hikmet and Thomas; David Cameron and Bob Dolby were 6 down to Caroe and Caroe (when did we ever have so many twins in this match?!). Suddenly a deficit of 15 after the Singles became 30 at the turn. David Barnes, practising for his task as referee at the Varsity Match a week later by keeping the score at Oundle, looked glum; it was 10 years since the Past had lost.

Record Trivia: Which member of the Past team in 1996 played six times, always victoriously, for the VIII and twice for the Sparrows, losing both times? It was, of course, that man Arnold.

The Match Manager departed after the first round of doubles to lay the table at Magdalene. Andy Pringle stepped in for him to partner David Cameron. Perhaps all would now change, as Andy is known not only for his prowess as an Executioner but also for his semi-professional football skills and fitness. Alas, it was not to be: another 15 points dribbled away, and another 13 next door, where Paddy and Joe were feeling the toll of playing in both Singles and Doubles. Tim and Dave gave a few away too against the Townley brothers. Only Wilkinson *père* (50 that very day!) *et fils* came up trumps, 4 points to the good against Charlie and Sam. And thus the Present recorded their first win since 1987 - and by a comfortable margin too.

Police Trivia: Rustom Irani is the Nigel Mansell - aka Special Police Constable.

The players and scorer were joined in The Pickerel and then in the Parlour by Barry Trapnell, Norman Reddaway, John Redfern, Richard Thomas, Chris Metcalfe, Dennis Silk, Alan Taylor, Peter Ingram, David Beevers, Mike Allen, Simon Bevan, Richard Jefferson, David Hares, Andrew Lewis, John Chapman-Andrews, Peter Cameron, Don Ellwood, Tony Murley, Alan Matthews, Simon Kemp, Martin Gee and, finally, Ben Taberner, who had been re-routed off the M-something-or-other and arrived only in time for the venison. Illness and unfortunate events had prevented John Holroyd, Dickie Clarke, John Pretlove and Ian

Jackson from joining us as they had intended. Somehow or other every VIII since 1938 was represented except for 1958, 1970 and 1975.

Clerical Trivia: It was Bob Short who wrote a letter to *The Independent* in February 1995 about the unangelic nature of rebel leader Marcos and the Zapatistas.

When everyone sat down in Ramsay Hall Tony Murley triumphantly announced that he had guessed four of the five courses on the menu. If the make-up of the menu has now taken on such cult proportions, next year we shall conduct a sweepstake on the number of whitebait on Tony's plate. For ardent students of the menu, there will also be an appropriate prize (not a raspberry) for the first person guessing correctly which berries will accompany the *crème brûlée* next year. A small clue: since 1990 the pattern has been raspberries, blackberries, raspberries, blackberries, raspberries and, this year, blackberries.

Whitebait trivia: Does anyone have a copy of the menu from the year when Jock was feeling revolutionary and omitted whitebait from the menu? Was it Soft Roe he replaced it with?

No guests this year at Dinner. But moving and encouraging words from Barry on the progress of the courts. Plans for a project involving a court games centre on the Grange Road site had passed successfully through two Cambridge committees and were next due for perusal by the Building Committee. One hardly needs to be familiar with the nature of the Byzantine Empire or to be a student of Kafka to know that it is hard for Barry, as a person standing outside the University, to penetrate the proceedings of the various bodies involved in making our dreams come true, but there does seem to be movement in a forward direction. To be Captain at such a time is both a misery and a challenge, and Charlie Scobie deserves much credit for keeping morale high. Warden Silk, who sat next to his erstwhile charge at dinner, beamed knowingly as Charlie talked of the difficulties of combining serious studies with the task of transporting players to practise and play matches at Bedford Modern and Oundle. Barry's final words concerned Jock: As we run up to the 50th Past versus Present in 1999, was it perhaps not time, for various reasons, to commemorate his colossal role in promoting Cambridge Rugby Fives by calling the dinner which follows the Past versus Present Match 'The Jock Burnet Dinner'? The suggestion met with all-round approval and thus next year you will receive an invitation, penned in Jock's customary words, to play in the Match and attend the Dinner which will now bear his name.

Fantasy Fives: no takers. We'll stick to the real stuff!

This year we have lost three former Sparrows, strangely all three of them Haileyburians. Firstly **Peter Mitton** (Queens') who played in 1960 and 1961. He had been suffering from cancer for some time and wrote each year of his hope of attending the Dinner once he got fit. Secondly **Ronnie Childs** (Clare), who played in 1938 and 1939. In his later life he was Joint Headmaster of the now defunct Stone House Preparatory School in Broadstairs. And Thirdly **Barrie Darewski** (Clare; played 1935, 1936 and 1937), an enormously gifted sportsman who played Hockey for England in 1948. He was Mentioned in Despatches while on active service in Italy; his career was variously in music publishing, variety acting, advertising, film-making and television; from 1973 until 1986 he was Secretary to the General Council and Registrar of the British School of Osteopathy, later Secretary of the Osteopathic Educational Foundation, for which work he was appointed CBE in 1988. He was clearly a

greatly admired and liked man, and - a future item for the Trivia this! - he was named after his godfather, the playwright J.M. Barrie.

[One of the sadnesses of Barrie Darewski's death was that he died without known relatives and his estate was administered by a school friend, who found a home for Barrie's hockey photographs with the Surbiton Hockey Club but consigned the photograph of the 1938 CURFC VIII to the skip. This prompted me to start a collection of team photographs before more went missing permanently. These are now to be seen on this website. - Ed.]

Next year's Match will be the 50th contest and the occasion will mark the founding of the Sparrows in 1949. A mammoth gathering of Sparrows, their wives and their loved ones, should surely take place that year.

Correspondence gratefully received and enthusiastically answered!
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See next page for scorecard of the Varsity match 1997

CAMBRIDGE v. OXFORD 1997
Saturday, February 15th at St. Paul's School

Cambridge

Oxford

Singles

BJ Thomas (St. Paul's & Fitzwilliam)	lost to MT Cavanagh (Bedford Modern & Balliol)	4-15
CK Scobie (Radley & Magdalene)	lost to T Stock (St. Dunstan's & St. Peter's)	2-15
CW Caroe (Eastbourne & Pembroke)	lost to AHS Booth (Sedbergh & Christ Church)	7-15
EJ Hikmet (Eastbourne & Emmanuel)	lost to PM Lord (St. Paul's & Trinity)	5-15

18-60

Doubles

Fabes and Collier	v. Cavanagh and Booth	10-15
		8-15
	v. Lord and Elfick	6-15
		11-15
Caroe and TD Caroe (Eastbourne & Pembroke)	v. Lord and BR Elfick (Bradfield & Exeter)	3-15
		1-15
	v. Cavanagh and Booth	6-15
		9-15
Scobie and ES Jones (Eastbourne & Emmanuel)	v. Stock and EW Brooke (Eastbourne & Magdalen)	8-15
		10-15
	v. Harrison and McManus	8-15
		6-15
WA Townley (St. Paul's & Clare) and JB Townley (St. Paul's & Trinity)	v. JT Harrison (Merchant Taylors' & Balliol)	15-0
	J McManus (Tonbridge & Merton)	15-11
	v. Stock and Brooke	8-15
		13-15
		137-221

Cambridge lost by 155-281

Cambridge were unable to raise a Sparrows IV to play the Beavers.