



Past and Present Nr. 18

Next year's Past v. Present: Saturday, February 13th 2010 – put it in your diary NOW!
Boyz alone, I'm afraid, but it won't be long before we have ladies again!

The Past versus Present: There's never any guarantee that Fives events will get off the ground on time – keys to the courts left in Cambridge; Bev and co. stranded on the M11; wrong kind of engine (clapped out) in the car; major fire at Buncefield – so it was good to see the lads from CURFC at Oundle champing at the bit well before 11 am this year. First to arrive to confront them was Number One, Andy Pringle, up from London; then Brian Elfick hot-foot from his circuit of parish churches in Norfolk; followed by Malcolm Reid, who euro-starred in from Amiens, where he has been teaching *les demoiselles du lycée Edouard Gand* to speak English with a gentle Edinburgh lilt. These three could at least get going while we awaited the arrival of Iain de Weymarn, who, as it turned out, had been delayed advising Mervyn King on how to solve the global banking crisis. It happened to be an Open Day at Oundle, so there were plenty of passing spectators for the President to explain the game to, and Steve Davies (see photo below with Andy Pringle) turned up to remind himself of the days when he and Adam Hyde were a top pair on the Doubles circuit.



By the time Iain got on court, big-hitting Andy had gained a 15-5 win over Cambridge Captain Chris Jones, no mean feat given the level of fitness achieved this year by Chris in his other capacity of Captain of Emmanuel Boats, and Brian had managed a 15-8 victory over Jacob Brubert, winner of the National Schools Doubles a few months earlier. Malcolm renewed amicable hostilities with Alqahir Ladak, suffering a 15-8 defeat and a massive bruise on his unaccustomed right hand (“No courts in Picardy, Bob”) in the process. With the Past 10 points to the good, Iain promptly took up the mantle of Joe Gribble and dug in for a hour-long attritional battle with freshman Charlie Dewhurst, making sure that the increasingly hungry spectators got their money's worth and the Past increased their lead by—one point! Off to The Ship to meet up with Ian Jackson, Martin Wilkinson, Martin Robinson and Joe Gribble and to explain the ins and outs of Fives to some bemused diners on our table.

Big game trivia: James Toop (ex-Oxford!) is only the second player to hold the Kinnaird Cup for Eton Fives and the Jesters Club Cup for Rugby Fives Singles simultaneously since our own **Kenneth Gandar Dower** (Harrow & Trinity), who achieved this feat in 1932. KGD represented Cambridge at billiards, tennis, real tennis, Rugby Fives, Eton Fives and rackets. He was a stalwart of the Jesters, frequently playing cricket with Jock Burnet. He was also a highly accomplished squash player (he won the British Amateur Squash championship in 1938) and had considerable success at tennis, playing in championships in Paris, at Wimbledon and Queen's Club. KGD came to public notice through his exploits as an aviator (particularly in the King's Cup Air Race), as an explorer (seeking the spotted Marozi lion in East Africa) and as an adventure writer. In 1937 Gandar Dower brought eight cheetahs to



England with the intention of racing them at greyhound stadiums, where they set numerous speed records. He once caused uproar at Queen's Club by entering the bar with a male cheetah on a lead. He subsequently worked as a war correspondent and died in 1944 with 1296 others when his ship en route for Colombo was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine.

The Doubles, which the Past won 188-154, were a very mixed bag this year. Elfick and Pringle shared their games with 1st pair Jones and Brubert; de Weymarn and Gribble somehow contrived to lose a game 15-1 to the Cambridge top pair and another 16-15 to the third pair of Dewhurst and Fred Kelly; Martin and Martin sorted out the third pair, then ran out of puff against 4th pair, Rupert Walter and Charles Compton; Ian Jackson had to nurse the injured Malcolm Reid for two games before teaming up with substitute undergraduate Peter Gwynn to embarrass Rupert and Charles. The match ended in drama as Brian Elfick thundered a right-hand into Anand Ashok's eye – the contact lens thus ejected was never found again and all were very grateful that no permanent damage was done. The game in progress was abandoned and the Past came out victors by 242-197. Off to The Pickerel!

The Jock Burnet Dinner. This year's event was the 60th of its kind. To mark this extraordinary milestone the candle-lit Dinner was held by kind permission of Magdalene in the College Hall and Sparrows were invited to bring wives, partners, guests. As usual there were no speeches, simply a toast to the memory of Jock Burnet, 'a few words' from the President and a report on the season from the Captain. 80 people attended: Chris & Sally Arnold, David Arnold and Angela Benson, David Barnes, Chris & Caroline Bascombe, Peter & Anne Cameron, David & Alison Cameron, John Chapman-Andrews, Dickie & Sandra Clarke, Robert Cleave, Allan & Anne Colver, Mark Cornwall-Jones, Steve Davies, Graeme & Jane Denison, Iain & Melanie de Weymarn, Bob & Sue Dolby, Brian Elfick, Don & Belinda Ellwood, David Evans, Joe Gribble, Matt Hanney, David & Helen Hares, David Hebden and Alexandra Gillies, John & Lucille Holroyd, John & Ann Ingram, Ian Jackson, Richard Jefferson, Andrew & Carolyn Lewis, Richard & Margaret Morgan, John & Ann Pretlove, Andy Pringle, Gareth & Jill Quarry, Malcolm Reid and Nush Chakravarty, Martin Robinson, Mike & Philippa Seymour, Dave & Ros Sharman, Dennis & Diana Silk, Paul Simister and Emma Draper, Alan Taylor, Richard & Belinda Thomas, George & Sue Todd, Tim & Julia Wilson, Martin Wilkinson, Guy Whiting, 9 members of CURFC and our guest, Tony Burrows of Oundle School.

The Varsity Match: Cambridge had a very young and inexperienced team, with four freshmen and one other debutant; Oxford had far greater strength in all departments. It was no surprise, therefore, that Cambridge found themselves well behind after the Singles and could make no inroads in the Doubles. Our third and fourth pairs fought valiantly, and successfully, to amass sufficient points to avoid the embarrassment of the heaviest defeat for Cambridge in the history of the game. We expect to be stronger next year but will find it difficult to match Oxford's pool of talent. A heavy burden will fall on the new Captain, Alqahir Ladak, to motivate and bring on his players.

The Jock Burnet Trophy: *After a year in which there was no trophy to award to the winning side in the Varsity Match, it was good to see Peter King, deputizing for the indisposed David Barnes, award the very fine new trophy to David Park of Oxford. The previous trophy, donated by the Jesters ten years ago in Jock's memory, had been stolen while in the care of St. Paul's, who very graciously agreed to fund provision and engraving of the new cup.*

Cambridge Successes: **Andy Pringle** reached the final of the South West Doubles 2008 with his partner Phil Bishop; **Ben Taberner** won the South West Doubles 2009 with Hamish Buchanan. **Ian Jackson** raised £1200 by completing the 10-mile Crick Run at Rugby School, money which will go towards the cost of their two new courts. Otherwise we have to record the retirement from competitive play of **David Hebden**, who has won over one hundred national and regional titles in Singles and Doubles. The forthcoming Annual Fives Review will include an on-line interview with David, in which he reviews his long and successful career as a Fives-player. And sadly we note that, currently, two of the most highly ranked players in the country, James Toop and Dan Tristao, are from the other place!

A Tribute to Chris Bascombe: *Bob Dolby remembers most ruefully that he figured in the only three-year run of defeats ever suffered by Cambridge until the court-less 1990s. Not that Cambridge were particularly weak; Oxford were just stuffed with top Paulines like John East and John Schneerson and stars from the West Country as well. When David Hebden won his first half-blue in 1968 things didn't look good, but, as he remembers in his 'memoirs', "With Oxford having won the last three years, and containing a number of stars from the game of Fives, they were clear favourites. Chris Bascombe, our captain, was to a great extent responsible. He created a training regime and team spirit which resulted in a very fit eight turning up to do battle, and I think the level of the Cambridge play rather took Oxford by surprise. We ended up by winning 260-237 with the first IV just about holding Oxford, and our 2nd IV managing to achieve the winning margin required."*

Valete: AC Dracup (Denstone & Selwyn). Tony Dracup won the Public Schools Doubles in 1953 and played for Cambridge three times from 1957-59. He ran Stanley Mills on the banks of the Tay in the 1980s, giving this beautiful Arkwright mill a last lease of commercial life until he persuaded Historic Scotland to take it over in 1995. **HJH Gatford** (Oundle & Trinity Hall). Jack Gatford was a Rugby Blue as well as a member of the 1947 Fives VIII that beat Oxford 263-235. He partnered the Captain, John Redfern. After a career in the Army which took him to Germany, Turkey and Pakistan he worked at Birmingham and Oxford universities, giving careers advice to undergraduates. **AP Jackson** (Christ's Hospital & St. Catharine's). Tony Jackson played three times on the winning side between 1952 and 1954. He emigrated to New Zealand where he initially farmed and subsequently worked as a careers counsellor, editor and teacher. He was a published poet and an accomplished painter.

Correspondence welcome: Bob Dolby, 26 Waverley Avenue, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 1HZ (Tel.: 0115 925 2845). Also e-mail: bobdolby5@btinternet.com

Don't get double-booked! Next year's Past v. Present: Saturday, February 13th 2010

CAMBRIDGE v. OXFORD 2009
 Saturday, February 21st at St. Paul's School

Cambridge

Oxford

Singles

CP Jones (Captain) (Tonbridge & Emmanuel)	lost to DC Tristao (St. Paul's & Lincoln)	3-15
JB Brubert (Alley's & Queens')	lost to J Fabes (Clifton & Green)	2-15
A Ladak (St Paul's & Christ's)	lost to EO Ronan (Bradfield & St. Hugh's)	0-15
CWD Dewhurst (St. Paul's & St. John's)	lost to DM Park (Captain) (Sherborne & St. Catherine's)	11-15
		16-60

Doubles

Jones and Brubert	v. Tristao and Ronan	0-15 3-15
	v. Fabes and Park	12-15 6-15
A Ashok (St Paul's & Queens') and Ladak	v. Fabes and Park	3-15 7-15
	v. Tristao and Ronan	1-15 1-15
FWA Kelly (Winchester & Girton) and Dewhurst	v. SJ Adcock (Eastbourne & St. Edmund Hall) and EJ Emmett (St. Paul's & Christ Church)	15-13 10-15
	v. Hoolahan and Baker	0-15 1-15
RE Walter (Tonbridge & St. John's) (Hon. Sec.) and CK Compton (Eastbourne & St. John's)	v. TJ Hoolahan (St. Paul's & Christ Church) and JC Baker (St. Paul's & Pembroke)	7-15 6-15
	v. Adcock and Emmett (Hon. Sec)	9-15 12-15
		93-238

Cambridge lost by 109-298

Cambridge now counts 50 wins against 29 by Oxford.

There was no **Sparrows versus Beavers** match.