



Past and Present Nr. 20

**Next year's Past v. Present: Saturday, February 11th 2012.
Put it in your diary!**

It'd be an unusual Past versus Present that didn't present the Match Manager with a dilemma. Charlie Brooks, our top nationally ranked Sparrow (see www.rfa.org.uk for the latest rankings), reported in sick a few days before the match ("done my back in playing cricket!"). Charlie had been carded to play CURFC's rising star, Ed Kay, in the Number 1 Singles, the ideal preparation for the following week's Varsity Match where freshman Ed was due to play Oxford veteran, Ed Ronan. What to do? Either push our other three volunteers up one game and invite the Cambridge Number 5 to play for the Past, or accept a very generous offer from Ian Jackson to dash up early from Tonbridge and play at Number 4. Of course, there was always the option of contacting Joe Gribble. But no, that would be silly...

Jock Burnet Trivia: What car did Jock drive as an undergraduate? The answer, discovered through a photo in Jock's scrapbook of Jesters fixtures held in the RFA archives, can be found at www.cu-sparrows.org.uk/history.

Of course, Ian's offer was gratefully accepted. Andy Pringle, our distinguished General Secretary of the RFA, moved up to play young Ed – and what a game it was! 15-10 to Andy after a dour but flairful (is that possible?) battle on the new Oundle courts where killing the ball is almost as hard as at St. Paul's but whose speed facilitates the serving of aces like few courts in Britain. While Andy and Ed toiled, Brian Elfick showed Hon. Sec. Elliott Malone what a handful he still is if he is allowed to get on the front foot and display the full range of his left-hand shots. Richard Lebon, playing his first game of Fives since the Varsity Match three years before, did all he could to encourage our other freshman Tom Chase by going down gently at 3 with a smile on his face. Doubtless losing a game of Singles paled into insignificance by comparison with the sights of earthquake-riven Haiti where Richard had spent the past year doing humanitarian work. At 4 Ian Jackson gave Jacob Brubert, himself rather rusty after a year at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a lesson in calm consistency. An unexpected lead of 54-32, therefore, for the Past at lunch-time.

Family Trivia: Which of the afore-mentioned singles-playing members of CURFC (from St. Paul's) had an Oundelian grandfather playing in the Varsity Match of 1935 and 1936? The answer can, of course, be found on the website at www.cu-sparrows.org.uk. This must be the first time we have had a grand-père/petit-fils connection in Cambridge Fives.

Andy, Brian, Richard and Ian were joined for lunch at The Ship in Oundle town-centre by Rod Oscroft, Martin Wilkinson, Martin Robinson and Joe Gribble ("Just a bit of light doubles, please, Bob!"). The sun was shining. All was right with the world. Fred Kelly's bruised hand was holding up; Peter Judge was standing by in case.

More Family Trivia: When was the last time we had père et fils playing in the same Past v. Present? Clue: The père was playing again this year. Further Clue: One year, by a quirk of the calendar, he played in the Past v. Present twice in the same year (work that one out!).

After the lunch-break the match continued in earnest. Andy and Brian teamed up to give National Schools Champions Ed Kay & Tom Chase a serious work-out, from which Ed and Tom emerged three points to the good, 16-15, 15-13. Elliott and Jacob played brilliantly against the ever youthful Joe Gribble and Richard Lebon, picking up a bonus of 13 points, while Fred Kelly & Luke Rowland, as good a third pair as one is ever likely to see performing in a Varsity Match, held Ian Jackson &

Rod Oscroft to 12-15, 14-16. It was, as ever, on the fourth court that Martin & Martin showed Captain Charles Compton and the rejuvenated Malcolm Reid how to play the game – for a while, at least. To their credit Charles and Malcolm came back from a heavy defeat in the first game to snatch a 15-13 win in the second. At the ‘turn’ the Past were just 5 points up. Would that be enough to retain the Trapnell Tankard which Joe had brought to the fixture, lamenting the large hole left upon his mantelpiece where it had resided proudly for a year?

Barry Trapnell: after some three decades at Corfe Close Barry has moved to sheltered housing near the home of his daughter Margie in Teddington. Our oldest National Singles Champion (1949) is “cheerful, chatty, a bit forgetful”, but the mention of Fives brings a sparkle to his eye

Fred dropped out to protect his persistently vulnerable hand and to enable freshman and OMT Peter Judge, who had played in more Cambridge matches this year than anyone else, to experience the pleasure of this particular fixture. Indeed he had the pleasure, with Luke, of getting a 10-point profit from Martin & Martin – that doesn’t happen very often. Ed Kay & Tom Chase picked up 24 more against an understandably tiring pairing of Joe and Richard. With Jacob & Elliott making heavy weather of their tussle with the formidable left-right combination of Andy Pringle & Brian Elfick, it fell to Charles & Malcolm to try to close the gap against the two weary but canny Martins. Predictably the latter raised their pace enough in the final game of the afternoon to sneak a 15-13 win and ensure the Past won the match by just 10 points. But the Present had plenty of reason to feel very encouraged in defeat – it was almost a moral victory.

Bat Fives: If anyone has any information, photos, artefacts relating to Bat Fives Martin Wilkinson would love to hear from them.

Sadly Magdalene got themselves double-booked this year and were unable to cater for us in Ramsay Hall for the Dinner. However, they did offer dinner for 24 in the Parlour. We duly accepted their suggestion, had drinks in the Pickerel (where Hon. Sec. of two years ago, Rupert Walter, joined us for a pint after playing Rugby) and dined in the very convivial surroundings of the Parlour beneath portraits of various College luminaries. It was a regrettable, but thoroughly enjoyable, one-off. Joining the 17 players were David Barnes, John Ingram, Chris Bascombe, Tony Palmer, David Arnold, Gareth Quarry, Charlie Brooks and Bob Dolby. For those perceptive readers who make that 25, it has to be admitted that Peter Judge made Sparrows history by being the first to have a Chinese take-away instead of whitebait *et al.* I think Jock would have seen the funny side of that. Next year we return to normal: Drinks in the Parlour, Dinner in Ramsay Hall!

Captaincy Trivia: At the Dinner Charles Compton awarded the Trapnell Tankard to Brian Elfick, captain of the Past. Brian now has the unique distinction of having captained Oxford to victory in 1998, Cambridge in 2005 and now Cambridge Past this year. It only remains for him, one year, to captain Old Oxford in their match against OURFC. No chance!

The Varsity Match: A win! David Barnes, the Match referee, reports:

A rejuvenated Cambridge won this season’s Varsity Match by a clear margin, recording the first light-blue victory since their four-point win in 2006.

British Universities singles finalist Kay gave Cambridge a good lead in the top singles by defeating the veteran Ronan, playing in his sixth and final University Match, while the second-string singles resulted in a narrow win for Oxford’s Hine over Malone. Chase at three for Cambridge won well against Barnes, and the Oxford captain Baker, the only left-hander on either side, went down by a few points to Brubert at four after a lengthy battle.

Cambridge’s 23-point lead in the singles looked useful, if by no means decisive. As the doubles developed, it became clear that Kay and Chase, the reigning British Universities doubles champions, were the outstanding pair, and they defeated Oxford I (Ronan & Adcock) convincingly. However, Hine & Baker for Oxford combined well against the second Cambridge pair (Malone & Brubert), winning one of their games to love and restoring the balance of the match. Cambridge’s third and fourth pairs this year were more experienced than their opponents, all of them new to the Varsity Match. This allowed the light-blues to settle more quickly and establish a good lead on points against their opposite numbers.

At halfway in the doubles, Cambridge had increased their lead to 47 points and looked safe. Oxford III (Barnes and McKelvie) would have none of this, defeating Cambridge IV heavily; and the top dark-blue pair won both their games as well, giving just a glimmer of hope. But the irresistible Cambridge I and their reliable third pair (Kelly & Rowland) won all their games to ensure the lead was protected, the final margin being 37 points. The Oxford Beavers were too good for the Cambridge Sparrows in the reserves match, retaining the 'Fist of Iron' trophy won three years ago. It was good to see each University bring a full complement of players this year. Congratulations to both captains on this achievement, and to Cambridge's Charles Compton on leading a winning side.

Other Cambridge Successes: **Andy Pringle** Plate winner National Doubles 2010, runner-up London Doubles 2010, Plate winner Winchester Doubles 2011. **Charlie Brooks** and **Alan Beverly** led OPs to victory in the 2010 Owers Trophy; **Charlie** was part of the Old Pauline squad that won the Wood (Club Knockout) Trophy in 2011. **Charlie** also reached the semi-final of the National Doubles (Cyriax Cup) with Hal Mohammed.

Valete: **M Paine** (Bradfield & Jesus) died aged 90 last year. He went up to Cambridge in 1938 and played in just the one, pre-war Varsity Match of 1939. At school Michael Paine had been a fine cricketer, boxer and Fives player who went on to play cricket for Kent 2nd XI and Bradfield Old Boys, for whom he once took 10 wickets in a single innings. War meant that he was called up in 1940 and spent much of the war as a gunner fighting in the Mediterranean. He was mentioned in dispatches. After the war Michael did not return to Cambridge but worked with his father, a tenant farmer in Kent, then later on his own hop farm till the day of his death. He was a parish and borough councillor and President of his local cricket club. **PB Nicholls** (Oundle & Christ's) died last year on a Caribbean cruise at the age of 90. As a young man Pat Nicholls was a very gifted and successful sportsman. He played rugby for the Public Schools and was subsequently full back for Gloucester Rugby Club; he captained Gloucestershire 2nd XI and later Gloucester Cricket Club for many years. He entered Cambridge in 1939 and played in the last Varsity Match before the Second World War. It took a further 8 years before he played a second time. In between times he took part in the retreat from Dunkirk as an ordinary soldier and was later commissioned in the Indian Army, where he was on a troopship to Japan when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. He worked in the construction business in the West Country, initially in the family business, later in his own company. In retirement he was a magistrate. **PC Clemmow** (Marlborough & Trinity Hall) came up to Cambridge in 1940 and was resident for two years before being recruited by the RAF to work in the field of radar. During his undergraduate days Phillip Clemmow played Fives in the unofficial Varsity Match of 1941 but had to wait until 1948 to play, as a post-graduate, against Oxford. He worked in the Radio Section of the Cavendish Laboratory and became Director of Studies in Mathematics at Sidney Sussex College and a University Lecturer in Theoretical Electrodynamics and Radio. He was a Fellow of his college for 58 years and Vice-Master for two of those. In his spare time he was a gardener, crossword puzzler and watercolourist. **JN Redfern** died in Hull, the town of his birth and where he worked for many years as a GP, aged 83. A brilliant scholar and superb all-round sportsman at school, John Redfern played twice for Cambridge, captaining the side in 1947. He was President of the Hull Medical Society and of the local branch of the BMA. He was active in local charity work and school governing. He was delighted to attend the Past versus Present in 1997, 50 years after his last game of Fives. **DJS Guilford** (Harrow & Christ's) played in 1954. David subsequently was more involved with Eton Fives, winning the Kinnaird Cup twice and acting as Secretary to the EFA. He spent most of his career at Eton, teaching English and Classics and as a Housemaster. **JA Holroyd** (Oundle & Corpus) played for Cambridge three times, captaining the side in 1952. An elegant left-hander, John Holroyd had been Public Schools Singles and Doubles Champion in 1946 and 1947. John was quite the most loyal supporter of the Past versus Present. By his own reckoning he had attended every Dinner from 1950 (the second of its kind) to 2009 (the candle-lit 60th in the Hall of Magdalene College). He missed just three, twice through severe illness and once through a family bereavement. A gentle and kind man, he always insisted on paying both for himself and for one of the undergraduates. A modern linguist at Cambridge, John retrained as an engineer in order to work for, and subsequently manage, the family firm which manufactured switchgear. John had a particular love for Ghana, where he contributed generously to the building and running of a Children's Hospital.

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CAMBRIDGE v. OXFORD 2011
Saturday, February 19th at St. Paul's School

Cambridge	Oxford	
<i>Singles</i>		
E Kay (St. Paul's & Emmanuel)	beat EO Ronan (Bradfield & Linacre)	15-5
ER Malone (<i>Hon.Sec.</i>) (St. Paul's & Churchill)	lost to ML Hine (<i>Hon.Sec.</i>) (St. Paul's & St. John's)	13-15
TJG Chase (St Paul's & Churchill)	beat GWJ Barnes (St. Paul's & LMH)	15-6
JB Brubert (Alleyn's & Queens')	beat JC Baker (<i>Captain</i>) (St. Paul's & Pembroke)	15-9
		58-35
<i>Doubles</i>		
Kay and Chase	v. SJ Adcock (Eastbourne & St. Edmund Hall) and Ronan	15-5 15-4
	v. ML Hine and Baker	15-5 15-7
Malone and Brubert	v. Hine and Baker	8-15 0-15
	v. Adcock and Ronan	7-15 11-15
WFA Kelly (Winchester & Girton) and LO Rowland (St. Paul's & Fitzwilliam)	v. CDH McKelvie (St. Paul's & Trinity) and Barnes	15-5 15-12
	v. Waller and Esin	15-5 16-15
MC Reid (Edinburgh Academy & St. John's) and CK Compton (Eastbourne & St. John's) (<i>Captain</i>)	v. CLY Waller (Clifton & New) and AD Esin (St. Paul's & Pembroke)	15-5 15-13
	v. McKelvie and Barnes	2-15 1-15
		180-166

Cambridge won by 238-201

Cambridge now counts 51 wins against 30 by Oxford.

In the **Sparrows versus Beavers** match Oxford won by 163-91. Representing Cambridge were PRH Judge (Merchant Taylors' & Robinson), TPR Hennock (Christ's Hospital & Trinity), CR Emerton (St. Paul's & St. John's) and BSI Quarry (St. Paul's & Selwyn). Representing Oxford were HR Wilman (Giggleswick & Hertford), ES Wilman (Giggleswick & Hertford), JC Thompson (Tonbridge & Queen's) and JRP Johnson (Tonbridge & St. Hugh's).