



Past and Present Nr. 21

**Next year's Past v. Present: Saturday, February 16th 2013.
Put it in your diary!**

It'd be an unusual Past versus Present that didn't have a bit of adventure or misadventure attached. Spotting the fact that the A14 between Cambridge and the A1 was closed on the day, involving a lengthy detour via St. Neots, we moved the start of the match to noon so as to enable the Present to get to Oundle without rising at the crack of dawn. So it was that Charlie Brooks, Andy Pringle, Richard Lebon and the President found themselves at the courts at noon—and no opposition in sight. But mobile phones are wonderful things. Soon we learned that the Present, in a luxurious Cambridge Minicab and in the company of a seething driver, were still a good hour away, and Brian Elfick doubtless somewhere not far behind.

Captaincy Trivia: At the Dinner last year's Captain of the Past, Joe Gribble, handed the Trapnell Tankard to Martin Robinson who had taken on that onerous task for this year. Unlike the Davis Cup team, which has a non-playing Captain, the Past this year had a semi-playing Captain, i.e. Martin performed in just two of the Doubles games before handing over to the bouncing Richard Lebon to partner the effervescent Martin Wilkinson.

By the time everyone did arrive, stiff-legged from a 2½ hour stint on the road, it was well after 1pm. It was a tribute to everybody's powers of concentration that the four Singles matches then played were all close and hard fought affairs. Jacob Brubert, Elliott Malone and Tom Chase won to 12, 11 and 11 respectively for the Present, while Charlie Brooks for the Past narrowly beat Ed Kay in the top match. Net result: Present up by 7 points after the Singles.

Trophy Trivia: An email out of the blue from Corpus announced the discovery among the College silver of a trophy marked 'Cambridge University Rugby Fives Club Intercollegiate Knock-out Competition Challenge Cup 1930' (no expense spared on engraving in those days – and there was a Cambridge crest engraved on it too!). The last college to win it was also engraved on the back: St. John's College in 1930. Since when the trophy has languished unrecognised – but why in Corpus? We shall never know. Also difficult to know what to do with such a trophy these days when many fewer people play the game than then. The President awaits (sensible) suggestions!

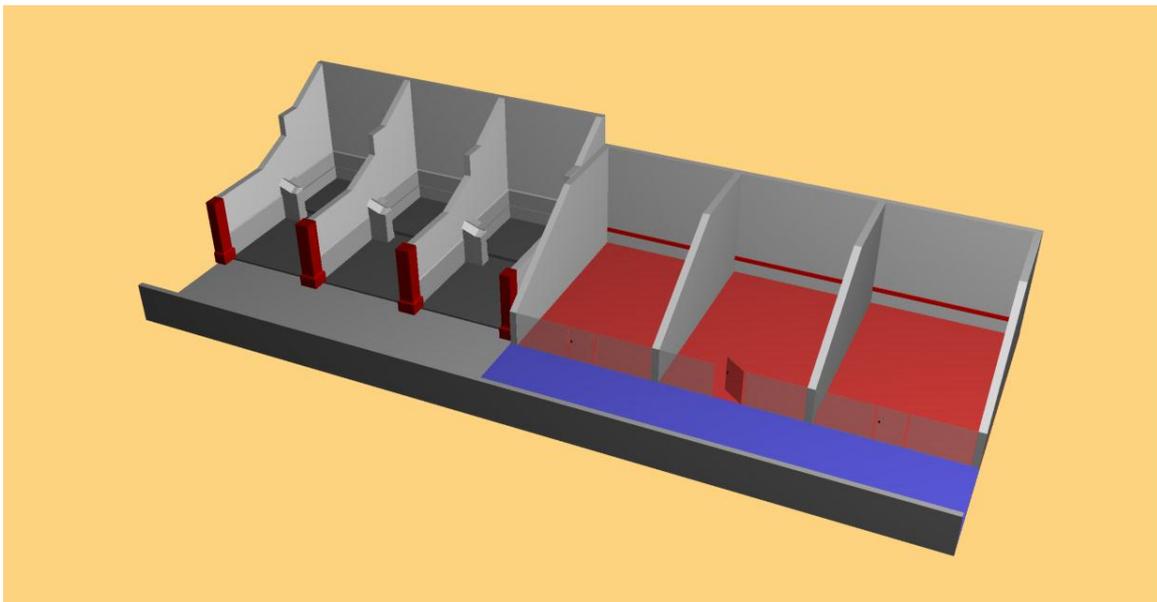
With no time for lunch at The Ship we started the Doubles. The Present had high hopes of winning the contest this year, especially when Kay & Chase beat Brooks & Elfick 15-1, 15-2 and Malone & Lane also gained 9 points in their tussle with Pringle & Compton. But down in the bottom half, without Beverly (skiing!) and Malde (Olympics job interview), things went less well for the Present. Peter Judge & Jacob Brubert found Ian Jackson & Joe Gribble a little too experienced at third pair, while Jacob Ader and Ben Quarry were not the first pair to find Martin Wilkinson & Martin Robinson, having their annual outing in the fourth pair, altogether too much of a handful. At the 'turn' the Present were a further two points ahead. Would it be enough?

RFA News: Sadly Jeremy Schroeter has had to resign the Deputy Presidency of the RFA for health reasons after only a few weeks in office. Given the difficult situation the RFA found itself in, Bob Dolby volunteered his services, despite spending over half the year in *la belle Bourgogne*. From CURFC's point of view it has advantages, however, as he will be in office during the build of the new Cambridge University Sports Centre and will be at the heart of decision-making regarding the proposed Fives courts therein.

No, it wasn't enough. Elfick & Brooks found some form in their second set of Doubles, Jackson & Gribble gained a hatful of points (even though there were worries that an increasingly florid Joe might expire in mid-game), and in the fourth pair a bouncing young Rich Lebon took over from Martin Robinson and took Brubert & Judge somewhat by surprise. A lead of 11 points for the Present turned into a deficit of 26. No shame, though – it's not the first time it's happened!

Autobiographica: How good to see broadcasting legend Chris Martin-Jenkins' autobiography published this spring. He speaks warmly of his Fives-playing days at Cambridge. Chris played in the Varsity Match in 1966 and 1967. Chris was elected Captain for 1967-68 but in fact did not return to Cambridge: instead he embarked upon—*A Cricketing Life*.

New courts for Cambridge—they will look like this!



And the Sports Centre will look like this:



Work has now begun on the Centre, which is due for completion in October 2013. A suite of 3 Rugby Fives courts and 3 Eton Fives courts is planned for the first floor. An Appeal will be launched later this year for the large amount of money still required to ensure their construction. More of that anon, but contact Bob Dolby if you want more details.

The Varsity Match: Another win——by 290-158! David Barnes, the Match referee, reports:

The strongest Cambridge side for some years defeated Oxford convincingly in the 2012 Varsity Match at St. Paul's, sponsored by Champagne Pol Roger. Both teams featured a majority of Old Paulines, demonstrating the excellence of the School's fives in recent years, and at times it was almost like a home match for both sides. This, if anything, only served to increase the rivalry, although the match was played, as ever, in the best traditions of sportsmanship.

Oxford's Hine led his team by example in the singles, playing superbly to defeat Beverly, the 2007 Cambridge captain. Cambridge came back strongly, however, by taking the remaining three singles matches to lead at lunch by 13 points.

In the doubles, Cambridge's well-balanced first and second pairs looked impressive and won all their matches with something to spare, although Oxford's top pair offered stout resistance throughout the afternoon. Cambridge 3, with both players new to the Varsity Match, also played well to record wins in all their games, while Oxford 3 prevented a clean sweep in the doubles by narrowly defeating Cambridge 4 in two hard-fought games. [see overleaf for scorecard]

In the reserves match, Cambridge Sparrows, fielding four more Old Paulines, just had the better of a wider-ranging ensemble of Oxford Beavers, with the ever-faithful Wilman brothers in attendance. This was a close encounter, the final outcome determined by the fine play of Rowland and Sloper, the Sparrows' first pair.

Other Cambridge Successes: **Charlie Brooks** won the North West Open Doubles at Manchester in February, playing with fellow Pauline Tom Dean. They then went on to beat the reigning National Doubles champions, Buchanan & Perry, in the semi-final of the National Doubles before losing in three games to Tristao & Grant in the final. At the same event **Andy Pringle** won the Plate final for the second time in three years, this time with John Minta from Manchester. **Ed Kay** has had a good season. In November he was runner-up in the BUCS Singles and also runner-up with **Tom Chase** in the Doubles. Ed then went on to win the U25s Doubles title with Dan Tristao. Then came a match-winning performance from Ed and Tom in the Varsity Match: so far they have a points record in two Varsity matches of 180-76! Ed and Charlie were subsequently part of the Old Paulines squad that won the National Club Knockout (the Wood Cup) in April for the second year in a row.

Valete: ACW Abrahams (Bedford & Emmanuel), soldier, lawyer, educationalist and entrepreneur, was born in Zanzibar in 1923. Among his uncles was the British athlete Harold Abrahams. Anthony Abrahams volunteered for the Indian Army and saw active service on the North West Frontier, in North Africa and in Italy. After the war he read Law at Cambridge, played for Cambridge at Rugby Fives in 1949 and was called to the Bar in 1951. He became passionately interested in education: he was founder member of the Committee of the Royal Society of Arts and a founding sponsor of the Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language. To aid those teaching English abroad, in 1964 he founded and later ran the Centre for British Teachers, a major force in TEFL all over the world. In the late 1970s he became a highly successful chairman of the Harpur Trust, which runs the four Bedford Schools. He later moved to Brunei and served as an advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court. In the 1980s he governed an independent boarding school in Malaysia.

Correspondence welcome: Bob Dolby, 26 Waverley Avenue, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 1HZ (Tel.: 0115 925 2845). Also e-mail: bbdolby5@btinternet.com

And once more: Next year's Past versus Present
Saturday, February 16th 2013
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CAMBRIDGE v. OXFORD 2012
 Saturday, February 18th at St. Paul's School

Cambridge

Oxford

Singles

A Beverly (St. Paul's & Girton)	lost to ML Hine (<i>Captain</i>) (St. Paul's & St. John's)	8-15
EI Kay (St. Paul's & Emmanuel)	beat GWJ Barnes (<i>Hon. Sec.</i>) (St. Paul's & LMH)	15-7
TJG Chase (<i>Hon. Sec.</i>) (St Paul's & Churchill)	beat HKE Jefferies (St. Paul's & Oriel)	15-13
JB Brubert (Alleyn's & Queens')	beat CLY Waller (Clifton & New)	15-5

53-40

Doubles

Kay and Chase	v. Hine and Waller	15-9 15-8
	v. Jefferies and Barnes	15-4 15-3
Beverly and Brubert	v. Jefferies and Barnes	15-5 15-4
	v. Hine and Waller	15-7 15-7
JN Lane (Winchester & St Catharine's) and JK Malde (St. Paul's & Clare)	v. JC Baker (St. Paul's & Pembroke) and AD Esin (St. Paul's & Pembroke)	15-8 15-11
	v. McKelvie and Roberts	15-4 15-8
	v. CDH McKelvie (St. Paul's & Trinity) and JW Roberts (Tonbridge & St. Edmund Hall)	15-4 15-5
ER Malone (St. Paul's & Churchill) (<i>Captain</i>) and PRH Judge (Merchant Taylors' & Robinson)	v. Baker and Esin	13-15 14-16
		237-118

Cambridge won by 290-158

Cambridge now counts 52 wins against 30 by Oxford.

In the **Sparrows versus Beavers** match Cambridge won by 138-119. Representing Cambridge were LO Rowland (St. Paul's & Fitzwilliam), JS Ader (St. Paul's & Pembroke), WJ Sloper (St. Paul's & Girton) and BSI Quarry (St. Paul's & Selwyn). Representing Oxford were TM Hoskins (Oundle & LMH), ES Wilman (Giggleswick & Hertford), HR Wilman (Giggleswick & Hertford) and DT Webb (Tonbridge & Magdalen).