

Boundary View

Winter 2016 - No. 14

The Newsletter of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society

Founded 1972



A framed picture of Don Kenyon and Martin Horton was presented to Dan Haywood (back centre) vice-chairman of Stourbridge CC. Meriel Harris (2nd right) received a copy on behalf of Worcestershire CCC - Heritage Group. Smaller copies were presented to Mrs Margaret Horton and Mrs Jean Kenyon (front, L & R). Mike Tomkins and Sue Jackson (née Kenyon) complete the group. Both Don and Martin were former presidents of the Society.

OBITUARY

Former Worcestershire player, Louis Devereux died, aged 85, on 12 November 2016 at Aberystwyth.

Louis, who was born in Heavitree, Exeter, in Devon on October 20, 1931, joined the County after playing twice for Middlesex.

From 1950 to 1955, he played in 79 first-class matches for Worcestershire, scoring 2,070 runs at an average of 19.16 as a right-hand batsman and took 106 wickets at 42.42 with his off spin bowling.

Louis enjoyed his best season at New Road in 1953 when he scored 732 runs and took 55 wickets. That year, he made his highest score (91*) for Worcestershire versus Warwickshire.

He joined Glamorgan in 1956 and in the next season scored his only first-class century (108*) v. Lancashire.

His first-class career ended in 1960 with a total of 192 matches, 5,560 runs at 19.85 and 178 wickets at 35.31.

In 1949, he represented England at table tennis.

VALUATION EVENT

Members are reminded that if they wish to have any cricket items for valuation, details of all items must be provided to Terry Church by no later than 19 January 2017 (The evening of Paul Pridgeon's visit).

A varied and interesting selection of items has been notified already by members, but we are sure that there must be many other items of interest amongst our membership.

The valuation event will be held after the AGM on 13 April.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following persons who have joined the Society:

Ian Barrett – Kinver

Chris Bryant – Kidderminster

John Howells – Kinver

Trevor Johnson – Wolverhampton

Roderick Lane – Pedmore

John Robb – Kingswinford

CONTRIBUTIONS

Members' cricketing memories are always welcome. Please submit by email to the editor (address at bottom of back page)

CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

The 2017 fixtures enable us, if we so wish, to update our diaries and plan where we may be going or what we may be doing throughout next year.

It may not be everyone's cup of tea but day/night matches in County Championship cricket are now available to spectators for a short period in June at four venues. As I see it, this small taster will provide an opportunity to judge public interest, observe the use of the pink ball in twilight conditions and, who knows maybe provide us with a little terrestrial TV coverage. Was that a pig just flying past the window!

Watching County cricket, like its big brother Test cricket, requires a concentrated mind and is not a quick fix but is played over several match-changing situations. It will need spectators and with our potential cool summer evenings may prove a difficult sell. I do feel, however, it is well worth a try and will, as intended, provide a feeder and introduction to day/night Test cricket.

Out of darkness cometh light and India, after finally accepting D.R.S., are seeing and benefiting from the reality of getting decision making as accurate as possible, thus incorporating the drama it adds to the game situation.

Well done India with its vast wealth and passionate cricket following, but where on earth is everyone hiding on Test Match days! Yet another major concern for the marketing experts.

We are fortunate here at Stourbridge where our cricket nights are well attended. Thank you to everyone for supporting the Committee with two terrific attendances. The feedback we are getting indicates how much you enjoyed the quality of our first two guest speakers. They were both very much impressed with your enthusiasm and questions.

Let me finally wish all of our members and families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Peaceful and Prosperous New Year.

Mike Tomkins

The opinions expressed in Boundary View are not necessarily those of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society

Dave Nicklin (President)

Committee Members:

Mike Tomkins (Chairman); **Anthony Collis** (Secretary / Editor); **Ken Workman** (Treasurer); **Terry Church** (Programme Secretary)

DAVID SMITH
(Warwickshire 1973-85)

David Smith opened by saying this was his second appearance at Stourbridge. On the first occasion, he played in a Second XI match for Warwickshire against Worcestershire in 1973. [The match was dominated by David Stewart who took 7/63, then opened the batting for Worcestershire and put on 207 for the first wicket: Stewart 111, Keith Wilkinson 100].

Smith, who was born in Jesmond in 1956, recalled his early years in cricket. He played for the Northern Under 15's (forerunner of the Bunbury Festival) alongside IT Botham, who showed little evidence, then, of the player he was to become. David obtained a trial with both Northants and Warwickshire. While the Cobblers had numerous Geordies playing there, the ground and facilities were shocking. Before deciding he checked out Edgbaston, which was a palace by comparison (before the redevelopment, Smith added) and he signed for them. He soon realised that it would be hugely difficult to get into the first team – the top order was drawn from Abberley, Amiss, Jameson, Kallicharran, Kanhai, MJK Smith and Whitehouse.

"The 1975 World Cup gave me my first opportunity as so many were called away. I made my debut at Swansea." David was playing in an Under 25 game at Leicester when he was told he was needed next day at Taunton as Kanhai was injured. No sponsored cars in those days, so he made by way by bus and train after collecting additional clothing as he was unsure for how long he would be away. "When I checked in to the County Hotel at 3am, I found I was rooming with the injured Kanhai who was in bed watching TV at that hour! I played for the rest of the season and scored 1,000 runs, assisted by John Jameson, who was due to retire and he kindly helped me reach the benchmark. It was a gesture that I have never forgotten – to help a young cricketer setting out. Thereafter, I opened the batting with Dennis Amiss for the next five years and then with Andy Lloyd."

Smith was awarded his County cap aged 21, and recalled "Before that I changed in the dressing room for uncapped players, whereas the captain and capped players had a separate room. Amiss worked so hard at his game and would often be in the nets at 8am. He was a player to emulate."

Smith regarded Bob Willis as "a genuine guy, great socially, but as a captain,

his man management approach was shocking." In Smith's opinion, Warwickshire relied on too many overseas players at the time, who did not share the same passion shown by the likes of Amiss, Geoff Humpage and Steve Perryman. Smith drew a parallel with his favourite football club, Aston Villa (groans in the audience). He admitted that apart from Grealish, he could not identify any other player. He predicted that the Bears would be relegated next season and, like Villa, would find it hard to re-establish themselves in the upper division as the gap was widening further each year.



When David became Chief Executive of Leicestershire in 2008, he was aghast to find seven Kolpak players in the side. The dominant language in the dressing room was Afrikaans – hardly conducive to team spirit, especially as Leicestershire were very good at developing young players; in contrast Warwickshire today have got massive problems with seven of their present team aged over 30. Worcestershire, on the other hand, have developed a fine team of youngsters, but Smith wondered how long they can keep hold of Joe Clarke, who will gravitate to a first division club sooner or later.

County cricket has been in a dicey situation for a number of years. When Smith returned to Northamptonshire, as CEO, his first task was to find money to pay salaries at month-end after which he had to cancel a club trip to South Africa as funds were so tight. David related another example of cricket's decline by saying that Warwickshire's membership has fallen by 10-thousand since the days of Brian Lara. Somerset, with a large, widely-spread catchment area is the only non-Test match venue able to fight their corner. Another reason for the drop in numbers was due to fewer overseas crick-

eters playing for counties as the star performers can get double the amount for a season by playing for six weeks in the IPL and/or the Caribbean Tournament.

In the meeting's second innings, David spoke some home truths about the current state of English cricket and the proposed franchise scheme.

To open, he fielded a question about Durham's situation. "The choice of Durham as a Test venue was wrong; it should have been in the Newcastle area where there is a far larger catchment area. To play Test cricket in the north-east so early in the season also is unwise and with the Headingley Test following soon after, not many supporters would attend both venues. The ECB's reaction was punishing for the club and demoralising for the players and supporters. The ECB must shoulder part of the blame because they over-optimistically pushed for more Test venues, one of which was Cardiff which also has been a disaster; it was politically chosen because Wales put the 'W' in the board's full name," responded Smith.

The next point concerned the franchise proposal which occupied much of the second innings of the evening. Smith claimed was "a done deal", but said the planned start date had been put back two years until 2020. The ECB wants to create additional value for the broadcaster and T20 fits the bill perfectly. Smith said the eight franchise teams would be based in the highly populated areas with two teams based in London. Sky sees T20 as their main source of cricket revenue with BT as their only rivals in this country. Cricket will not return to terrestrial television as the BBC cannot compete against either satellite rival and has no wish to do so.

Smith bemoaned the fact that clubs and players are becoming removed from their supporters, and while admitting that fitness and playing standards had greatly improved. But the spirit of the game has been diluted and for a great many followers of the game, their interest had been killed as he alluded to earlier.

Like it or not cricket is changing and Worcestershire will not be immune from the changes. Cricket is going the way of football – the top six counties will get richer and the rest will suffer. Many members congratulated David Smith at the end of the evening, in appreciation of his straight talking. If the rest of the season's speakers are half as thought-provoking, our members are in for a great season.

20 October 2016 Att: 93

MIKE NEWELL
(Nottinghamshire 1984-92)

Traffic problems caused Mick Newell to make a late start but the delay was worth waiting for!

As he admitted he was an average County cricketer and realised early on that he would like to make coaching his forte. At the end of his first unfulfilled season he was advised to accept an option to attend Exeter University but decided to give cricket another go. He summed up his career by saying that on the day Graeme Hick scored 405 not out at Somerset he was being dismissed for a pair at Trent Bridge against Lancashire. So it was no surprise that at the age of 26 he decided on a career in coaching. But he did emphasise that he is proud to hold two records – carrying his bat for 10 not out in a total of 44 at Edgbaston and secondly scoring more runs than anyone else in 2nd XI cricket! Following the departure of Clive Rice, Mick Newell took to the helm in 2002, with Notts languishing in Division Two. An instant promotion made his temporary charge permanent.

Unfortunately after over 30 years his coaching career came to an end in September with the relegation of Notts from Division One of the Championship for the first time in ten years. Some of his staff left and it was decided to send him ‘upstairs’ to become Director of Cricket. He had coached and played with many top players in a great era for Notts from Rice and Hadlee to more recently Kevin Pietersen and James Taylor. He rated KP very highly. Kevin had arrived to impress Clive Rice and once Rice had left his

enthusiasm waned. It was no surprise that he left Notts, especially when his kit bag was thrown over the Trent Bridge balcony by Club captain Jason Gallian. Mick was not given much of a mention in KP’s autobiography!

Leaving the coaching to Peter Moores was a great weight off his mind. He had lost the drive and some enthusiasm. Just how could he try to persuade Samit Patel to lose weight yet again!



Now Mick is a very proud Test selector and gave an insight into the complexities of the task. He stressed the selectors only select the squad not the actual XI that takes the field. They see as many matches as possible but concentrate on Division One players as that is now a higher standard than Division Two.

In the second half he wondered what effect Brexit would have on overseas players – he expected an influx of Kolpak players before the start of next season.

He acknowledged that for a player like Joe Clarke at Worcester to gain Test recognition he would need to consistently out score his rivals in the top division. If after a few years he was still in the lower

division he may have to think of a move to further his chances of Test cricket. Mick rated Joe Clarke very highly.

He spent some time over the Durham issue. He accepted that they deserved to be relegated as their finances were in a mess but did not think it was fair for points to be deducted for next season. Bearing in mind that the Durham hierarchy had bid for Test matches in May they should have taken into account the opposition and the prospect of poor weather at that time of year. They could not blame the public for low attendances.

He considered sledging was a problem but only if it became physical. Stokes pushed it to the limit and aimed to provoke the batsmen into mistakes. He thought umpires should be more proactive.

In conclusion he looked at the future. County Cricket cannot survive without T20, Sky television and a successful England XI. Clubs must aim to produce Test players and having done so must expect to lose them for much of the summer. He agreed that if the ‘franchise’ T20 got off the ground something must be done for the other County grounds otherwise spectators were going to be lost. He was not convinced that the new format would start soon. There were still too many unknowns at the moment.

Mick was a speaker who spoke from the heart and gave honest opinions about current cricketing problems.

And so ended a fascinating evening, much appreciated by another full house.

Words by Dave Nicklin
17 November 2016 Att: 92

WHEN THE EYE HAS GONE

The Professional Cricketers’ Association commissioned Dougie Blaxland, nom de plume of former Kent and Derbyshire all-rounder, James Graham-Brown, to write a play about Colin Milburn as part of the Mind Matters Campaign designed to raise awareness about mental health and well being within the cricketing community. The resulting work, ‘When the Eye Has Gone’ played to audiences at all 18 first-class County headquarters during November 2016. The editor attended the Edgbaston performance.

The audience numbered upwards of 100 and of that number I counted on one hand the number I recognised. I was struck by the number of persons present – too young to have seen Ollie bat or perhaps even been aware of his life – which ended nearly 27 years ago. Cricket societies might have recruited a few members, but like the eye, the moment has gone.

The hour-long, one-man show was enacted by Dan Gaisford, who, though looking nothing like the largest cricketer since Warwick Armstrong, provided enough pathos, gallows humour and insight into the character of the man who once was regarded as an England batting sensation. Milburn lived simply to play cricket, have fun with his mates with no thought of tomorrow as his mother constantly berated him, as the actor recalled Ollie’s life in a series of verbal flashbacks.

The play focused on some of the highlights of Ollie’s career. He shot to fame, albeit locally, when aged 17, he scored 101 for Durham (then not a first-class county) against the Indian tourists in 1958. He was tempted to join Warwickshire, but opted for Northants who offered him ten bob a week more. Against West Indies in 1966, Milburn scored 126*, his maiden Test century at Lord’s in his second of only nine Test appearances. He was dropped after his fourth match, because his size was such a liability in the field. Facing the prospect of signing-on during the winters, Ollie was invited to coach in South Africa and play in Australia. Batting at Brisbane, he scored 243 for Western Australia which included 181 runs scored between lunch and tea. It won him many admirers and, no doubt, more gin and cokes. His highest Test score (139) was against Pakistan at Karachi in his last innings.

Ollie’s cricket career came to an abrupt end when he crashed his car, which caused the injury that changed his life to such an extent that although he tried to make a comeback, the all-important right eye had gone. In 1990, Colin Milburn died of a heart attack, appropriately, in a pub car park. He was aged 49.

MEETINGS' PROGRAMME FOR 2016/17

All meetings start at 7.30pm (unless stated otherwise) Programme subject to change
If in doubt, for example, due to severe weather, phone 01384 292170

Dec 15	Tim Jones Author	Tim will tell the story behind his biography of Don Kenyon, who served as a national selector while still an active player. (Ken Workman's poetry readings will be held at a future date)
Jan 19	Paul Pridgeon Worcs	Wall Heath-born, right-arm fast-medium bowler, Paul played 240 games for Worcs during 1972-89. His BB was 7/35 v Oxford University 1976. He played for Stourbridge.
Feb 16	Derek Brewer MCC CEO	He played for Warwickshire 2nd XI, before 'forging' a career in finance.
Mar 16	Dennis Breakwell Som'set & N'hants	Brierley Hill-born, Dennis played 231 f-c matches 1969-84 for Somerset and Northamptonshire. He will be in conversation with Dave Bradley
Apr 13	AGM followed by Valuation Event	NB – The AGM starts at 7pm; the Valuation Event, which will begin soon afterwards, will be presented by Mark Hannam (Fielding's) with Mike Williams (Midlands Cricket Society).

2017 S&DCS TRIP

Terry Church has announced that next year's coach excursion will be to London on Thursday 9 March.

The trip is likely to be a sure sell-out as we will visit The Oval and the London (formerly Olympic) Stadium, currently the new home of West Ham FC.

Cost will be approximately £45, including coach fare, subject to numbers (it does NOT include any food). Phone Terry (01384 292170) to check availability or to add your name to the waiting list, in case of cancellations.

An announcement was sent by email to members on 31 October. If you did not receive the email info, tell Terry.

STOURBRIDGE TEST CRICKETERS

The Society's book 'Stourbridge Test Cricketers' is progressing speedily.

The purpose of the publication is to commemorate the 175th anniversary of Stourbridge CC, which will occur in 2017.

It is hoped that the book will add to the sporting heritage of the area and will appeal to cricket lovers further afield.

The book will consist of a series of pen portraits of cricketers who have played for Stourbridge CC and achieved Test honours. In all 24 have been identified, of which all but five were capped by their country.

The quintet, described as Worthies, were players who played international or repre-

sentative cricket - e.g. Commonwealth or similar level, such as Jock Livingston.

Another who didn't play Test cricket was deemed capable enough of selecting players who did – on three separate occasions! He too is included.

The next immediate requirement is to invite members to carry out proof-reading of the pages written so far. The purpose of proof-reading is to Czech typos and misspellings (e.g. 'form' instead of 'from'), and not to rewrite the articles!

Please note that the articles will be emailed as pdf documents.

Volunteers are requested to email:
adcollis@blueyonder.co.uk

GENTLEMEN V. PLAYERS CHALLENGE (*Boundary View - Spring 2016*) Dave Carney's teams

At the request of the editor I have omitted anyone who previously played in this fixture. This means that the Gentlemen had to be chosen from professional cricketers as, from 1963, everyone became a Player. In my arbitrary choice I considered background [mostly school and university] and the potential Gentlemen's means of support bearing in mind the relatively low wage [summer only] of a cricketer in the early 1960s. Alistair Cook, for example, would have informed Essex that he was not available during harvest time but would still have been selected for any England winter tour. The Gentlemen's team is rather short of fast bowling but then they nearly always were.

Only English qualified cricketers have been considered, and the

GENTLEMEN

AN Cook
AJ Strauss
JP Crawley
ET Smith
PWG Parker
JM Brearley * #
MV Fleming
VJ Marks
DR Pringle
PJ Edmonds
RS Martin-Jenkins

PLAYERS

G Boycott
GA Gooch *
JE Root
KP Pietersen
DI Gower
IT Botham
A Flintoff
APE Knott #
GP Swann
DL Underwood
JM Anderson

Players' selection is, in my opinion, the best eleven that I could have selected to form a balanced team. Part of the fun of this type of exercise is that my team will never actually take the field but,

I stress, this is just my selection and others will have their opinions. I am aware that this Players' dressing room is full of some, shall we say, complex individuals and the atmosphere might be just a little toxic. I did consider Brian Close as captain to sort them out but, in the end, I adopted the Australian approach of picking the best team and then deciding on the captain. So Graham Gooch gets the job – that should cheer him up.

[Thanks, Dave—not sure about Gower's place]

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Deadline for receipt of copy is for each **Issue** is (Last Friday of Month)

Autumn (August) **Winter** (November) **Spring** (February)

Preferably all articles should be typed and emailed to the address below

The editor reserves the right to edit or refuse the publication of any material submitted without further reason.