

Stourbridge Cricket Society

www.sdcs.councilcricketsocieties.com

A Member of the Council of Cricket Societies

Christmas 2010

The Things They Say

" I feel slightly humble at that (breaking Bradman's record), slightly ruining all the records there for the wrong reasons, but it's a nice one to have"

Alastair Cook after his marathon innings at Brisbane.

" Even the West Indies saved a Test last year and they can't play"

Geoff Boycott predicts high scores at Adelaide

" I turned up at Lord's to make my Test debut and I don't think they had actually seen me bowl at all" **Chris Schofield**

From the Chair

Modest, a word best used to describe our October and November guests, Dennis Amiss MBE and Malcolm Scott accompanied by Stephen Chalke.

Malcolm, a lovely man, cricketer/footballer, who actually thought that we would not be interested in hearing of the many fine players from both sports that he had played with and against, Duncan Edwards, Tom Finney, Frank Tyson and Colin Milburn to name only a few. To have played at the top level in two sports, not one is something we mere mortals can only dream of. To present himself to us with such grace and charm is extremely creditable.

Dennis talked about pretty well everything, especially his international team mates and opponents, recalling the massive battles against Australia, the fire and brimstone of the West Indies and the cunning artistry of the Asian teams, yet Dennis Amiss MBE omitted that during his magnificent career, he mind-blowingly surpassed one hundred hundreds himself, a feat few have achieved in the history of the game.

In an era of instant gratification and reward where ordinary performers are called great, Terry deserves credit for bringing to our Society a mix of truly modest sportsmen who in their own individual way made terrific guests.

Mike Tomkins
Chairman

Remember The Gentlemen ?

In an age when our government seems hell bent on removing sport from the timetable of our State schools it is interesting to recall that eight of The Gentlemen's side of 1962 were University educated (most if not all originally from the private schools sector)

RM Prideaux, OS Wheatley, AR Lewis, AC Smith, RW Barber, TE Bailey, ER Dexter, Revd DS Sheperd, MJK Smith.

Future Speakers

20 January

Geoff Humpage (Warwickshire and England)

17 February

Cally Barlow (Memories of Eddie)

17 March

Jim Parks (Sussex and England)

14 April

Tim Jones(Chairman Worcs History/Heritage)

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The Ultimate Sacrifice

One of the most striking and famous cricket portraits to adorn the walls of the inner sanctum that is the Long Room at Lord's is entitled "Kent in the field-1906" by Albert Chevalier Tayler. The Kent player who features as the bowler in the painting is Colin Blythe who, among his many achievements, had the distinction of topping the bowling averages in the season prior to the outbreak of the Great War. Cricket has a way of producing all manner of statistics and coincidences and one such is the fact that the bowler who headed the averages in the season before the outbreak of the second World War, Hedley Verity, shared a commonality with Colin Blythe. They were both great left arm bowlers who played with distinction for England and they both were killed in action.

It was a measure of the country's desperation for manpower in 1914 that Blythe was allowed to enlist given that he was thirty-five at the time and suffered from epilepsy. He joined the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, an indication that county loyalties were not considered upon allocation of regiments, and spent most of his active service building railways to serve the front line.

Colin Blythe's cricket career was exceptional as he was one of the finest bowlers of the "Golden Age". He is on a short list of not many that have taken a wicket with his first ball in first class cricket and took over one hundred wickets in his first full season. His victims included Gilbert Jessop nineteen times and Tom Hayward and Jack Hobbs seventeen times each and no less a batsman than Ranjitsinhji considered him harder to face than the great Wilfred Rhodes. A litany of his bowling achievements would become tedious if

listed in their entirety but seventeen wickets in one day against Northamptonshire and

fifteen wickets for England against South Africa in 1907 are dramatic examples of his prowess. Test matches became increasingly difficult for him due to the regularity of epileptic fits but he still managed to take exactly one hundred wickets in only nineteen matches. He combined his great sporting ability with an exceptional talent as a violinist.

The memorial church of Saint George in Ypres is dedicated to the fallen of the three battles of the Ypres salient and somewhere near the front on the left hand side (if memory serves) is a chair dedicated to Colin Blythe's memory. It was heartening to see the current England team visiting the First World War graves just prior to the last Ashes series; perhaps they were inspired by Steve Waugh's insistence that his players visited Gallipoli and it was a poignant moment when Andrew Strauss laid a stone cricket ball on Colin Blythe's grave.

Blythe was killed by random fire when working on the railway during the carnage of Passchendaele in 1917 and is buried in Oxford Road cemetery. A memorial to him stands in the Saint Lawrence Ground in Canterbury and his shrapnel punctured wallet is housed in the museum.

Colin Blythe plied his trade at the finest of county grounds (I hope the readership of mostly Worcestershire fans will allow the writer that opinion!) and the site of his death in the mud and gore of Passchendaele could hardly have been more diametric.

Brian Hilson

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Fifty Years Ago (1960)

Worcestershire finished 13th(of 17) in the County Championship, winning 8 of 32 3daygames. **Jack Flavell** took 100+ wickets for the fourth consecutive season and **Don Kenyon, George Dews, Martin Horton, Dick Richardson and Ron Headley** all completed 1000+ runs in the Championship.

George Dews chose the Lancashire game for his benefit match. 36 days including 5 Saturdays were played at New Road, 6 Days (2 Saturdays) at Dudley, 6 days (2Saturdays) at Kidderminster and 1 3day game at Stourbridge. In addition 3 day first class games were played against South Africa and Cambridge University at New Road.

The season started on 30 April and finished on 6 September (19 weeks) and Worcestershire members were able to watch 1stclass cricket on 9 Saturdays!

England won a 5 match test series 3-0 with 2 draws, a tour overshadowed by demonstrations against apartheid and the "throwing" controversy over Geoff Griffin's action. Wisden's 5 "Cricketers of the Year" were **ER Dexter, N Adcock, R McLean, R Subba Row and JV Wilson.**

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Webb's Garden Centre, Worcester Road, Wychbold, Droitwich Spa for once again donating raffle prizes. We hope that our members will support them wherever possible.

Congratulations !

Congratulations to Norman Whiting who celebrated his 90th birthday earlier this year.

Where are they now? Steve O'Shaughnessy

After leaving Worcestershire in 1989 I continued to play in Australia for another eight years, playing in Canberra and representing ACT. I also continued to play in UK, representing Cumberland in the Minor Counties as well as pro-ing for various clubs in the Lancashire Leagues. I finished Minor Counties in 2002 and finally stopped playing in 2004 after a bout of glandular fever laid me low, aged forty-three. All in all I played fifty cricket seasons, thirty-three in UK and seventeen in Oz, so not a bad little innings.

After cricket I took up umpiring and also opened a restaurant and a hotel. After three years I moved on and worked for Stuart Surridge , relaunching the brand name. For the last two years I have been on the umpires reserve list and currently I am waiting to see if I have been promoted to the First Class list for the 2011 season.

Editors Note Steve will be our guest speaker in October 2011.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Martin Horton** who has been awarded The Bert Sutcliffe Medal for outstanding services to New Zealand cricket. Martin was appointed as New Zealand's first National Director of Coaching in 1967 and is credited with building the skills of the players who formed the base of New Zealand's successes during the "Golden Era" of the 1970's and 80's. It is a well-deserved honour and we know that Martin is justifiably proud of the honour accorded to him.

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Did you know?

During the season just ended **Robert Croft** became the first Glamorgan cricketer to achieve the double of 10000 runs and 1000 wickets in first-class matches for the county alone. He is the first player to achieve this landmark for any county since May 1972 when **Peter Sainsbury** reached it for Hampshire (**Tony Brown** had got there ten days earlier) and the 37th to do so in all.

Worcestershire's only member of this "exclusive club" is **Dick Howarth** and from Warwickshire **Tom Cartwright**. Apart from Croft the only current players with even 5000 runs and 500 wickets for a single county are **Glen Chapple** for Lancashire and **Dominic Cork**, for Derbyshire.

Shaun Udal who retired at the end of season 2010 also achieved these figures for Hampshire. Well done to **Robert Croft** for being, surely, the last cricketer ever to achieve this outstanding "county career double.

With acknowledgements to The Cricket Society News Bulletin.

Oops!

Apologies to our Secretary, Murray George. His email address is janeandmur@hotmail.com

Surely not!

"In 1962 **Roy Collins** and **Peter Marnier** went briefly berserk against Worcestershire, clouting **Martin Horton** on to the roof of the marquees dotted around the Stourbridge ground and causing spectators to duck for cover as the ball dropped down on to them".

Extract from The Wisden Cricketer Magazine

The enigma that is Owais Shah

"I remember a pre-season trip with John Emburey. I ran at him first ball and hit him straight over his head for six. I just thought that is how you play" **Owais Shah**

"It really hurts me. Certain people get six,seven,eight months in the Test side not performing and then I have two bad Test matches and I am out. That is just bizarre" **Owais Shah**

"England like Owais Shah because he hits the ball in unusual areas. The only problem is his brain is often in unusual areas too" **Derek Pringle**

(Shah was released by Middlesex at the end of season 2010)

Who's Who in Stourbridge Cricket Society

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