

JOURNAL

HAMPSTEAD & WESTMINSTER HOCKEY CLUB

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INTRODUCTION

This is now the fourth of our Newsletters. In the absence of suits for defamation and visits from the Mob we struggle on to find snippets to pass on to the venerable H&W brethren and sisterhood. With no match reports in the close season, we shall try to avoid any mention of the increasingly disowned "Great Summer of Sport" but conscious that appetites for reading sporting news may already be exhausted.



plays too for their Veterans. His speciality he claims is tuition of the perfect reverse stick sweep tackle, which his charges are quickly mastering.

Norman also recalls fondly with Hampstead the first League win for what seemed ever against Maidenhead, accompanied by Ian Catley, Leon Flack and Peter Bell.

A further revised Address List will be held over until the next edition as we seem now to have established a fairly clear idea of who is where. That is not to understate our wish to be alert for (and alerted to) changes and the more obvious cock-ups.

NEWS of OLD MEMBERS

The Journal was distressed to learn that Colin Greenhalgh had suffered a heart attack whilst on the tennis court in early June but was at the last count continuing to make a good recovery back at home. The Editor was never told that this job should carry a Government Health Warning but knows that all the readership will want to wish him a continued speedy and full recovery.

One face that was seen often during Wimbledon week was that of Tony Henman watching son Tim take on the world's best: how is his Hockey faring, Tony? We offer warm congratulations on the success achieved.

A brief note has been received from Mark Ramsay, now definitely in Hong Kong and reporting that Brian Guest was, entirely appropriately, "over the hill" and about to be contacted to be persuaded to join in for some Veterans' Hockey and to dazzle the locals with that renowned stick skill that once adorned Hornsey and Coram's Fields. Mark was eager that the circulation list should be further extended to include Bill Taylor, Geoff Hunt and Steve Pennington, to whom a warm welcome is given (if Ramsay has correctly recorded your addresses). Surprise the rest and tell us how you are all faring.

We have managed to unearth Our Man in Lagos. It was a pleasure to hear from Sam Hatfield, aka *Darkest Horse*, for not only has he sold his flat and bought a house and then married but he is also proud Dad of daughter, India. The family have decided against joining him for a stint of life in Nigeria for the time being, even though Sam reckons that it ain't as bad as folk would have you believe. Who would not guess that he was in the Diplomatic Corps? No Hockey apparently but Sam tries to make it up on the Golf Course, where he has become an expert on the browns (that's Nigerian for a Green) as well as part-time tennis, squash and survival (only joking, Sam). The Daily Torygraph had brought news to West Africa of the Play-Offs, so Sam was really up to date.

It was equally good to hear from Norman Borrett in response to a request for guidance over the engraving of the Secretarts Jug (see later) and who provided some right proper Fanzene material without being asked for it directly. Norman is just as busy as he was whilst at H&W. He is playing 4th XI at Ben Rhydding, where he also coaches the youngsters and

OPEN HOCKEY

The Journal is indebted to Stan Elgar for news of developments right at the top of the sport, which seem yet to reach any national prominence (but admittedly may well do so if they catch the imagination or attention of *Hockey Sport*).

Certainly there seems to have been none of the EPRUC v Brittle battles that so afflicted the world of Rugby Union this winter and spring but, again, it is unlikely that Hockey would be able to award TV rights for close on £70,000,000!

However, in view of the alteration by the FIH of its statutes to remove the term "amateur" and the wish to bring eligibility of players competing at international level into line the International Olympic Committee's Regulations - that is, introduce "Open Hockey" - the Home Councils or appropriate Hockey Associations in the UK have considered the implications and have agreed upon proposals and rule changes that were to be recommended for acceptance, adoption and implementation from June 1996.

News of the future of the National League structures is also awaited: proposals were being discussed last month and it may be premature to announce them (for last year's machinations were far from certain to say the least). There is an immediate concern to H&W Men's 1st XI that in future years there may only be one automatic promotion place from the South League to the National League Play-Offs. Once again, thanks to Stan for his honorary watching brief, which we hope to capitalise upon in the future and perhaps report in the next edition, where we can also bring news of the London League's deliberations of the summer.

STATE OF THE UNION

Middlesex County Hockey Association, through its Secretary, has recently completed an informal but fairly full survey of the state of Men's Hockey in the County (undertaken on a confidential basis). The purpose was to determine the fluctuations in the numbers of teams and players compared with the previous season. Many of the assumptions reached before the survey was conducted have been confirmed, namely that in summary, the state of Hockey in Middlesex is not good. This might well reflect the position in the rest of the country.

29 clubs responded and reported 16 fewer teams in 1995/6 and 45% of Clubs "doubled up" to maintain their lowest ranking team. 17 Clubs lost a total of 153 players (on average

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9, although the range was between 3 and 25) and only 3 gained a total of 26, varying between 4 to 12 (an average of 8.5). 9 Clubs reported no change.

Asked to comment on future prospects, 3 Clubs said that they were in crisis, 5 regarded themselves as "poor": 15 reported no change and 6 were anticipating better prospects. As for their financial base, 5 Clubs say they are on a sound basis. 22 expressed a degree of concern, varying from "just surviving" to "losses which are difficult to sustain": 2 said they were in trouble.

When asked to identify reasons, as for Players, the common theme was that it was too difficult to recruit young players, with fewer state schools playing the game and Saturday jobs probably proving more alluring. With the loss of players comes reduced income, estimated to be £38,000 (in the aggregate) for the Clubs as a whole, coupled with the cost of hire for artificial grass pitches, fractured start times and lack of social cohesion affecting bar takings and other minor sources of Club income.

For the future, the ownership of one's own artificial surface was the basis for optimism for some Clubs. However, in general, member Clubs voiced considerable concern for the future, with anticipated further deterioration in playing numbers and increasing costs.

It is not known whether H&W were included within the Survey's findings but it makes salutary reading. The "youth issue" is well recognised, a large measure of success having been achieved in earlier years, which, through Nick Coleman's leadership, saw a good many play for and be introduced to H&W whilst still at school. These initiatives are now being reactivated under the guidance of Nigel Fletcher, further details of which follow. What is clear however, is that H&W is fortunate being able to win interest from a good many at the start of each season, which it needs in order to counter the fairly rapid turnover of players from one season to the next: 'twas ever thus?

MIDDLESEX NEWS

The County held its AGM on 21st June and only a 90th birthday evening celebration in Crewe (of all places) kept the **Journal's** roving reporter away. However, a useful view of life in the County can be gained from the various reports that were due to be submitted to the Meeting.

Discipline appears to have been a recurring problem for Middlesex Men's Hockey. The situation improved from 1994/5 but still 19% of nation-wide red cards were "awarded" within the County. The worrying trend seems to be that occurrences are increasingly with younger players and lower ranking teams. The introduction and phased adoption of qualified umpires for League fixtures may improve the general standard both on and off the field but the lack of a stampede for qualification as umpires is a cause for concern (and echoes comments that Tony Elliott made to the **Journal** in the last edition).

In his Report, Peter Dodd voices concern over the general state of playing strengths and financial viability covered above and the view from the County that the Hockey Association

ought to be made aware, in case it does reflect a national situation.

The County supports the amalgamation of Women's and Men's administration currently being debated and efforts are being made to deal with this issue within Middlesex by preliminary talks.

On the playing front, Middlesex's National League teams did not fare so well. Mention is made of H&W's "all too brief debut" and Indian Gym's appearance next year in the extended NHL Division 2.

Dave Dixon unfortunately had to relinquish his post as the Manager to the County's senior side, owing to work commitments and Southgate HC were asked to fill the breach, which they did by representing the County, much as H&W did a few years back. Although they knocked out the reigning champions, they lost to Surrey by 2-3, who then went on to win the Championship.

On the playing front at Under 21 level, it was pleasing to note that Daniel Pech, in his first year with H&W, was a member of the County squad. The squad suffers from Sunday matches (with NHL clubs needing their players) and, secondly, just like H&W, from good quality young players going off to University just as they begin to make an impression.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

So what is H&W doing about its youth? It had been whispered that H&W tended to reject young players and Colts and was a difficult Club to get admitted to. As with other clubs (see above) the average age within H&W is tending to increase and this therefore is something which the Committee has wanted to put to rights for several years. Fortunately, Nigel Fletcher has now come forward to help run sessions for youth players and hopefully to propel development forward from where Nick Coleman last left it when interest then waned (it tends to be admission to Universities that is the problem - especially in such a diversely populated place like London).

Three local schools, St George's, St Augustine's and Quintin Kynaston have been approached and were apparently keen to be involved and there was to have been a meeting with the City of Westminster's Sports Development Unit earlier this month. Other suggested schools were The Hall, Highgate and UCS at Frognaal, with whom a good relationship was cast before. There was some hope that we might be able to persuade UCS to offer the use of their pitch but these are early days. A slot has been reserved at PRG on Sunday mornings in the hope (and expectation) of getting something moving.

SECRETARY'S JUG

No: not a spelling error but the engraved name of a bold Jug previously with the Club, which appeared recently to have gone the way of the World Cup in 1966. Our version of Pickles (that's ending with an "s" and not a "d") has brought it back to life and the research teams have been busy to identify and cross-check details of the Club's General Secretaries since 1979 when Brian Owles' initials were last carved into the surface. A full list has now been obtained and the Engravers have been

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asked to match the original style. We hope to have the updated Jug back behind the bar at the Carlton and in full use as the new season opens. Doubtless there are a few stories behind this piece of steel, including its esoteric name, which someone might come forward with (doubtless less exciting than that those associated with the Barnard Cup and its dent). Can anyone with a Mastermind Memory help?

BULLETIN

The forthcoming season will hopefully see the re-birth of the Club's fortnightly Bulletin circulated to the playing membership with team selections. Upon David Bott's departure, the Club was unable to find anyone willing to fill the breach, save for interim bouts of news and comment, but certainly not the desk-top publication that the Club became accustomed to. True, it had some esoteric reporting, which ventured on the philosophical or truly [antipodeanly - if there is such a word] opaque from time to time. However, coming from the pen (or processor) of a 1st XI player there was the benefit of regular results from the top teams.

Well for this next year, Rosemary Warne (honorary GK to the Spaniards) has agreed to try her hand, with reports of the Men's and Women's 1st XI matches and results only from the other teams. This should greatly assist the Journal in compiling reasonably accurate reports of matters on the playing front as the season progresses: syndicated rates are yet to be negotiated however!

In the hope of giving Rosemary some encouragement, here are a few gems (well, examples, any rate) uncovered from the pen of the Bulletin editor for March 1984 (the Richmond block fixture)

1st XI Lost 0-2. Well, we was (sic) slow to start off with but we got quicker and as usual played 'em off the park for the last 20 minutes of the first half. The second half was different and ended as the most shambolic since Teddington in 1941 (so Norm [Borrett?] tells me). They scored a very nifty goal early on and killed us off with a second with about two minutes left.

3rd XI Won 2-1. Partisan performance on Paddington's plastic plains. Retrospecting regrouping ruins renegade Richmond rally. Gutless guests grab grubby goal. Coleman's chat chivvies changelings. Heartened Hampstead hammer hapless harlots. Sensational shortie stuns soporific southerners. Easily earned equaliser eradicates embarrassment. Persistent pressure penalises pitifully ponderous prats. Stocky super-sub Simon Stockbridge slithers second score. We won. Timely Teale tremendous. (Always avoid alliteration).

Not so sure about the syntax there - still, such is the product of the pre-Blunkett/Shepherd Era! Were we really playing at Paddington so far back (comparatively)?

VETERANS on TOUR

On the first weekend in June the Veterans were invited to the St George's Club at Courtrai, Belgium for a summer tournament. Taking advantage of the Eurostar, the team

travelled via Lille and are reputed to have spent the whole time in the Bar. Despite (or because of) this, the team played well, beating the French and German representatives but came unstuck against a team from Antwerp on the Saturday afternoon (who eventually went on to win the whole event). However, after a well-deserved draw against the South Africans, H&W won the 3rd/4th Play Off on Sunday against the host club. The entire proceedings were greatly enjoyed and in particular the Saturday night when there was a special Dinner from which the Tournament justifiably lives up to its name, "Gastronomic"

The tourists were Pycock, Watson, Critchlow, Brown R, Sykes, Brown S, Elliott C, Hansen, Chapman, McIlwaine and Sheffield

AND THE NEXT.....

Undaunted, Harry Watson then eagerly awaited another trip to Europe and did not need to wait too long, for on the very next weekend he joined what he calls a Youngsters Trip to Utrecht, to the Kampong Hockey Club. So eager to play was Graham Tomkinson that he flew back from New York where he is on a temporary work assignment just for the event (and a long trip back afterwards!).

This is the home of the last non-German Men's club to have won the European Championship and its Women are the current holders of the same Championship (but for Women - the script says). Harry was much impressed with the beauty of the city and the splendid club and its facilities.

H&W were the only non-Dutch team playing, which may have had something to do with the presence of Sjeff de Kimpe, who left H&W this summer after a happy few years at the Club and who had ensured a strong representation from the Men's 5th XI. The team did well to win 3, draw 3 and lose 4 (sounds like rather a lot of Hockey for a weekend tournament?). Apparently there was a Ladies Tournament going on at the same time which ensured that the Saturday disco was more than an inebriates' convention (that's PC for a piss-up) where many partnerships began but, as usual, failed to blossom.

Ironically, Kampong were so pleased with the lads' performance (being the last to leave on the Sunday) that in a very rash moment, they said they would like the team to return perhaps with a Women's side as well. Truly, this is a great honour from one of Europe's premier Clubs.

The team's shirts also stood out and not just for their colour. In the spirit of Euro 96 the players' names were also displayed on their backs. The team therefore comprised: Schmeichel (aka Keep P); Gullit (Watson); Bergkamp (Tomkinson); Baggio (Paskin J); Gascoigne (Sjeff de Kimpe); Rijkaard (Critchlow); Asprilla (Maqdair P); Klinsmann (Angus Matthew - wonder why, huh?); Romario (Johnson P); Chapuisat (Mark Kunzli - ever loyal to his Swiss birthright). Now in that Pub Quiz you will be able to name at least one Swiss footballer - and you read it first in the Journal! - that is, unless, of course, Harry has got the wrong spelling, which doubtless will be picked up by any eagle-eyed anorak or amateur Statto. [Apologies to those abroad who are in blissful ignorance of BBC TV's Fantasy Football League programme]

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WESTMINSTER CHALLENGE

This year's Challenge will be held at the Recreation Ground on the weekend of 14th and 15th September. It is hoped that it will provide stiff practice for the Men's 1st XI in the run-up to their new League campaign.

The participating clubs are expected to be Surbiton, Oxford University and H&W in Pool A; Old Loughtonians, Crostyx and Maidenhead in Pool B; East Grinstead, Bromley and Cambridge University in Pool C and Guildford, City of Portsmouth and Edgbaston in Pool D. So as you will quickly see, the old Surbiton rivalry will once again be renewed.

Matches are to start at 9.45am on both days and will end at about 6.15pm on the Saturday and 5.00pm on the Sunday. All matches will be of 70 minutes' duration, under the new Rules and umpired by the Middlesex County Association. The Challenge Cup will be awarded to the Winners and fair play awards are at the discretion of the Umpires and the Tournament Committee. There is a suggestion that *Hockey Sport* will try to convene a Hockey Fair at the event which is in addition to the Social Evening (see below).

In addition it is proposed that the weekend be used as a focal point for the introduction to H&W of youngsters for the refreshed youth development programme. Further the Club is to hold its first social event of the year on the Saturday night at the Carlton and which the 1st XIs have been asked to organise (they have been told that this is the word between *organ* and *orgasm* in the Oxford English Dictionary).

Offers are being sought for folk to act as Liaison Officers for the 11 visiting Clubs. The duties are not expected to be arduous (collecting a few drinks perhaps? - sorting the scoreboard etc: great, if it's 0-0!) and a little lunch is hopefully on offer for those willing to contribute. Those interested should ring John McCabe whose telephone and fax number is 0171 252 0344.

Club members are being told that if their visits to Lillywhites (chance would be a fine thing!) has always led to frustration they should not despair, as Chris Alcock of Best Option Sports will be present throughout the weekend with a complete range of hockey gear/equipment at competitive prices. Now might be the time (*might* is right!) to improve your game and to treat yourself to the dazzling power and cachet value of a new Vision 2 stick or the comfort and security of a pair of Camasitas.

ENCORE FANZENE

As mentioned at the opening, the **Journal** has not had to dip into its legal liability policy to fend off the disgruntled litigious, so off it went in search of another unfortunate soul, armed with its own version of University Challenge's *Starters for Ten*.

For this edition, who better than the star Tourist (still eager not to miss the pre-season trip to Newport and to enjoy the delights of Spitty Park) aka Harry Watson, known to virtually everyone in the Club for all the best reasons, we are sure. Harry, we trust, has found a happy Club in which he is held in high esteem and in which to spend the autumn of his

playing career, after several years at the top. He has shown a good example to his contemporaries by putting something back and acting as Men's Club Captain for this and last year (with hopefully other contributions to be made later).

Harry runs his own futures business, after surviving more than a few torrid years in the burn-out atmosphere of LIFFE and lives in East Finchley, from whose wonderful but unsung late Art Deco Underground station it is not too difficult to find his way home after an allegedly rare evening out: that's what the double yellow lines in the gutter are for, after all.

So, tell us, Harry:-

At what age did you first start playing Hockey?

8 years old

What was your first competitive match and with what result?

(for) Magdalen College School U14 0-2 New College School [1970]

When did you join Hampstead/Hampstead & Westminster?

1982

Which H&W teams have you played for?

All; bar 6th and 7th XI (ie including 1st XI and Spaniards XI)

Which H&W match result gave you the most pleasure?

Teddington 0-1 Hampstead; 1st XI, London League 1982

Who is your best H&W player you have played alongside?

Alex Lampert (ex Gross Plokebeck Club, Hamburg)

Which is the best Hockey match you have watched?

Live? England v West Germany 1986 World Cup Semi Final

TV? Great Britain v West Germany 1988 Olympic Final

Play? v Real Club Polo de Barcelona; relayed live on TV (and on my 21st birthday)

Who is the best Hockey player you have seen playing?

Tommy van Tek (Netherlands)

What was the last item of Hockey kit that you bought?

Polo neck Ski shirt, to wear beneath a Hockey shirt (older men are less tolerant of the cold and/or don't run around as much as they once did)

What infuriates you most about Hockey?

Hockey Association officials, who constantly make mistakes and fail to get the feel of the grass roots of Hockey

Your most amusing incident on a Hockey pitch?

National League home match at PRG with only one (rather than the usual 6) match ball available. At an opposition short corner, a dog (let off its leash by a passer by) ran on to the pitch and pinched the ball from beneath the push out, just as it was about to be taken

Which team do you least look forward to playing against?

Slough (of the past) and Eastcote

Which other Club do you most admire?

Real Club de Polo Barcelona

Except for Hockey, which sport gives you most pleasure?

Predominantly, watching and playing cricket

FINALLY

The next edition is likely to out in October, as the **Journal** tries to gather interesting news: hopefully we can bring some results and playing news. OK; so you've spotted the lack of this during your trapeze through the earlier three pages! All we would ask is for some contributions to add to the Old Members' News in the opening paragraph or two, or perhaps a treatise on your views on the present state of.....*????????????*