

HAMPSTEAD HOCKEY CLUB

Rosemary House,
16 Church St.,
Hampton,
Middx.,
TW12 2EG

Tel: 979 5809

6th November 1988

Dear Old Member,

Here we go with another new season and my early-season Newsletter to you all. Let me begin with the most important - and, I suppose one might say, promising - news in years:

The Club has moved again! As some of you may know, from the end-of-season dinner, the Committee (under the guidance of President Peter Boizot) was looking at the possibility of moving to Paddington. Well, it all came to pass. The situation is this: the home pitches are now at Paddington Recreation Ground in Carlton Vale, W.9 - just a few hundred yards from Maida Vale Station (Bakerloo Line). They are two Astro-Turf pitches (or one of the Astro-Turf look-a-likes); they are hired from Westminster City Council for 4 1/2 hours every Saturday (from 11.30 a.m. to 4 p.m.); and one of them is floodlit. So we should get half-a-dozen home games on them every Saturday, except in the worst possible weather conditions. And all XI's - including the Veterans and the Ladies - should play all their home matches at home and on a superb modern surface.

Changing rooms and showers are at the ground and have been re-furbished during the Summer. So, again, I believe they, too, are excellent.

And an arrangement has been set up with the Paddington Sports Club - in Castellain Road, only about 600 yards from the pitches - for refreshment and bar facilities. Paddington is an excellent tennis, squash, and bowls club (British champions or something, I believe) and the clubhouse facilities are also first class - much larger than anything we have been used to. (But one important point for when you visit: they only have a very small car park which is reserved for their members, so it's a question of finding spaces in the road outside for us - or leaving cars outside the Recreation Ground and walking the 600 yards there and back.)

Finally, some of you - those with the longer memories - may say 'this is Boston Manor all over again'. But: (a) Westminster Council have given us a 5-year agreement on hiring the pitches, with every intention of renewal if it all works out; (b) they offer as good a playing surface (probably) as any in the country - and floodlights for one match; (c) the changing facilities are also excellent - and at the ground (remember the two showers after flogging back to the West Ealing Club?); (d) the clubhouse is also splendid; and (e) it's only 600 yards from the pitches (not a car drive, as at West Ealing). Also, it's not only the most central location of any major hockey club in London, but 'Maida Vale' is quite a 'smart' address! So, you must agree, it does all sound very promising - hopefully the start of a new era - and we must congratulate, if only provisionally, Peter Boizot and his dynamic Committee.

Just two last points to round out this picture. As you will gather, the Club has, by mutual consent, severed its constitutional links with the Hornsey Club.

But, (a) to be fair to Hornsey, (b) because, strictly, our chaps had contracted to be members there for the coming year, and (c) as a possible safeguard against things not working out at the Paddington Club, a sub. is being paid to Hornsey for this year to retain a form of 'special membership' there. And, in fact, some miscellaneous games - e.g. the Spaniards Mixed XI games - are being played there. So the link, established 29 years ago, is not being cut entirely.

Westminster City Council have been enthusiastic and, I believe, have positively encouraged our tenancy of the pitches. (The reason being, I understand, that they are keen to nurture hockey as a game with a good, clean image - they can't have seen Sandy and Jeremy in their heyday as the 1st XI full-backs!) But, understandably, they would like our existence to be associated with 'Westminster'. In the short term, this explains the legend 'A City of Westminster Hockey Club' on the fixture card. In the longer term, a general meeting of the club may be asked to approve a name-change - for instance, to 'Hampstead and Westminster Hockey Club'. Personally, I think that sounds quite smart - and doesn't diminish our identity at all - but, since this is a 'historic' issue, you might feel like expressing an opinion, e.g. to Peter (Boizot) or to the Club Captain (Richard Chapman) or Secretary (Roger Rookes) - addresses and 'phone numbers in the fixture card.

Well, I think that tells you as much as I know about the move. The next thing is to tell you that, as usual, you will have an opportunity to inspect it all for yourself at the annual 'Old Members Day', when 'John Haynes' International XI' plays against the Veterans as usual. The date, this year, is 26th November, at Paddington Rec., of course, and this game has been awarded the prime time-slot, of 2.30 p.m. All welcome, to inspect the facilities - and the contestants - but, as usual, would you be good enough to provide an indication on the tear-off slip if you would like to have tea at the clubhouse, because I'm not certain, as yet, how fussed Paddington will be about exact numbers. As I have mentioned, the game shouldn't be cancelled because of the weather conditions but, if it is absolutely atrocious - deep snow or something - and you don't want to risk a wasted journey, then give me a ring before 1 p.m. and I'll report the situation to you.

What other news is there? Very sadly, having told you, at the end of last season, that dear old John Sankey was 'as well as can be expected and very cheerful', I received the news in May, from his daughter, that he had just died - at the grand old age of 89 (not 90, as he himself had told me last year!) I managed to inform several old members of his era, and half-a-dozen of us attended his funeral - in the church adjacent to the house in Hanworth where he (and Gladys) had lived for so many years. Betsy (John's daughter) was good enough to donate the whistles with which he umpired so many games for us, and I am in the process of getting them mounted, and will suggest, to the Committee, that they be added to the Barnard Cup, and other trophies, to be awarded at the A.G.M. every year. I thought to 'the most conscientious player or umpire of the season' - an award in John's mould - but let me know if you have a better idea.

Ironically, the day after John's funeral was the 'Veterans and Vintage Dinner', of which I advised you at the end of the season. Held at Jack Straw's Castle, it proved to be just the success we hoped for. Good, old-fashioned dinner, with Phil Appleyard (President of the H.A.) as our principal guest and providing an excellent after-dinner speech (in which I, personally, was very pleased to hear him extol the virtues of ordinary club hockey - including the lowe XI's - as well as the national side). Plus our old friend (and Hon. Old Member) Dick Cheston knocking them in the aisles in his 'vintage' form. Some

30-odd Old Members and Veterans attended - including, from memory, Andrew Alexander, Tony Bailey, Peter Bell, Geoff Brookes, Noel Cardoza, John Chaumeton, Eigil Kruse-Kempen, Donald Meacock, Geoff Porter, Beaker Saunders (really good to see him - the 'father of the club' now), David Smyth, Kip Stafford, Bob Tom and Hugh Wickham. (Stan Elgar, who organised the dinner so admirably, and myself, and Peter Boizot etc. count as current members, for this purpose, because of our continuing association with the Veterans - very tenuous in my case, with my whistle, about six times a year.) Definitely, in my opinion, a function to be regularly repeated.

Now, how are the first XI faring on their new pitches? Much better, I am glad to say. In the London League (now minus those high-flyers who have moved into the new National League - Southgate, Hounslow, Slough etc.), we have won two (Old Kingstonians and Cheam), drawn one (Maidenhead), and lost two (Purley and Cambridge University - very early in the season, and both by the odd goal). And the really encouraging news is that they have notched six goals in their last two league matches - slotting them in at last! Quite apart from those league successes, they have won through two rounds of the National Cup (the equivalent of the F.A. Cup) - Staines and Croydon - and they are due to travel to Isca (a Devon club) in the third round on 13th November. The only snag is that Isca are one of the clubs in the 1st Division of the National League, so this will be a real test of their new-found capabilities, and motivation. (STOP PRESS: That goal-scoring facility has evaporated again : 0-0 against Hawks. But it's another point in the League table.)

Much of that motivation has come, I believe, from the new Club Coach - Greg Carr. Again, under the inspired leadership of Peter Boizot - and with the assistance of ex-Secretary Brian Owles, now living in Wahroonga (where?) - Greg has been recruited from Australia, where he was a State player and coach, and, together with his wife, they are both playing for our respective 1st XI's. I hear that everybody is very enthusiastic about what he has achieved in his first six weeks or so, and the results are beginning to show it.

Finally, yet another good move. (This newsletter is very bull-ish, isn't it?) Through the stalwart efforts of a couple of the chaps, and chapesses, a new magazine /newsletter has been started, called 'The Bobbler'. The intention is that it will be published 3 or 4 times a season, and it will contain all the news (match results and reports), social functions, gossip etc. which has not found a place in what, of necessity, have become selection bulletins over recent years. The intention is that 'The Bobbler' will be mailed to our Old Members, too. I understand that you should receive Issue 1 very soon (and, probably, Issue 2 at the same time). If, by any chance, you don't receive it before Old Members' Day (26th November), then let me know and I'll try to find out why.

But I am taking the opportunity of this mailing to send you a fixture card for the season. However, I am going to change this system. Instead of asking if you want a card for this year, I'll just send it (otherwise the weeks are ticking by). Then at the beginning of next season, I'll just send fixture cards to those people who acknowledged this season's - and who, therefore, appear to want to continue. (Otherwise, as you can imagine, I might go on sending them for years to people who have lost interest.) By the way, if you feel like supporting the 1st XI in any of their home matches - and I'm sure they would welcome it - I think they always have the prime-time 2.30 slot at Paddington Rec.

A by-product of this arrangement is that a donation won't be a pre-requisite of receiving a fixture card. Nevertheless, I know that the Club does appreciate

the donations they have received from old members during the last couple of seasons. You will understand that I don't acknowledge them all individually, but some have been very generous and they are appreciated by the Committee. Let us say that, in total, they more than compensate the Club for the cost of these mailings and fixture cards etc.

That's it for now. Hope you enjoy all the news, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on 26th November.

Yours sincerely,

Adam
C. GREENHALGH

P.S. Remember that the Centenary is only 5 years away. It would be nice to build up a really comprehensive mailing list of Old Members by then. I am enclosing the current list: please let me know if you have an address for any other O.M.'s who were good, keen, members and, you believe, would be interested in being in touch again.

To: C. Greenhalgh
16 Church St.,
Hampton,
Middx., TW12 2EG

HAMPSTEAD HOCKEY CLUB: 1988-89

* DELETE AS APPROPRIATE

* I expect to attend the Old Members' Day on 26th November and would like tea.
(Only for guidance - don't let it tie you either way)

* I would like to continue to receive these news letters and a fixture card in future seasons

* I enclose a donation of £..... (cheques made out to the club, please)

Name:.....

Address:.....

..... Tel. No:.....

(NO NEED FOR YOUR ADDRESS IF YOU HAVE RETURNED PREVIOUS SLIPS AND YOUR ADDRESS HASN'T CHANGED. OTHERWISE, PLEASE DO COMPLETE IT, SO THAT MY MAILING LIST IS UP-TO-DATE - WITH POST-CODES ETC.)