

HAMPSTEAD AND WESTMINSTER HOCKEY CLUB

16 Church Street,
Hampton,
Middx.,
TW12 2EG
(Tel: 979 5809
or Answerphone: 941 1151)

7th March 1990

Dear Old Member,

I have had to re-write the first page of this end-season letter! Drafting it before the week-end, I had a very exciting prospect: the 1st XI was on target to be playing Surbiton in two weeks' time, with the prospect, if they beat them, of being equal top of the London League. (Whoops again - the PizzaExpress London League). The situation, then, was that Surbiton had drawn only two matches in the League so far, we had lost to Spencer and drawn one other match, and Spencer had lost to Surbiton and also drawn one other. So a victory against Surbiton would have made us equal first with Spencer. Regrettably, it isn't to be - we lost to Dulwich on Saturday (0 - 1), on a day on which Spencer were drawing with Beckenham (whom, incidentally, we beat 4 - 2 the week before). So, in this most exciting of seasons, it needs a couple of minor miracles for us now to be playing for the title. I think, if my arithmetic is right, that both Surbiton and Spencer must lose next Saturday, as well as our beating Surbiton subsequently, for us to sneak through as outright champions. (The arithmetic, by the way, is made more complicated by the modern reckoning of 3 points for a win and only 1 for a draw.) Well, I suppose we must never say die, and just hope for that unlikely outcome but, obviously, one is not nearly so bullish as before the week-end.

Incidentally, despite all that, I am sure the chaps would still welcome your support if you were able to go along and watch them against Surbiton: if they did manage to win, it would still be a considerable feather in their cap - to beat the side who must now be clear favourites to win the title. So, the details are as follows:

Date: Saturday, 24th March

Time: 2.30 p.m.

Venue: Our home ground, at Paddington Recreation Ground

And, even though it doesn't look as though we shall now be playing for the title, and therefore, for possible promotion to the National League, nevertheless the team have really done us proud this season. In the League we have beaten Old Kingstonians, Cambridge University, Cheam, Maidenhead, Hawks, London University, Oxford University, Tulse Hill, Wimbledon, Beckenham and Mid-Surrey, drawn with Purley (an aberration at the start of the season), and lost to Spencer and Dulwich (with Blackheath and Surbiton still to come). Apart from that, I think we have lost only one other game all season - namely to Guildford (a National League club) in the third round of the National Cup, having beaten NatWest Bank and Oxford Hawks in the first two rounds. And that's not all because, apart from a list of further victories in friendly matches and in the Middlesex Cup (we play against OK's this Sunday in, I think, the quarter-final), we also, during the winter break from the league, drew with one National League 1st Division team - Old Loughtonians - and beat another - Indian Gymkhana. (I don't know if they were at full strength but, nevertheless, that's still very good going.) Whatever else one can say, the 1st XI must be on course for the Barnard Cup - after a gap of many years - so they won't go away entirely empty-handed this season!

Oh, and incidentally, we have four representatives in the Middlesex County

squad - our first representative honours for a number of years - and they are still on target for the County Championship.

So, one way and another, things really are looking up at 1st XI level, after altogether too many years in the doldrums at that (shop-window) level.

Our thanks must go to Peter Boizot, who has been an inspirational President (don't believe the canard that we start every match 1 - 0 on account of him sponsoring the league), to Greg Carr, our Australian coach - who has performed marvels with the team - and to this year's Captain, Mike Hick.

Well, what else do I have for you after that inspiring news? Let me give you another date: the 'Vintage and Veterans' Dinner will be held again this year on Friday, 6th April - at Jack Straw's Castle (top of Hampstead Hill) as usual. The time: 7.30 (or earlier, if you like) for approx. 8.00 p.m. Stan Elgar is kind enough to make the arrangements again, and has managed to keep the price to £18 a head - including modest quantities of wine. (Pay for your extras if you want to drink immodest quantities.) Please apply to Stan on the tear-off slip if you'd like to attend (we have had an excellent turn-out for the first two of these new old-style dinners) - or give him a ring (on 0277 840 421) if you'd prefer. Incidentally, to clear up one point of slight ambiguity from the two previous dinners: the President (who is back from his jaunt to the World Cup in Pakistan!) will - I am told - be wearing his D.J. Other attenders are welcome to wear either D.J.'s or lounge suits (or, indeed, blazers) if they prefer - as long as we are all fairly 'respectable'.

However, one thing has changed since the last two dinners. We are to dine in the larger, and newly refurbished, restaurant on the top floor of Jack Straw's. (Never fear, I understand there is a lift!) This is larger than the previous room and has a separate bar. Therefore, there should be no difficulty about accommodating private guests: please feel free to invite anybody (male - as is our 'tradition') whom you think would enjoy the evening.

Now, some more news of the season drawing towards its close. The other XI's in the Club (including the ladies three XI's) continue to perform pretty well - some of them extremely well - and to turn in results well on the credit side. Unfortunately, I can't give you chapter and verse until they are all compiled for the end-of-season statistics: read this column next Autumn.

By the way, one O.M. said, after last Autumn's report, that the only thing now lacking was Junior Hockey. Not so! The Club does run coaching and some matches for 'colts'. Again, I am not sure of the exact details (there is too much to bone up on nowadays), but if you do happen to be interested - either for your own kids (or grand-children!) or for friends, or, maybe, to offer some assistance, please give Nick Coleman a ring on 800 4853.

The Peter Boizot 60th Birthday Surprise Dinner at Lord's was a great success. And it was a genuine surprise to Peter: Jim Atkinson (of the Veterans' XI) got Peter there, with the aid of a 'forged' letter on Sports Council paper, to a totally different function. On arrival, he found himself walking into a room with about 100 members, old members, representatives of the two leagues which Peter sponsors (the Peroni South League, as well as the PizzaExpress London League), wives etc., and just a few official guests. They included Phil Appleyard, the President of the H.A., who made an excellent speech in toasting Peter's health, to which he responded in fine style - ex tempore, of course. Incidentally, the guests also included Beaker Saunders, whom the Club was kind enough to invite as the 'father of the Club', representing an earlier generation (or 3 or 4 generations, I suppose - Beaker having been elected in 1930). Also present from the Old Members' list (apart from myself and Mrs. G.) were: Berry and Yolande Bermingham, Stan and Joyce Elgar, Bill and Peggy Fletcher, Morley Pecker, Jeremy Potter, Derek Ratcliffe and Tony Swing. The Club also presented Peter with a thoughtful birthday present - a full-length

cartoon of himself (in Hampstead kit) commissioned from a well-known cartoonist, John Jensen, and autographed by everyone present at the dinner.

The 'Old Members' Day' at Paddington was a limited success. John Haynes' 'International XI' were (if I remember rightly - I was only the umpire!) beaten fairly convincingly - missing a couple of their usual stalwart defenders. But we then had the opportunity to stay on and watch the 1st XI beat Oxford University emphatically (5 - 1). I'm afraid I didn't make a note of exactly who was in attendance, but it was a pleasure to see Kip Stafford again, from his Suffolk outpost, and Andrew Alexander, as usual, amongst others.

At the beginning of February, the Club held a President's Day, at the Paddington Ground and back at the clubhouse. The 1st XI notched up another fine win, 3 - 2, against the President's XI, with half-a-dozen GB, England and Wales internationals, and Middlesex (with its four Hampstead players) beat Oxfordshire to advance in the County Championship. The Mayor of Westminster attended, which shows that we are moving in prestigious circles now. I have suggested to Peter that, if this is to be a regular annual event, we might co-ordinate it with the Old Members' day at the Club - either instead of, or as well as, the existing day. Anyway, during the summer, when next year's fixture list is being compiled, I will liaise with Peter and the Fixture Secretary, so that I can ensure that you are posted at the start of next season. In the meantime, if you have any views (a Saturday at end-November/early-December, with John Haynes XI v. Veterans and 1st XI in a league match - though that will probably change from year to year; and/or a Sunday in early February with 1st XI against an invited Presidents' XI and possibly a representative match, too - though, again, that might well change from year to year), then please convey your preference to me - the Dinner on 6th April would be a convenient occasion to do so.

I must report on recruitment to the Old Members' list. Since my last letter, we have picked up another six members: Adrian Arnold (4th XI in the 60's - prison governor, and an old cronic of Peter's since Cambridge days), Aubrey Balhetchet (also 4th XI, but the previous decade), Richard Clarke (an inspiring 1st XI Captain in the rather depressing late-60's - whom I was very pleased to bump into when umpiring the Veterans against Oxford Hawks), Mike Peddar (one of the middle XI's - I can't remember which - around the 70's), John Tallon (2nd XI mostly, but 1st XI sometimes, I seem to remember - also 70's), and Alastair Stormont (one of the 60's New Zealand brigade, whom I managed to sign up just before his planned return to that outpost).

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To: S.N. Elgar,
4 High St.,
Stock,
Essex, CM4 9BA

HAMPSTEAD H.C. VINTAGE AND VETERANS' DINNER: 6 APRIL

I would like to attend and to bring guest(s)

I enclose a cheque for (£18 a head, payable to S.N. Elgar)

I would prefer a vegetarian main course (PLEASE TICK)

My guest(s)/....of them would prefer a vegetarian main course.... (PLEASE TICK)

Name:..... Address (for ticket):.....

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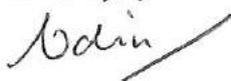
But, as I have said before, it's difficult to build up this list: after all, most people leave the club because they have moved away. So, if you do come across - or hear of - any old members who would be suitable for the list (decent chaps who were keen and conscientious in their time), please do let me know where I can find them and I'll do the rest. We are now up to 50-odd on the list: let's make a big push to reach 100 by our Centenary year (1994).

By the way, several of those new recruits - as well as lots of the existing list - were kind enough to send generous donations to the Club. (Don't worry if yours hasn't been debited against your bank statement yet: I tend to send them in batches to the Treasurer, rather than in ones and twos.) Some of those donations offset the cost of these mailings, and the run-on costs of extra fixture cards, but I believe the rest are being earmarked for special expenditures (the Centenary celebrations are a case in point). You will appreciate that I don't acknowledge those donations individually: nevertheless, I know that they are very much appreciated by the Club.

Looking ahead, here's one for the Autumn. The Veterans have been invited to a prestigious International Veterans' Tournament in Malaysia* with teams from all over the world competing - as a result of the Sultan's team being in the pool which played at Hornsey in the last World Cup at Hornsey. Stan (Elgar) is organising that event, too - what an industrious little goalkeeper he is! (For those of you who don't know, he's still playing most Saturdays, too!) The cost, I understand, is likely to be in the region of £1,000 for air fare and a week's accommodation, and camp-followers would be very welcome. Contact Stan if you are interested in joining the party. (*18th - 23rd September.)

I think that brings you adequately up-to-date for this year. Keep your eyes skinned on the results in the national press, just to see if the miracle occurs and we really are playing against Surbiton to decide the league. Apart from that, see you at the Dinner, when lots of old acquaintances will, hopefully, be renewed. And don't forget to delve into the fastnesses of your memory to recommend more old members for the list.

Yours aye,



C. GREENHALGH

PETER BOIZOT'S SECRET BIRTHDAY BALL

You may have heard that Peter Boizot will be 60 in November.

Most of you will know Peter, as one of the longest-serving members of Hampstead & Westminster Hockey Club and, for some years, President of the Club. Unless you have served on committees or otherwise been involved in the game's administration, you may not fully appreciate the great contribution (in terms of commitment, time and money) that Peter has made to the sport, at club, league and national level.

To mark his birthday, the Club has arranged to host a dinner, to be held at ~~The Grason~~, Lords, St. John's Wood, NW8 on Tuesday, 14th November 1989. Peter has been invited to attend a fictitious event organised by the Sports Council. **HE DOES NOT KNOW (WE HOPE) WHAT THE TRUE PURPOSE OF THE EVENING IS.**

There will be 100 places for the dinner. Dress will be formal and guests are asked to arrive between 7.30-8.00. Tickets are priced at £ 25 each. We hope you will be able to attend. If you would like to apply for tickets, please complete the slip below and return it to the address shown, with your payment, **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** Tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

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TO: Nick Openshaw
22 Aden Grove
London
N16 9NJ.

I would like tickets at £25.00 each to the dinner on Tuesday, 14th November 1989. I enclose a cheque for £ made payable to Hampstead & Westminster Hockey Club.

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PRINT NAME

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PRINT ADDRESS (for tickets)