

# Hampstead and Westminster Hockey Club

Newsletter February 2009

*Keeping Vice Presidents and Friends in the know*

## Welcome

**This is an interim Newsletter and a little impromptu, to accompany an invitation to join other Vice Presidents and Friends of the Club at the Men's 1's clash with Southgate at Paddington Recreation Ground on 15 March, with a 2.00pm start. A buffet will be provided but to organise things properly we shall need to gain an idea of numbers, so please reply if you will be able to attend and wish to participate.**

This could well be another key game for the 1's and it would be good to outnumber the visiting support, which is usually very strong.

## People News

*Two different Air Ambulances were involved in a race against time to save a Bude man's life highlighting their vital role and emphasising the need to raise funds to keep them in the air.*

This happened to be none other than [Dave Teale](#), the Club's General Secretary in the early 1980's and who ran the ship almost single-handedly. As it is a matter of record, we hope that Dave will not object to our reporting his story that unfolded last September.

Dave, now tired Junior School teacher was watching golfers on the North Cornwall and Bude Golf Course. His ground floor flat is directly opposite the 18th Tee and as a former player, he would spend many hours studying players' form.

Dave suddenly became aware of severe pains across his chest. He immediately realised that he was having a heart attack. Instantly he walked to the Ambulance Station, fewer than 100m away. Fortunately a paramedic was in the building, waiting to go out. He called to his partner. They checked Dave's condition and diagnosed a heart attack. They managed to stabilise the condition but realised that Dave would need to be taken by road to the North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple.

As Dave's was a severe attack, they doubted if they would reach the hospital in time and they called for the Cornish Air Ambulance. As the golf course was adjacent, there was more than sufficient landing space for the helicopter. Unfortunately however, the course was surrounded by a fence and there was no wheelchair access. Four Ambulance men therefore had to lift the chair over the fence (Dave within it) before the helicopter could take off for Barnstaple.

Once in the hospital, the emergency team carried out some tests and decided that Dave's condition was such that major surgery was itself a risk. Angioplasty was therefore needed and would have to be administered in Exeter. Dave was put into a road ambulance but after a few miles, his condition deteriorated and, by now in the neighbouring county, the **Devon** Air Ambulance had to be called.

This helicopter arrived quickly. Dave was ferried to Exeter but the angioplasty was unsuccessful. That meant that only one further procedure was possible - major heart surgery and that would be need to be carried out in Plymouth.

As soon as a bed and operating theatre were available, Dave was taken by road to Plymouth successfully operated on. On the following day he was up and walking about and 4½ days later he was allowed to return home to Bude.

We hear that Dave is not only fit and well but he takes his dog for a four-mile walk twice a day. He considers that his NHS treatment, two helicopters and two road ambulances have given him a

new lease of life. He has expressed his gratitude for the care given to him throughout the treatment and mentioned in particular the preparation before each move or stage of the treatment. This removed his fear of the unknown and gave him confidence to endure the procedures. He cannot speak too highly of the Ambulance crews, who worked so well together in many difficult circumstances. We send him our best wishes.

## On the Pitch

The second half of the season is now in full swing.

## Men's 1<sup>st</sup> XI

The second half of the season in the Premiership began in February with the news of the docking by the English Hockey League of points for fielding an unregistered player in the last game in December, when the squad was badly affected by injury and other absences. The EHL demands that all potential players are registered centrally and are allocated a unique reference number. Photo ID is also prescribed and can be called for at every game by the EHL's appointed Match Official (Technical Delegate or TD in *oldspeak*).

Before every game each team has to lodge a team sheet recoding the names of the selected players, who are then eligible to sit on the team bench, alongside the pitch. All players potentially liable to be called up to play have to be named and numbered. This sheet has to be authenticated by a signature. This confirms the eligibility of the players listed and in conformity with the League rules. For example, no new players can be registered to a team after 31 December.

Somewhat oddly, the Match official repeats by hand these details in his own official report and this includes the names and the registered number of each player. Presumably there would not have been a number allocated for the player concerned, even though it had been assumed by everyone involved with the team that the necessary paperwork had been cleared beforehand with the EHA – or else the player would not have been enlisted to play on that Sunday.

Whilst the team appreciates that the primary responsibility for verification lies with the team and the authenticating signatory, the Match Official appears not to have pointed out that there was a problem and this missing piece of information probably only came to light when the official match report was received at the EHL's offices in Milton Keynes in mid-week, after the game.

Naturally with every point hard earned and in the lower reaches of the League this was a bitter blow. It was not made easier facing Reading in the first match of 2009 and they ran out easy winners by a 6-0 score.

Assistant Coach Rob Turner reports that in the crucial next game against Havant, who were then bottom of the League, things took a turn for the worse. Defensively the strategy of keeping close wraps on Calum Giles and Egyptian international Ezz Mohamed worked very well until the second part of the second half. Hampstead have often been unable to see the opposition off and this repeated itself here. Two short corner conversions (100% success rate) by David Eakins put H&W 3-1 up. Then Ezz went on a mazy run, the "rules" so well employed were temporarily forgotten, as he was followed by more than one defender and unleashed a cracking shot to make it 3-2. Then their centre back, Rabe, scored an entirely unexpected, *once in a million* reverse shot to bring it to 3-3.

Havant's confidence went sky high and it was sadly inevitable that they scored the winner in the last five minutes after a scrambled short corner. This was their first win of the season and, by reports, they came off the pitch as if they had won the Cup!

Facing an uphill struggle in the next game against Bowdon, who had beaten us narrowly in Cheshire and then later in the Cup at PRG, Soma Singh rallied the team and whilst the number of chances to each team were about the same, the Hampstead defence retained its concentration, David Eakins retained his short corner conversion success rate and a 4-1 win resulted.

This last weekend confidence was therefore improved for the trip to Surbiton, fielding its six GB internationals. The home side took an early 2-0 lead after a penalty flick. A defensive lapse then let in Mikey Williamson to flick it (he never hits them!) over the advancing 'keeper to make it 2-1.

The 1's view is that the umpiring against opposition with international players becomes too comfortable for the internationals, who tend to get the rub of the green and this was no exception. At 3-2 after a long flowing move by Hampstead and score by Matt Riches, it was all to play for. Hampstead then failed to convert any of the four or five corners it won. Surbiton's Daly stuck two corners away with two minutes to go (as is his wont when Hampstead are the opposition) to put an unbalanced 5-2 on the scoreline, much to the frustration of the Hampstead bench.

So, this leaves Hampstead with some work to do but in spite of the docked points, the 1's still have a gap between them and the play-off place for the penultimate team (the bottom team being automatically relegated to the regional National Leagues that this season are three in number).

This makes more important the game against Southgate on 15 March to which previous players members and friends of the Club are warmly invited, as the team seeks to reverse the 3-2 loss at Trent Park in the first part of the season.

### Men's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI

It is getting tighter at the top of the London League Premiership. The Men's 2's are currently third, four points off the top, with a one game more having been played. On 21 February there was a 3-3 draw with Southgate, who are fourth, and then on the Sunday went on to play Old Georgians and beat them 11-0. Indeed the high scores all around have put the League table into an odd seriatim, with Surbiton's goal difference, as leaders, being 44, East Grinstead's in second is 57 and H&W's in third, currently, is 52. Most pleasing recently was the 12-2 drubbing of Reading and skipper Jamie Edington's expanding goal tally, with a hat trick against Southgate

The League places are as follows

Surbiton	W14, D1, L2	43pts
East Grinstead	W14, D0, L2	42pts
H&W	W12, D3, L3	39pts

### Men's 3<sup>rd</sup> XI

On 21 February, the 3's beat second placed Southgate 1-0 and are currently top of League Division 1, on goal difference from Southgate, having suffered a narrow loss to Reading (in eighth spot) the week before. There are three teams on 32 points and two on 31: Spencer in sixth have 30 (but with an extra game played) so this League is far from sorted

H&W	W9, D5, L3	32pts
Southgate	W10, D2, L4	32pts
Old Louts	W10, D2, L5	32pts
Surbiton	W9, D4, L4	31pts
Oxford Univ	W9, D4, L3	31pts
Spencer	W,9 D3, L6	30pts

### Mens 4<sup>th</sup> XI and Zak Hond XI

Both teams are in London League Division 2, the 4's are in sixth spot after a 5-4 away win at Southgate, the bottom team in this League and the Zaks are in last but one spot (on goal difference with Southgate, who have played one game fewer). So there is plenty for the Zaks to get stuck into!

### Men's 5th XI (Hammers) and Men's 6<sup>th</sup> XI

Both our teams are London League Division 4. After the last weekend, the Hammers are in fourth spot and the 6's in eighth, the Hammers having taken three points off the League leaders

Old Loughtonians Foresters, with a 4-2 win at Chigwell. On the previous Saturday, the Hammers and the opposing 6's played out a 3-3 draw. The points are evenly spread throughout this League, save at the foot where Maidenhead Stags have won one point in 17 games and have a goal deficit of 57.

#### [Men's Spaniards XI](#)

The Spaniards beat Southgate's 5<sup>th</sup> XI by the odd goal in three on Saturday and are in third spot in London League Division 6 but 11 points off the lead held by Richmond Stags, with Blackheath Heathens in second, six in front of the Spaniards.

#### [Men's Thirsts XI](#)

The Thirsts are fifth in their League, the London League Division 7, after an 8-2 trouncing of Southgate Goblets who hug the bottom of the League. The leaders are PHC Chiswick 4's with 35 points from 15 games (two losses) compared with the Thirsts' 23 points from 16, with five losses.

#### [Men's Veterans XI](#)

It is nip and tuck at the top of the London League Vets East Division, with H&W on top by a goal difference seven more than Bromley & Beckenham, each on 29 points from 12 games and, otherwise, an equal record. On Saturday, the Vets beat Cheam Clarets 6-2 away and Bromley & Beckenham were awarded a 10-0 walk over, that certainly helped their bank balance. Southgate Flagons are in third spot, three points behind.

#### [Men's Super Veterans XI](#)

The Supervets are in eighth spot, in spite of a 6-3 defeat of bottom placed Southgate Magnums on Saturday. Their record is six wins, two draws and eight losses so far. They have 20 points and the League is topped by Spencer with 45 points, 12 ahead of second-placed Indian Gym Supervets.

#### [Women's 1<sup>st</sup> XI](#)

The 1's are in fifth position in the South Division 1, with 16 points, five fewer than Oxford Hawks in fourth spot. The table is led by Buckingham 1's in the play off place, three ahead of Epsom and with a game in hand. On Saturday, the team had a narrow loss 4-3 to Southampton, having travelled almost as far the previous week and driving home with the three points, after a win at Havant. A frozen PRG had put paid to the game the week before that against Oxford Hawks. At the end of January, as the League restarted after the winter break, the 1's had a 3-3 draw with Reading Ladies 1A's (their first team being in the National League).

#### [Women's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI](#)

In the Middlesex Premier League, the 2's are in second place, one point behind Eastcote 2's but with a game in hand. It is tightly contested, as PHC Chiswick in third are a point behind but have played the additional game. There is an 18 point gap then to fourth (but two games not played by Teddington 2's). On Saturday the 2's won 9-1 away at Winchmore Hill, in seventh spot.

#### [Women's 3<sup>rd</sup> XI](#)

The 3's are also in the same League as the 2's and are in ninth place after three wins and two draws, but affected by the more widespread deduction of points doled out by the Middlesex hierarchy. Hendon are on the foot of the table with 2 points, having had 6 points docked themselves.

#### [Women's 4<sup>th</sup> XI](#)

Third place is where the 4's can be found, 12 off the lead in Middlesex Division 1 after eight wins, a draw and four losses. League leaders are Eastcote 3's with 37 points.

#### [Women's 5<sup>th</sup> XI](#)

After a smash and grab at West Hampstead on Saturday(a 6-0 way win) the 5's are in sixth spot in Middlesex Division 2, from 10 teams, with 16 points, some way off the leaders, Staines 4's, who have 37 points from 13 games and are unbeaten (and with only one draw).

### Women's 6<sup>th</sup> XI

League Leaders in Middlesex Division 3 are the 6's, with 34 points but second placed Gymkhana Ladies 1's have had two points deducted, which is rare for a top ranking team but the Middlesex organisers are not timid in strictly enforcing the League's rules and apply a registration system pretty rigorously and demand umpiring standards that the Men's teams might find surprising at the corresponding level. In the only League fixture last Saturday, the 6's won 4-1 at Eastcote.

### Women's 7<sup>th</sup> XI

The 7's are recovering from a cathartic 21-0 loss to Teddington 6's in January and have now managed two recent wins on the trot. They are still at the foot of the table, in Middlesex Division 4, suffering from the fairly ubiquitous points deduction. This is a pity, as they have won two more games than West Hampstead 6's, who are above them in 10<sup>th</sup> spot. These two games have seen the 7's almost double the team goal tally from the earlier part of the season.

### From the Annals

A list of the Club's officers of some 30 years ago was recently discovered. This may jog a few memories, including some that may be poignant.

### Officer Class of 1980

General Secretary	Dave Teale
Fixture Secretary	Robin Henderson
Assistant Fixture Secretary	Tony Elliott
Match Secretary	Dave Teale
Team Secretary	Robin Francis
Equipment Officer	Guy Stobart
1 <sup>st</sup> XI Captain	Dave Dixon
2 <sup>nd</sup> XI Captain	Arthur Soares
3 <sup>rd</sup> XI Captain	Peter Dale
4 <sup>th</sup> XI Captain	Dirk Fleming
5 <sup>th</sup> XI Captains	John Grierson and Roger Rookes
6 <sup>th</sup> XI Captain	Dick Cresswell
Veterans' Captain	Mike Sadler-Forster
Summer Spaniards' Manager	Nick Coleman
Winter Spaniards' Managers	Mike Earp and Nigel Fletcher
Indoor (Truman League) Managers	Geoff Wilmot and Dave Dixon
Indoor (Stanmore League) Manager	John Tipping
Indoor (Middlesex League) Manager	Steve Nickson
Hornsey Club Committee	Dave Teale Dave Walker and Nick Coleman
Drainage Fund Committee	Mike Earp, John McCabe, Dave Walker, Guy Stobart

### Secretary's Report

Hampstead AGM's are perhaps not what they used to be, cramped in the bar at Hornsey or more so on the first floor at the Paddington Sports Club. However, those who experienced them may be interested to recollect how things really were.

Mention of Dave Teale at the start of this Letter was sufficient to renew the search for his first Secretary's Report, in the days when, as mentioned earlier, the General Secretary had an enforced monopoly on organising everything (or it seemed and Dave was certainly no exception). Later, he even took on umpiring the 3's in their successful season gaining a place in the London League Play-off Finals, which was then a rare event for Hampstead HC.

At the risk of over exposure in this Letter (or claims of a monopoly) following Brian Owles' retirement as General Secretary, Dave took over the reins. To those who played at the time he appeared almost single-handedly to run the whole show.

Dave offered the following report of his activities in 1980 and it makes for interesting reading, as some complaints or irritations never disappear.

### Introduction

Players tend to judge a season on their own performances, whether their pre-season aspirations have been met and on the overall record of their team. Not so for the Secretary, who looks at the club as a whole, all seven teams, all players and all the different aspects that go into producing the seven teams each Saturday.

In splitting this report into sections I hope to highlight improvements made and also where further progress can be made in future seasons.

Finally, may I thank all those who have helped me in my first season as Secretary. I will not mention everyone as the list would be far too long. It's been a 'long' and difficult season but rewarding, successful and enjoyable.

### Team Records

The most striking feature has been the number of games played. The reason for this is the number of all-weather pitches we have. I'm therefore delighted that our overall percentage is so high, in fact, the highest I can remember. We are certainly cultivating a reputation, even with the top clubs, of being competitive and successful all the way down the teams.

Team	Played	1979	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	%	1979
1	29	23	12	3	14	44	51	46.6	63.0
2	28	23	14	7	7	53	40	62.5	47.8
3	24	20	8	9	7	38	27	52.1	65.0
4	23	18	13	3	7	50	25	63.0	55.6
5	24	19	12	5	7	59	42	60.4	47.4
6	18	18	8	4	6	35	35	55.6	58.3
Vets	20	15	13	1	6	67	32	67.5	63.3
<b>All</b>	166	136	80	32	54	346	252	57.8	56.9

Congratulations to the Vets on winning the Barnard Cup. Results above do not include the RAF and Broxbourne matches.

### Goal Scorers

The season has shown a remarkable rise in the number of players who have reached double figures (last season only four). Obviously the extra number of games has influenced this but not completely. I firmly believe the higher standard of play, the greater commitment has also played its part.

27	Mike Sadler-Forster	12	Dave Dixon
21	Hugh Smith	11	Tony Fawley
19	Andy Gregory		Griffiths
17	Stuart Brown	10	Robin Francis
13	Abe Hillel		Guy Mayers
	Cay Schroeder	9	Westcott
			Hughes, Galloway



## **Pitches**

The grass pitches were played on for only 36% of scheduled matches, compared with 34% the previous season.

Undoubtedly hockey is best played on good grass pitches. If you haven't got them you must rely on other types of surface. In this respect, as a club, we are exceptionally lucky. The pitch at Corams Fields (Avon rubber) has been a bonus, enabling the top two teams to play on a really first-rate surface. Teams have had to modify their game there, more in line with skilful indoor hockey. Those of us who remember Creighton North of some years ago think of buckets and spades. The difference has been most pleasing and numerous high-standard matches have been played there. The small pitch at Highgate Wood, although in my opinion too small, has been useful in emergencies and is always well kept by the two groundsmen.

We made a decision early on in the season not to use Pickets Lock or World's End and I'm pleased we kept to that. Having spoken to numerous Match Secretaries from other clubs, they appreciate our difficulties but are extremely grateful to the effort we have made in offering these alternative pitches. We will be booking all these pitches again next season. This will enable lower teams the opportunity of playing at Corams, certainly before Christmas.

## **Selection**

Selection has gone very smoothly this season on Monday evenings with the teams selected, bulletin completed and envelopes done within a couple of hours. This has been greatly appreciated by all, especially me, who after a hard day's work do not relish the thought of selection going on until nearly 11pm, as in previous years. The first two teams have been selected beforehand, the captains consulting each other and the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI captain contacting the 3<sup>rd</sup> XI captain when necessary. I would like to thank Peter, Ram, Andy, John, Dick and Mike for their excellent support.

## **Pool System**

I would like to see a pool system introduced next season. This will depend on recruiting new members, which I shall be working on in the summer. Ideally, I would like the following numbers - 1<sup>st</sup> XI ... (11), 2<sup>nd</sup> XI ... (11), 3<sup>rd</sup> XI ... (15), 4<sup>th</sup> XI ... (15), 5<sup>th</sup> XI ... (15), 6<sup>th</sup> XI ... (16), Vets ... (16) - a total playing membership of 99. With the introduction of a number of schoolboys this should be possible and if need be, we could raise yet another team.

## **Teas**

One of the joys of the season has been Marie's Shepherds Pie. I believe we have the best teas of any club and I know most of our opponents feel the same. We may pay slightly more than other clubs but I feel it is certainly worthwhile. I'm pleased to add that Marie and Sandra will be with us again next season.

## **Umpires**

The standard of umpiring (not counting 1<sup>st</sup> XI and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI) has certainly improved but the system we have is still totally wrong. Many thanks to Farouqui and Colin Greenhalgh but we need more ex-players to do umpiring, especially for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> XIs.

## **Availability/Cry Offs**

On the whole this has been a much better season than last, with the captains having slightly less aggravation during the week. The only way we will be able to really have smooth running is to introduce the pool system already mentioned.

## **Finance**

I feel next season the match fees for away matches must be increased by a fairly substantial amount. The cost of equipment (balls), entrance fees for Associations, festivals and competitions has increased rapidly. Our postage expenses for this past season have been in excess of £400. With the extra number of games played one would have thought more money would have come in. However, these figures for home and away matches give home - 91 away - 75. I should also

mention that there has been a problem with those players who leave straight after a match without paying.

### **Standards**

I would like to draw your attention to four aspects that I consider lower or raise the standard and reputation of a club.

- Punctuality. There is no doubt in my mind that we have made tremendous progress in this area. The cases of players being late are extremely rare and for those of us who have been around for some time will appreciate what an incredible statement that is for the club. May it continue.
- Dress on the field. We still seem to have a problem in having sides out with the same shirts. This is not necessarily the fault of the new players. I would like to see a system whereby each captain has at least a couple of spare old shirts to be used by newcomers in his team.
- The question of behaviour on the field. I feel a little progress has been made, though there are still too many incidents for my liking. In all honesty, I cannot accept the excuse of poor umpiring.
- Socialising after a match. I believe in this aspect we have fallen down badly. Too many players have not returned to the clubhouse, too often teams tend to gather in groups not talking to the opposition and above all our opposition jugs tend to be too slow in coming.

These are the main points that come to mind. They are meant to be both a Secretary's viewpoint of the season plus a chance for the membership of the club to look at the running of the club from a wider viewpoint. I finish with one sobering thought. When the grass pitches are drained I fully intend, if still Secretary, to see at least one ladies' team at Hampstead.

The rest, as they say, is history ..... Dave was always an eager advocate of a Women's Section and soon this was to come about. Like Martin Peters, he was 10 years' ahead of his game.

### **Fund Raising**

Club Chairman Oz Rankin has told us that more news will also follow shortly, probably separately, on the crucial fund raising issues for the replacement of the water-based pitch at PRG.

### **Representative Honours**

Oz also reports that the Men's 1's goalkeeper, Ian Scanlon, has been selected for the GB under 21 and is off to Sydney in June for the U21 World Championships, the first H&W GK occasion since the days of John Mitchell in 1984/5 for England U21 (when representative success was also enjoyed by outplayers Sunil Wickremeratne and Tim Allman).

### **Next Letter**

Hopefully this will be ready for issue at the conclusion of the playing season, in April 2009. We shall mention John Matthews-Lane in more detail, of whose recent death we have heard and shall record those who were good enough to respond to the earlier Newsletter. Brian Owles was an early correspondent and it was good to hear from David Harper and Rob Critchlow, to name but two.

If you have any news or views, please send by e-mail to [ian.smith@otb.uk.com](mailto:ian.smith@otb.uk.com) or [mail@velwell.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:mail@velwell.eclipse.co.uk).

If it is fit to print, it will be!