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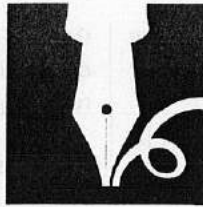
HAMPSTEAD & WESTMINSTER HOCKEY CLUB

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APRIL 29, 1997

INTRODUCTION

Here is the ninth Newsletter, which as promised brings news of the success of the Men's 1st XI at the Milton Keynes Play Offs. There are a few other bits and pieces but if this edition is abbreviated it is only in order to fulfil that promise and to celebrate in a small way the resultant Promotion.



Saxby then earned a green card for Norton's Coughig (if the Programme has the spelling right).

Norton still pressed forward and on 22 minutes secured their first short corner after a strong cross from the left hit Gulsh on the foot. This was followed by another straightaway but Rob Turner flicked the ball away in conjunction

with Steve Dodson in the H&W goal.

Lindsay Troy then came on as first sub and with a concerted dribble took the ball deep into Norton territory which eventually led to the second H&W short corner. Unfortunately, Mark Crowley's push out from the backline went airborne and sailed right beyond the circle but as it was not dangerous the ball was collected and forced back into the "D": a special teams' special if ever there were one but alas unsuccessful: it must have been the rain on his stick handle. Last seen in almost the same guise at Tunbridge Wells the move has undergone a bit of a transformation but clearly still needs some work done in it!

The only other action of the half was a snap short range shot from Lindsay that surprised everyone but not enough to beat the 'keeper and a third short corner against that was successfully repelled.

The second half saw two early further short corners against, with a prostrate block after the second from Steve Dodson that had the goal very well covered. Norton failed to convert their next two after 40 minutes and three minutes later the third H&W short corner saw Rob Thompson's strong push in to the centre of the goal only narrowly missed by Mark Crowley speeding in from the back-line push out. H&W's second goal was then scored in the 46th minute by Nigel Land after passes on the deep right from Lindsay Troy and Mark Crowley. This still appeared insufficient to enable H&W to relax and swing the ball about as they demonstrated so well in the League campaign but again the stakes are much higher. This tension was shown when Rob Carter was spotted pushing a defender in a sprinted challenge for the ball and received a green card. Two more short corner opportunities were squandered by Norton and after one a green card was shown to their Todd Eden for dissent. Then in the 59th minute H&W secured the match with Lindsay Troy's break leading to a loose ball in the inside right channel and Rob Thompson found himself in the circle and cracked the ball in along the surface, the pace stranding the goalkeeper completely. J-J mesmerised the Norton defence with another of his amazingly stirring sinewy runs, giving the impression that the ball is glued to his stick and although it only (only?) led to a short corner, it earned warm applause from the crowd (ie not just the H&W contingent). Towards the end the game did open up a little but H&W were unable to capitalise further. even with 3 attackers on 2, or later 2 on 2. There was still time however for a point blank save from Steve Dodson as the H&W goal stayed intact. Perhaps the luck that deserted the team so manifestly last year is with them this year - but, it was not as if they were stretched to the breaking point at any time in this game.

So a satisfying opening result, especially given the other favourites, Colchester's 4-1 defeat of Loughborough Students for whom, so says the Programme, Marcus Rudler is now

NEWS of OLD MEMBERS

Unfortunately, there was been no correspondence from out there for this Newsletter but the Play Offs did see visits from Club stalwarts Colin Geenhalgh, Stan Elgar, Tarlok Mandair, Jimmy James (who was very disappointed not to be well enough to attend on the Sunday as well and wanted to be kept fully up to date with the news of the result by mobile phone) and (we gather) all the way from Harrogate from David Austin-Jones. Also travelling from northerly parts (and sensibly by train out of Lime Street) were Melinda and Richard James who stayed overnight and watched the matches on Saturday and Sunday. Apparently, Richard's team at Oxton just missed out on promotion: they still regard him as old as the hills in comparative terms. Melinda has threatened to advertise locally to see if there are any Women players as Oxton has yet to "do a Leander" and admit them.

PLAY OFF REPORTS

HAMPSTEAD & WESTMINSTER 3 : 0 NORTON
25th April 1997

In weather all too familiar to H&W Past Play Off Troopers (but admittedly 10 degrees warmer) H&W opened their three day account against the North League Champions, Norton, who hail from the land between Stockton and Middlesborough and aiming to become the most northerly of future National League venues: quite a prospect for H&W, let alone the likes of Isca, should they succeed!

In the rain and red shirted, H&W opened rather tentatively as both sides appeared rather hesitant, happy to play "cat and mouse" as often seems to be the case with these tight Play Off games. Rob Thompson was prominent in the early stages, prompting Will Saxby to get behind the defence and in the second minute he did but his hard hit cross was cut out. At the other end, Derek Stone stayed alert with a fine tackle and interception. A stinging pass from Rob Turner then found Will Saxby in the circle but a strong tackle took the ball away. Good work from Gulsh Mandair led to a short corner in the tenth minute and from the stop, Rob Thompson's strong drive flew in off the Goalkeeper's pads for 1-0. Five minutes later Rob wanted to remind the Umpires of his presence and a challenge was deemed too strong and led to a green card. J-J found himself being closely marked and with little ball coming his way, in the 15th minute he took it on himself from deep inside left to beat at least three defenders to zig-zag into the circle but his shot was saved. A robust challenge on Will

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playing: they mention his NHL experience with Beeston, but what about H&W? Are memories that short these days?

EDGBASTON 1 : 3 HAMPSTEAD & W'MINSTER

26th April 1997

At a far preferable Saturday Play Off start of midday (at least so far as last year's early bird spectators were concerned) H&W took on the black clad National League representatives in what turned out to be a tough *National League Division One sort of game* - the very stuff of winter Sunday afternoons if you aspire to the NHL, that is.

On a damp surface with little sun, this game had a percussive atmosphere to it: some thought it was the timpani section of the famous BBSO orchestra out to support Edgbaston with the drums rattling out at opportune moments (the natives are getting restless) However it turned out to be the Robinsons (of Bristol) support merely warming up for their Pool A game after ours! Some even had blue and white painted faces such was the fanaticism of their supporters.

With H&W adopting a changed formation, with Dan Williams moving to the right midfield for a touch of man to man marking and Rob Thompson taking over at the centre, there was little room for manoeuvre for both sides as the play remained tight in the opening stages.

Hampstead opened with a penetrating long ball into the opposition circle after inter-passes between Mark Crowley, Rob Thompson and Nigel Land but the ball was kicked away by the Edgbaston keeper and in the fourth minute Mark evaded three defenders and passed to Nigel Land but again the ball was forced away. Two minutes later a goal was disallowed for obstruction before a stick tackle in the 25 led to the first short corner, at which Rob Thompson's drive was too high.

However, Hampstead whilst putting together their attacks, began to miss chances: in the 15th minute a Rob Thompson shot skimmed past the post and three minutes later a pass from J-J van Dijk appeared to have put Nigel Land in a prime position to score on the line but the ball was kept out. Then, in a pressure relieving moment, H&W opened the scoring with a Nigel Land goal mid way through the half, pushing the ball in at close range.

This did not immediately appear to upset Edgbaston, who pressed forward, although Rob Carter and Rob Turner were calmly dealing with the opposition attacks (and with the former's stick control in tight situations evidence of his former prowess as a forward). Hailing from Harry Watson's *alma mater* (in terms of school) H reckons that class, as ever, will always shine through! In the 29th minute, Edgbaston secured their second short corner for a foot and the initial shot was well saved by Steve Dodson off his body but the very slight rebound was touched in by Anthony Straw on the post for 1-1. It was important for H&W not to let this slip and it took a gem of a goal to regain the lead. Two minutes further on after Lindsay Troy had carefully ridden several challenges, he passed to Dan Williams in an attack that appeared to be going further deep right. However Dan suddenly squirted the ball left and found Rob Thompson totally unmarked at the top of

the circle in an inside right spot and with minimal back lift he drilled the ball high and into the net for a very welcome 1-2. a really significant goal with three minutes to the end of the half.

It was much the same in the second half with the Hampstead defence picking off the Edgbaston attacks and then in the 44th minute Mark Crowley scrambled in to score and make it 1-3 after good work from Will Saxby deep on the right. Mark managed an ill advised celebratory Footie-style spread-eagled dive on to the playing surface and was probably lucky to escape with only minor injury burns. A minute later a J-J shot was stopped on the line following a Dan Williams drive after our fourth short corner. Three Edgbaston short corners were then successfully repulsed in as many minutes before J-J van Dijk, with a turn on a proverbial sixpence that was worth the admission fee on its own, made acres of space and an interchange of passes between the forwards led to an outstretched save from the opposition keeper. With the game now sealed H&W soaked up whatever Edgbaston offered: Jack Galliford came on for a run around up front on the left and such was his enthusiasm that he was given a green card. The match ended with another H&W short corner after efforts from Mark Crowley and J-J but with no further scoring.

So, this was an encouraging second stage to the Play Off campaign but with the team aware that this had been a tough match. With a goal difference of 5 it would make it difficult for the other pool teams to catch us on the Sunday.

HAMPSTEAD & W'MINSTER 3:1 ANCHORIAN

27th April 1997

News of the narrow win earlier in the day by Edgbaston over Norton by 2-1 brought rapid conclusions, assisted for the arithmetically challenged, by calculating machines that H&W had to avoid defeat by fewer than 5-0 to qualify for the National League. This was confirmed by the new Results Board just inside the entrance gate, with its useful tables and list of scores. It showed that Chelmsford had also won and secured the maximum 9 points to qualify for the National League.

So, at 4.00pm this was the final game of the Tournament. Peter Boizot was present, perhaps the only Chairman of a Club (Peterborough FC) to be relegated and President of another to be promoted on successive days? With the Club flag affixed to the stand barrier amidst the Hampstead contingent, it was time to get serious but at what stage would we hear the famous Boizot cry "Come on Hampstead.....and Westminster!" which we had missed on the Saturday?

The Milton Keynes scoreboard had needed to change with the times, for this was a fixture involving the two South League sides in the same Pool, which, to most, was wrong in principle for their teams seem to have been separated in previous years. The board could not read "SOU v SOU" consistent with the "NOR v SOU" that we had seen in the Norton game and "NHL v SOU" in the Edgbaston match so they turned to "HAM v ANC" which would have been a far clearer system to start with.

Whilst the Robinsons drums were being carried away from the stand after their last game, some hoping for a relatively quiet afternoon in what promised to be some sun, were soon disappointed by the tannoy package of today's hits (and the

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same four that we had heard *ad nauseam* previously) as if we were at Filbert Street or the like: at half time the infernal equipment was not switched off until the second minute of play!

At the opening, Rob Thompson fired a long pass upfield to Will Saxby in a promising position in the Anchorians' circle but he was tackled. H&W then dominated play, winning their first short corner in the second minute after Rob Thompson's hard cross from the left after a free hit. His drive from the short was saved and the ball whipped away upfield to lead to Anchorians' first threat which Rob Carter was able to intercept to safety. Then at the other end in the fourth minute Rob Thompson was on his own in a left inside slot and, left unmarked at the top of the D, rattled in a shot for 1-0. The next few minutes saw further H&W attacks predominantly in the Anchorians' circle but we seemed unable to secure short corners from these opportunities. Plenty of space was being carved out, especially on the right with Gulsh Mandair overlapping and with Will Saxby in support but no real chances were created. The Umpire then decided to have a word with Dan Williams authoritatively (ie aggressively, to some) prowling around midfield and picking up the loose pieces and prompting attacks. The Subs' bench was active too, with frequent swops signifying the wish to keep players as fresh as possible given the three day work out that the Play Offs provide. Thus, Dave Grady made a welcome appearance after 15 minutes.

Anchorians' first short corner was awarded in the 17th minute and produced a flying stick save from Steve Dodson. At the other end seven minutes later Mark Crowley managed all the hard work by rounding the defence and tried one of his spectacular (but admittedly speculative) aerial shots which unfortunately went sailing over the cross bar. The half ended with Steve Dodson's save at a further Anchorians' short corner after a kick cum stop that went airborne and the second short for H&W which saw the ball pushed back to the incoming Mark Crowley (from his push out) but his shot was wide of the left post.

In the second half, Hampstead's third short corner arrived in the second minute of resumed play after a strong run and dribble from Lindsay Troy; Dan Williams' drive from Rob Thompson's pass after the stop went wide of the right post. On a subsequent attack the Anchorians' goalie opted for a run around as he closed down the space at the top of the circle but found himself well beyond the D and having to dive to push the ball out over the sideline to prevent a really embarrassing moment.

H&W's second goal came in the 42nd minute after a Penalty Stroke awarded after Mark Crowley had rounded the goalie when his stick appeared to be held. On came super PF specialist J-J to hit the back of the net for 2-0 in his calm no nonsense way. It was probably no reflection but Anchorians substituted their keeper three minute later. His arrival was met soon later by a flick from Dan Williams that hit the far post and rebounded away. At this stage, play was opening up considerably, with acres of green between the two 25 yard lines uninhabited by players, as if there were two training sessions on the same pitch at the same time or "Our Defence

against Your Attack" sort of play. Clearly lung power was fading for both teams. Three successive Anchorians' short corners were saved in the 51st minute before in the 57th Neil Gordon ran into the circle from deep right and flicked the ball past Steve Dodson on the near post for 2-1.

However two minutes later Mark Crowley who was still getting through an enormous amount of work up front had his stick held and a second flick was awarded, which J-J calmly converted for 3-1. Mark then appeared to be astride the Anchorians' keeper in an attempt to win another flick but a short was awarded and Rob Thompson's hefty drive was saved off the pads. Tim Forte then replaced Steve Dodson in the Hampstead goal and there was till time at the other end for J-J and Mark Crowley to come close but the score remained the same.

Clearly, Anchorians were eager not to throw the towel in and put up stout resistance despite what was to be another disappointing time at the Play Offs, following the lack of success in 1993 and again in 1994, having been founder members of the NHL. In next season's South League they will again encounter City of Portsmouth who were relegated following their Pool A defeat by Loughborough Students.

For H&W, it was smiles all round, with Champagne via Styrofoam cups, the traditional photograph in the goalmouth and the statutory soaking of the Coach in true Bill Parcells' style, but which did not deter him from an impromptu coaching session on the pitch with three youngsters and one blatant failure to stop the ball on the line which must surely indicate that he will be dropped at the start of next season unless there is a marked improvement!

ANNUAL DINNER AWARDS

This Year's Dinner was held at the Langham Hilton and some express doubts as to whether they will want to see us back next year! As Peter Boizot said it was as good a venue for a Hampstead dinner as he could recall in terms of its quality, with white gloved service and all. Perhaps not surprisingly therefore there was some management opposition to dancing on the tables and diving from tables on to the dance floor which a few of the Men's 5th XI were eager to try (they must have more confidence in their colleagues than sense or perhaps private medical insurance cover?) The event was even gate-crashed by Hotel guests obviously thinking that this was the very stuff of the Hilton's weekend programme: wonder why they did not spot that it was a black tie event and they were attired in any thing but?

Bill & Jean Colwill attended as the Club's guests and Bill was good enough to assist with some of the Award presentations, of which pride of place was the Sam Taylor Award to Peter Boizot for his long term generosity and extraordinary support for the Club over so many years.

Woodpecker Tankards were awarded to the retiring Club Treasurers Simon & Fiona Downes who immediately tested the capacity and integrity of each vessel at the presentation itself. The Sankey Siffleurs were awarded to Morley Pecker for his ability to walk across the Channel from Belgium and provide incomparable umpiring to the Veterans' XI throughout the year.

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Sadly other commitments meant that Morley was unable to attend to collect this special award, bearing in mind the considerable debt that the current Club owes to the efforts of John Sankey.

The new *Jug and a Third* which was donated by the Men's 5th XI and in recognition of the Club's most sociable team was this year awarded to the Women's 1st XI. The actual award is in the gift of last year's winners, which were the Veterans. There were mutterings to the side that the Vets must indeed be suffering from failing vision (or hearing) bearing in mind the considerable presence in the Carlton throughout the year of the Cup's donors, with their compulsory attendances at the Bar - much as was so often the case in previous decades.

Of the four special Cups now up for grabs, the Most Outstanding Men's Player was J-J van Dijk (received with a gracious short speech fortunately in perfect English, and in marked contrast to that from Dan Williams, the Men's 1st XI skipper when collecting the Barnard "Cup" (more anon) which was anticipated by MC Nick Coleman to be in Double Dutch). The equivalent Women's Player was Lis Steele, the Women's Club Captain.

Of the Most Improved Player awards, the Men's went to Lindsay Troy, who managed to keep his shirt tucked in (cf when he is on the pitch) and the Women's to Joy Fernyhough. Of the Golden Stick Awards, the Men's went to John Dakin of the Men's 5th XI, who implored support for the team's participation in the final of the London League Cup 5th Division on the following day. John just pipped Mark Crowley with his 30 goals for the Men's 1st XI, but the latter was adequately compensated by the award of a cheque for £50 as the Nastro Azzurro South Hockey League's Leading Scorer (try reciting that when you have had a few - as Mark had by the end of the evening).

The Women's award went to Adelaide Macauley who must have practised her Oscar-style walk on for several days beforehand: the like of which we have not seen before!

The presentations ended with the final draw of the 200 Club bonanza prize which was won by Nick Cowley. Harry Watson had already warned him, however, and doubtless twisted his arm, for Nick generously donated half back to the Club. Read into that what you want: it may be PC for "Harry's opening offer was £50" (out of a prize of £500!!).

BARNARD CUP

The reason for reference to "Cup" above is that the original dating back to 1937 was regrettably stolen recently and has not to date been retrieved, so if you spot it on Crimewatch please shout. We are pursuing an insurance claim but there is a real dearth of evidence as to its value and the possibility of securing a suitable replacement in the longer term. Colin Greenhalgh miraculously came up trumps with a copy of the Club's letter of 1937 accepting Mr Barnard's kind offer and setting out the proposed terms on which the Cup would be provided and how and when it was to be celebrated. This is indeed a sad loss.

BRIEF NEWS

Space is short as time is brief if this Edition is to be "newsy" (well, in relative terms, then). There is room to report the promotion to London League 5A of the Men's 6th XI, the appearance in the Final of the London League Cup Tournament of the Men's 5th XI, who narrowly lost out to St Albans, with **Tony Elliott** controlling things with the whistle - and admiring the far higher standard of play than in his playing days (his very words: honest!) and the Men's 3rd XI's appearance, too, in the London League Cup Championships where they unfortunately lost out before the Final. Much more detail next time around, we hope!

ENCORE FANZENE

As many run away when approached for inclusion in this spot as now, instead, stand their ground but groan and ask "Why Me?"

With the thriving Women's section we thought it was time to speak to a stalwart and hear how things might be different from their perspective (indeed if at all). Your roving reporter happened upon Caroline Brooke in the stand at Milton Keynes and tried to divert her rapt attention to the Norton game for some speedy prompt replies. Caroline works in Printing and Design in Enfield and is thus another contra-flow commuter from her home in Fortis Green on the East Finchley borders. She has recently served as Women's Club Captain, thus well qualified to give us an insight.

So, tell us Caroline:

At what age did you first start playing Hockey?

I was 10 years old

What was your first competitive match and with what result?

God only knows: it was far too long ago but I will plumb for Merchant Taylors Girls School v Sacred Heart, Crosby and we won 3-1

When did you join Hampstead/Hampstead & Westminster?

1988

Which H&W teams have you played for?

Almost exclusively Women's 1st XI but with appearances for the 2nd XI!

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

The win after strokes to gain promotion to the South League

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

Tracey Carr

Which is the best Hockey match you have watched?

No strong views but possibly the Olympic Final v West Germany

Who is the best Hockey player you have seen playing?

Very difficult, but under "journo pressure", I'd say J-J van Dijk

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

My stick

What infuriates you most about Hockey?

Watching Hampstead at the Play Offs three times in four years

Your most amusing incident on a Hockey pitch?

When Karen Pullar in defence and with the ball in our "D" suddenly just picked it up off the floor

Which team do you least look forward to playing against?

Hendon

Which other Club do you most admire?

None: I'm for Hampstead

Except for Hockey, which sport gives you most pleasure?

Sailing