

The Virtual Wisdener

No 37 May 20 2021.

The Newsletter of the Wisden Collectors' Club

After a very long time of having teething problems and odd little quirks on the Wisden Collectors' Club website, finally, I think it is all fine. The new site is up and running and just to let you know:

*The latest auction is running - for the auction please click [HERE](#) and there are more details on Page 16 of this newsletter.

*Over the next few weeks general cricket books will be listed in the Latest Offers and Giveaways section of the website.

*There is a feature for members on the new site where you can make a note of your Wisden collection and request a valuation. I promise you that I will only view the collection you have if you have requested a valuation - I will not be looking at your details.

* The website will be gradually updated with more information and all the editions of The Virtual Wisdener will be uploaded in time.

Well, now that I have flogged the new website lets have a little 'yippee' for the wonderful start to the cricket season. I know from a lot of you that just having cricket being played is fabulous and even those following counties that are struggling are glad the game is even being played.

The structure works a treat...every Thursday apart from the odd match, there are championship matches and there is none of that ludicrous garbage of a Royal London match then a CC and then a 20-20...all we wanted was structure and It has worked.

SKY are showing county matches but lets not kid ourselves here, it is only because the IPL was abandoned and honestly, the moment there was a rise in cases in India, it should have been stopped - in fact it should never have started.

We can go and watch cricket again - Nick Howson for the Cricketer online writes,

'At The Ageas Bowl, The Incora County Ground, Chelmsford, Trent Bridge, Bristol, The Kia Oval, Canterbury and Wantage Road fans will adorn concourses and seats for the first time at competitive top-flight matches in 601 days, when the curtain came down on a wet climax to the 2019 season.

A return to full capacity will have to wait, perhaps even beyond June 21 when the government hoped limits on social contact will be dropped, but for ardent fans who have waited patiently for turnstiles to be unlocked, it is a welcome start.'

Spot on Nick, it is a welcome start and I for one am looking forward to my next trip to a game. On the

* A little appeal - two customers contacted me recently about a 1916 paperback and a 1913 Hardback, they spotted them on the site but by the time they called me both had gone. I now have super editions for both years so if it was YOU who contacted me, please call me again and I apologise for not remembering to keep your details.

subject of fans returning there is a brilliant article by Richard Clarke that first appeared in The Cricket Paper, but you can read it by clicking [here](#)

I asked for your comments and opinions on the 2021 Wisden and thank you to all of you who took the time to respond. I hope no one minds that I have used up three pages to put across a selection of views.

Overall, in fact the percentage was very high, the 2021 has been received exceptionally well. The criticisms tended to be on two aspects - the Cricketana article and the lack of a retrospective look at the counties or players, great matches etc. On the first I agree without reservation that Wisden Cricketers' Almanack which is bought by people who collect it, odd that isn't it, should have information, articles, news, facts about collecting. I subscribe to the BBC History magazine because I want to read about history - if articles on geography and rock formations became the content then I would unsubscribe. The argument I have heard from Wisden is that readers want to know about other cricket stuff - but for goodness sake the other stuff needs to be in the absolute minority and Wisden information needs to be the priority.

I do agree with the decision not to look at old matches, players etc because it really would be just to fill pages and next year, hopefully, there will be little need for such fillers. This content is also available in other publications.

Now some local news - last Thursday Abs went back to Uni, after Libs went a few weeks earlier...there is just Lorraine and I in the house and now Lorraine has a full time job as a Fitness manager - from a house full of women, i'm on my own a lot...please come back girls, I miss you.

Take care one and all

Bill (and no one else as they are not here)

Over a hundred more Wisdens will be listed in the next few days on [Wisdeworld](#), including originals for 1879, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1892, 1900, 1916, 1917, and 1919...Rebound editions from 1880 to 1945 and hardbacks from 1913, 1918-1919, 1920-1925 and 1933 to 1940.

Enjoy!

The arrival the 2021 Wisden adds to the growing slabs of yellow which my long-suffering wife tolerates as setting the dominant colour of our sitting room. There is a temptation to see the almanacks as simply decoration, a visible statement of one's membership of a precious club. But particularly in these challenging times what lies on the pages, rather than how they are bound and presented, is the true measure of their worth.

As with all things I read the almanack through the filter of my own, hardwired, opinions. I justify my own feelings, prejudices and interests by how I interpret what others say, wanting to be challenged but conscious that I will find some way of justifying, at least in the short term, positions I hold to be "true".

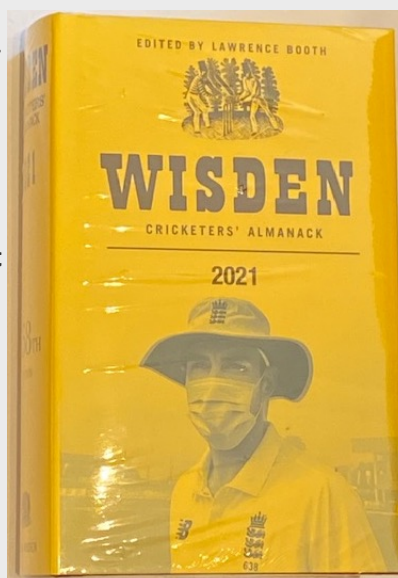
My "truths" include a view that cricket is the finest example of sport. A unique mix of personal performances delivered in a team context, a game of both the heart and the head, of the athlete and the academic. A game where your background, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, politics etc should matter not one jot, with skill and character the only things that should count. I look to see cricket testing those two demands to the limits with players giving both the game and each other the respect that they deserve.

And yet, and yet...

My "truths" are challenged by the cold blasts of reality which seemingly assail the game each day. The rise of the global cricket circus, with cocooned players jetting round the globe to pocket funds from the current day equivalent of the 18th Century aristocrats who gathered the best in the land to play for high stakes. A structure, in the UK at least, where young cricketers are overwhelmingly filtered through the prism of the public school system, denying opportunities to those kids with talent but lacking money or contacts. A game where the heroes fall from grace as they fix and twist games to the tune of the bookmakers.

And the wider issues of the world impact on the game as they always have done. The game sometimes responds by shining a light through the darkness, at other times its candle gutters and fades.

Racism. An ugly word for an even uglier fact. As a white, middle class, late middle-aged man I cannot start to know what hurt and pain is truly caused by this cancer. But I know it wounds me as a human being. And I seek solace in my "truth" about cricket being blind to ethnicity. But too often I find that this "truth"



is challenged on a far more profound level than my worries about those that dance to their masters on the T20 circuit.

The knee on the neck. An image that once seen cannot, and should not, be forgotten. I saw it and and I cried. But for those whose fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, and for generations before, suffered the verbal and physical cousins of that act of murder on the streets of Minneapolis they did not just see, they felt. And that feeling found voice on streets around the world.

And it found voice in our world in the words of Michael Holding and Ebony Rainsford Brent. And I felt proud to be part of a game which gave a platform for such voices.

And yet, and yet...

Read about Azeem Rafiq. Read about John Holder. Read about the black, Asian and minority ethnic cricketers who reported racism in the game in the Professional Cricketers' Association survey. Read about the racial slurs directed at the Indian players at the SCG.

And I think back to all the times in the past, and not so distant past, when I have heard casual and non-casual racism spouted by those in the game at lower levels. And I have said nothing. And I am ashamed.

So, I turn to the pages of Wisden and I read the words of Lawrence Booth. His dissection of the response of English cricket to the issue, of knee taking which was observed through the West Indies tour but dropped afterwards, summed up by his brilliant line "By not taking a knee, cricket raised a finger".

Wisden is joyously welcomed each year for the memories of the season just gone and of players that are celebrated, remembered and mourned. This year, it rises above this to touch on a profound truth. Far bigger than my "truths" about the game. It challenges our game to act with feeling and depth to this hideous malaise, not simply to react with marketing management speak.

Cricket cannot change society but it can change itself. The challenge will be whether the 2021 Wisden is seen as moving our cricket family to address these issues within our game, or whether the almanack just becomes another brick in the yellow wall.

Last year, I corresponded with our editor Lawrence Booth to make the case for a slim Wisden; to reflect the then anticipated short season, and to urge him not to pad it out with sensationalist and distasteful COVID related articles of the “how I survived lockdown” sort. After all, in the two World Wars, I argued, Wisden was commendably restrained in commentary on the terrible conflicts and loss of lives - the obituaries were left to tell us that story - and I tried to make the case for 2021 Wisden to be similarly inclined in this latest emergency. I need not have worried. In urging restraint, I had not anticipated the skill of the Editor and of his contributors in sympathetically presenting the year’s cricket season to us. Mr. Booth has done a superb job, I feel, in presenting this hopefully quite unique season to his readers.

My first task on taking delivery of Wisden is to discard the dust jacket - carefully stored and out of view, for the benefit of future owners. Am I alone in my dislike of D/Js? I love to see the bookbinders art on display in my library, and this year, we are treated to beautiful gold blocking around the edges of the front board. The quality of the cloth is excellent, and the binding very good indeed for a mass produced book.

The annual Wisden is an event to be slowly digested through the season, I feel, and with this in mind, my thoughts on the contents are necessarily to the highlights, and to the less good. Incidentally, I’ve not noted any “four letter” words yet; these have been creeping in over the years, and I hope to find a lot fewer this year!

Editor’s notes give a snapshot of the season, and are, as usual with Lawrence Booth, more than adequate. I particularly enjoyed the concluding parallel between village cricketers ferreting in the undergrowth for the ball after a six hit, and of the Test players having to do much the same, but in the empty stands. This amply reflects the sadness of a season without spectators.

A delight is Patrick Kidd’s “when the cricket stops”, where our last season is put into perspective when compared with those in the years of the two World Wars. A rather delicious collection of old hardbacks are displayed, too!

Turning to cricket book reviews, well, I feel these are ok so far as they go, reviewing many titles which we will surely find in charity shops in a couple of years time. Books of more lasting historical benefit are again almost totally ignored, if indeed the reviewer was even aware of their existence. Oh, how we miss John Arlott! Perhaps a real historian could be persuaded to undertake the task of ferreting out the literary works of lesser known authors - of club histories and bygone players - as well as the more popular titles which are reviewed in the press anyway.

Cricketana again disappoints, and one wonders whether Mr Williams can in future perhaps turn his

attention more towards sales of old cricket books and Wisdens, and away from “baggy greens”, bats, balls and stumps which are of no interest to me, whatsoever. Plenty of sales take place online, so an internet trawl will reveal the sale of many literary items. And yes, in the only reference to a book, whilst an 1896 hardback Wisden fetched a very high price, no mention is made that the Wisden index is in fact falling: rising prices are generally only seen for extreme rarities, or for pre war Wisdens in pristine condition. He could perhaps usefully have made the point that fine art investment people, who happily grab such items for “capital growth” are rather spoiling it for us cricket book collectors.

Conversely, there is a superb article by James Coyne on history of the Cricketer Magazine, which I have never subscribed to, and now wish that I had! Much historical information on the magazine is given, surely this is the real stuff of Wisden. The reader is tempted to seek a full set, which is available at reasonable cost, if only space permitted - several yards of shelf space would be required, but almost a lifetime of reading would be gained.

The obituaries are, as ever for me, one of the highlights of Wisden; beautifully written biographies which even Haygarth and Ashley-Cooper would be proud of. Could we, perhaps, please be advised who wrote them?

Just occasionally in Wisden, one comes across a real showstopper. And, wow, this one knocked me for six sixes in a row. I’m talking about The Elwes Papers, where from page 151 we are advised of surely the most extraordinary literary find for many years. Could it really be that the prequel to Wisden has been discovered? Had it been published at the time, it would have been far better than 1864 Wisden, and indeed, as the article demonstrates, it may well be that John Wisden was influenced by some of the contents, in preparing his first and historic effort. I really must urge someone, perhaps at Wisden, to follow this up in earnest, with a view to belatedly publishing the book, with all its illustrations. A facsimile of the original, followed by a transcript would be a very desirable volume, and one hopes that the owner of the work can be persuaded to allow publication. I’d certainly be happy to pay very handsomely indeed for a copy.

Cricket in 2020 is well reported, and the English Tests particularly so. The county summaries are, as usual, very informative. Overseas cricket seems to get very ample coverage, but, as ever, takes up far too much space, I feel. Maybe the time has come to consider reverting the Almanack to a record of English/Scottish/Irish doings, both home and abroad, and let the overseas countries rely on their own Annuals, which are mostly very adequate.

George Beagley

“Cricket has never been less important than in 2020 - and never more” - the opening line of the Editor’s notes encapsulate the times in which we live with the impact of Covid and scourge of racism being two of the issues that the game has faced in the last year or so. Both issues are covered throughout the book, but in great detail in the Comment and Review sections.

The arrival of my Almanack is always greatly anticipated, and this year was no exception. In the past I have taken the day off so as not to miss the postman and thus avoid a trip to the sorting office. In the new work from home world that wasn’t necessary and so shortly after 11.30 on April 15th I took delivery.

I tend to read the Almanack almost like a novel at first and then dip in and out of sections (apart for T20 and Schools) so to find that Comment and Review sections stretched to almost 300 pages was a bit of a bonus. I enjoyed virtually all of the essays, but especially Duncan Hamilton’s “Scraps of Comfort”, and I am pretty sure that he could write about the opening of an envelope and make it sound engaging.

Staying on the Covid theme, perhaps my only disappointment is the fleeting comments about how the recreational game got up and running, and how leagues, player, officials and spectators dealt with some pretty draconian regulation. The league I umpire in had something like 10 or 11 redrafts of Covid requirements before the season got underway due to the ever changing picture. I think this was worthy of its own essay rather than Marcus Berkman’s lighthearted and poor one-pager.

The issue of racism in the game also gets covered and hopefully the forceful comments included from the likes of Michael Holding will resonate throughout the game at all levels and that diversity wins out.

The review of the County Championship borders on the optimistic, but I think that is down to two factors; firstly relief that any cricket was played at all and secondly that counties were able to blood younger players and give opportunities earlier than they may have done.

Needless to say I am thoroughly enjoying Wisden 2021 and shortly will be working my way through various reports of cricket from around the world. In time thoughts will turn to Wisden 2022 and Bill’s invitation to buy email. I wonder if 2022 will have an option not to have reports on The Hundred included!

Ian Murrie.

I am grateful that there was any Wisden covering 2020, even if slightly slimmer than usual. With limited cricket in 2020, I’d expected a slimmer volume, but it was important that Wisden documented crickets place in the context of the pandemic for the benefit of my yet to be born (or conceived) cricket loving grandchildren.

If the price was to increase in 2022, I don’t begrudge the publishers this right. We all want Wisden to continue, and for this to happen they need to make a profit. As long as a price increase can be justified, I wouldn’t be against it.

Sean O’Neil

Generally as always a good read but an opportunity missed in terms of looking back through the history of each county, re-assessing great Tests or matches...but cynically maybe the publishers will bring out a book soon re-hashing lots of stuff, as per the Anthology series, which in essence were rather obscene.

Simon Copeland

I know that I should be grateful that Wisden was even published and I am grateful that there was cricket throughout the last twelve months, but this years’ Wisden left me feeling a little disappointed. My understanding is that the editor did not want to ‘pad’ out the almanack with stuff that would be removed in 2022, but I feel that padding out is exactly what has been done.

My taste in cricket writing is quite varied, but the articles entitled ‘250 years of Cricket Bats,’ ‘Fifty Years of One-Day Cricket,’ The End of University Cricket and ‘Wisden Schools Cricketer of the Year - all I found rather drab and what I would call essays to ‘pad out’ the book. Please don’t get me started on the Cricketana section - a constant waste of column inches year in year out.

Andrew Evans

The editor is to be congratulated on achieving a perfect balance of reflection on the events of the year, the actual cricket that happened and the major issues affecting the game and wider society.

It is particularly satisfying to see a lovely article from Sir Garfield Sobers on the life of his old friend Sir Everton Weekes, a contribution from the wonderful Duncan Hamilton, and a balanced article on the end of first-class status for The Universities, which I suspect had passed many people by.

One gripe however; why the trend to put mini- articles in the middle of a longer essay? This happens in the middle of ‘Cricket and Racism’; ‘Cricket and Coronavirus’ (twice) and ‘Cricket and the Environment’.

All in all an excellent effort, and ‘Three Cheers’ for the belated recognition for Lord Stevens of Leicester and Canterbury!

Hilary Richardson

Robert Winders’ article on Public Schools Cricketers of The Year was a super, well researched piece.

Paul Kilmartin

Overall, what a marvellous Wisden the 2021 is.
Kim Lancaster

I liked the slimmer version. Without covid-19 one expects the the number of pages to revert to previous size and inevitably grow thereafter. Is it perhaps time to limit the span of many records by starting at say 2000 and referring to the full list as being available in ??? year, whatever that may be? I found the articles interesting and to cover a wide picture from the present time and back through the ages, to remind us as to what has been before. Price rises seem inevitable and slimming down may well help to maintain an affordable cost to many subscribers.

Derek Noble

Despite these difficult and challenging times, it has been reassuring to receive the latest **WISDEN** through the post in mid-April, as usual! At 1,250 pages, it is understandably slimmer than normal, but at least it makes the volume rather easier to handle!

The coverage of the past season is as comprehensive as ever, but, as a reader of the almanack since 1950, I had hoped for the restoration of some past features, including county team photographs and updated plans of the county grounds (last seen in the late 1970s). I feel that the strength of the current edition is in the excellent range of articles in Parts One and Two.

John Swain

Wisden 2021 was a good effort. It captured the last year and it respectfully took the stance we all expected. Sadly, some sections still pander to those who give exclusivity and status a high value and once again I was a little baffled as to why collecting the book we all clove is constantly ignored - surely Wisden is only bought by collectors, I doubt if it is ever an impulse buy.

Les Bricknall

A fabulous effort and an edition that in years to come should rank with the very best.

Alan Chesterton.

One of the things that struck me reading through the new Wisden, which once again arrived on the day of publication thanks to Bill, was the cricket that was actually played. I for one seemed to be endlessly talking about when/if lockdowns will end and even though I watched the cricket on both the TV and the internet it seemed not to matter and it all faded into a blur - but Wisden brought it back and heart-felt thanks should be extended to both the West Indies and Pakistan, the counties and all those who helped remind us that under the most extreme adversity we can still achieve things and one of the greatest achievements was that Wisden was published.

Robert Pendle

Reading the new Wisden and knowing that the County Championship season was in progress brought a sense of calm. I did not like some things in the almanack, but one of the things I discovered this year was The Taste of Wisden on page 5. Completely by accident the page opened and so rather than reading it in my normal way, I went to each of the referenced pages in turn, a real joy.

On the flip side some of the content still leaves me bored and sadly disappointed - the strong emphasis on the female game when other aspects are almost ignored and the Book section, mostly tut that I will find on some online selling site in a few months. And don't get me started on the Cricketana waffle.

John Farrow

"A Gem in difficult times."

Brian Andrews

"An opportunity missed to give any new reader an insight into matches and players of years gone by."

Pete Ferguson.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Wisden has done more in its words in 2021 than the cricketing authorities have ever done to highlight and expose the long-standing hypocrisy and institutional racism that have been rife in our game.

Andrea Andrews.

Throughout last summer I felt it was inappropriate to have national sport played while people were ill and dying and then I listened to a report from a hospital in Kent on my local BBC station and a patient asked what the cricket score was. No one picked up on it, it wasn't mentioned by the reporter, but it made me realise that sport - cricket, football, rugby - gives people something to look forward to and something to hang onto and in my opinion the 2021 Wisden is respectful, considerate and moving in its words and reflections on the events of 2020.

Mr. Booth and the team deserve praise.

Graeme Foster.

A delightful read, one of the best almanacks in years and one that should be appreciated by all.

Carl Sheraton.

I could not print all the comments received and I received a lot. I hope these give you a flavour of the 'mailbag' - it is fair to say that around 90% of you thought the 2021 edition was one to treasure and all those connected with it should be thanked for such a truly wonderful achievement

Bill

The Last Australian 'sticky wicket'

In the Second Test of 1980 batting was merely difficult but at Brisbane, in 1950, it was close to impossible. If the Sydney pitch had been really like a genuine 'sticky', the two teams, neither overflowing with batting of true international calibre yet with plenty of quality bowling, would have been bundled out in a day, because on such a pitch a good length delivery will often lift head high.

Although Sir Donald Bradman had retired, Australia, in 1950, still had a formidable team. Morris, Harvey and Hassett were all international class batsmen, Keith Miller the best all-rounder in the world and Loxton an exceedingly competent one. Tallon, a superb wicket-keeper and Ian Johnson, a flighty off-spinner, could both score runs. Lindwall, Johnston and the unique Iverson completed a beautifully-balanced attack. In contrast England were weak, which is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that McIntyre was chosen as a middle order batsman and also, on the far-from-convincing evidence of bowling in a net, as a possible fifth bowler to support a thin four-man bowling line-up. On the other hand it would be fair to say that Hutton, Compton, Wash-brook and Simpson would certainly have challenged strongly for a place in our present Test side.

Pouring rain

The big surprise at Brisbane was that Australia were dismissed on a perfect pitch for 228 on the first day and, much to our surprise, we realised that we had a reasonable chance of bringing off a totally-unexpected victory.

After dinner and a celebration drink, five of us departed to the relaxation of a Western at the local cinema, well contented with the day's events until it gradually dawned upon us that the noise we could hear was not the Red Indian attack, but rain belting down upon the tin roof. We emerged to find a storm of tropical proportions, which was so heavy and so prolonged that no play was possible until shortly before lunch on the third day. The outcome was one of the most dramatic periods in the history of Test cricket.

This is probably best illustrated by what occurred in the Australian Parliament which contained a large number of cricket enthusiasts, including the late Sir Robert Menzies, who used to make sure that the Commonwealth Conference coincided with the Lord's Test. The Members were always kept well informed on the latest developments, but, on December 4 1950, these were so frequent and unusual that Sir Robert's suggestion for an adjournment to listen to the radio was immediately carried.

We opened with Washbrook and Simpson who scored 28 before the Australian bowlers found their footing and length, but, with Johnston keeping a much fuller length than usual, wickets started to fall, until at 3.20 F.

The Cricketer 1980.

Before the start of the Second Test between Australia and England at Sydney this winter, both captains described the conditions - a slow, wet pitch and heavy outfield - as unsuitable for starting a five-day match but the umpires decided otherwise. As a result there were suggestions that the pitch resembled an old fashioned 'sticky' but, as TREVOR BAILEY (left), the former England and Essex all-rounder, explains, this was very far from the truth.

R. Brown declared with our total 68 for 7. It was the right decision. Our mistake was holding back Hutton, the finest bad-wicket player in the world, until number 6, so that he finished not out 8. While at the crease he had looked unbelievably comfortable in near-unplayable conditions, which I had the good fortune to admire from the other end.

Australia's second innings began disastrously. For the only time in my life I witnessed the delightful sight of a scoreboard reading Australia 0 for 3 wickets.

Although that 'sticky' was a batting nightmare, it was certainly a seam bowler's dream. All that was required was to maintain a line and a full length and the pitch did the rest. The ball frequently reared shoulder high or kept low, so that it came as no surprise when Australia were soon deep in trouble.

Easing slightly

They declared their innings closed at 32 for six in order to have another go at us before the wicket had dried out. We went in again with 68 minutes remaining and needing 193 to win, with survival our sole objective.

All the time the pitch was easing slightly but it still remained distinctly unpleasant. Hutton and Compton were saved for the morrow, a ploy which might have worked if some of our batsmen had not contributed to their own downfall. Dewes was beaten by pace, McIntyre ran himself out going for a fourth run and I mishit a very long hop down square-leg's throat after surviving for more than 30 fascinating minutes.

The outcome was that, at stumps, we had slumped to 30 for six. On the following day Hutton scored a masterly 62 not out but Compton, alas, failed and there simply was not enough support at the other end. So we lost a match we might have won.

Although the result was a bitter disappointment, it was an unforgettable experience to have batted and bowled on a real Australian 'sticky'.

1st Test: Australia v England. Woolloongabba, Brisbane December 1, 2 (no play), 4, 5 1950.

Australia 228 (RN Harvey, 74. Bedser, 4-45.) & 32 - 7dec (Bailey 4 - 22).

England 68 - 7 dec (Johnston 5 - 35) & 122 (L. Hutton 62. Iverson, 4 - 43)

Australia won by 70 runs.

Keeping the side going single-handed

THE struggle in coarse cricket is not merely between bat and ball, but between husband and wife. Many a club stalwart now loiters palely in Tesco's on Saturday afternoons; his whites long since consigned to a rummage sale. Never again dare he neglect his own garden to roll the pitch. First-class cricketers simply turn up, but the mass of us prepare our own wickets, organise lifts, collect the tea-money, scour the pubs for spare players and empty the Elsan. These demands on our time are a fruitful field of domestic conflict.

Bachelors never encounter these problems. Girl friends simply love cricket and never tire of slicing the club sandwiches. Only on becoming wives do they start darkly plotting a future limited to offspring and wire-baskets. While there may be no escape from such doom, there is a form of parole - you can be let out for a few Saturdays or Sundays each summer by enlisting in a strolling, occasional side like the Brian Wilde XT

Wilde's XI - or 10 when he's unlucky - is an institution in East Hertfordshire minor cricket and worthy of wider recognition as the club with no averages, no committee, no fixture card, no annual meeting and an annual dinner held every other year. 'On the nearest Friday to St. Patrick's Day,' says the founder, as though that is somehow significant. The team began in 1961 as an offshoot of Old Hertfordians Rugby Club when Brian, a former O.H. captain, was approached by three senior players. He recalls the occasion thus:

'They said they wanted to play cricket without the chores of mowing grass and marking out pitches, and they asked: "If we start a strolling side, will you captain it?"

'I agreed and Maurice Hawkins, one of the three, became fixture secretary and was pretty good, except for the day when he booked us to play two villages at once, Bengoe and Bramfield. Our way out was to let them play each other while we made the tea. We never had any club rules, only a belief that cricket should be played in the right spirit - which is wanting to win but not minding if we lost.'

'We hadn't to mind. We lost a lot because the problem with a strolling side is that you can never field the same eleven. Some Sundays I have swept the pubs for anyone daft enough to play; other weeks I have turned up with a couple of old blues and even a county cricketer. I never know if there will be nine or 12, even 13 players. We have followed 150 for no wicket with 32 all out in the next outing. The uncertainty is part of the charm. Most of my players now are found in pubs and I don't think we have ever selected a teetotaller - because one of the attractions is the drink afterwards. Another is the family connection; we've had a lot of fathers and sons playing together; I've bowled with my own son, Andrew, and there was a day when four from one family were in the side.'

'Umpiring is always a problem in the villages and I remember cutting a ball at Wid-ford; the sort of shot I

Brian Wilde was an actor who was known to millions as the kindly warder in *Porridge* and as Foggy in *Last of the Summer Wine* but, his longest-playing role was that of captain, selector and organiser of his own cricket team. I am grateful to Eric Williams for sending this, it was published in 1980 and the writer was Mike Langley.



should never essay, ever, but couldn't help it. Of course, I cut it straight into the 'keeper's gloves. The bowler said: "How's that?", the wicketkeeper said: "How's that?" and the umpire said: "Not out." I turned to the captain, John Pawle, an old friend at first slip, who advised: "Stay there". But the next ball was exactly the same, like a rifle shot into the gloves. The bowler appealed, the 'keeper appealed and the umpire said: "Not out. What's going on down that end?"

'The wicketkeeper was purple, John Pawle was falling about laughing but again said: "Stay. Don't worry." So I did and got half-a-dozen runs before tea where I learned the reason for my two lives - the umpire and wicketkeeper weren't speaking to each other. Widford used to be an almost feudal cricket village where giants like Ranjitsinjhi and Fry would be invited for the week-end with the locals, told, not asked, to provide the opposition after rolling and preparing the wicket and bowling to the squire in the nets. I remember the umpire telling me: "The old squire had his ashes scattered on the pitch, and that pleased us. We'd always wanted to trample on the old bugger."

'The days of Gentry v Peasants have gone forever; sides today are a social cocktail but I don't know if there are many with a broader mix than ours. Keeping the side going single-handed is, of course, a problem, but it's made worthwhile by moments that I'll always cherish. I'm thinking of the lunchtime when I rang up a fellow, saying: "Get over to Little Gaddesden, I need you! He threw his stuff into a bag, broke all records for the journey and arrived as we were taking the field. But, when he pulled out what ought to be his shirt, he found it was a pillow-case. He had to follow us on in the shirt he was wearing, something in shocking pink.'

'There's always a laugh in the Brian Wilde XI such as the time I was house-painting one blazing Saturday. In response to the skipper's desperate entreaties, I put the brushes aside and drove to Much Hadham, only to discover that, for the first occasion in years, there were 12 of us. I yielded my place to a more distinguished, more penetrating and senior seamer who is now the editor of this magazine. It was Reg Hayter's debut - indeed, only appearance for us - and the lads did him proud. They dropped eight catches off him.

Mike Langley talking to Brian Wilde.



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Two events in 1862 were to shape the course of cricket in the century that followed. First, the debut of an English team in Australia, and, second, the no-balling by John Lillywhite of E. Willsher for throwing at the Oval. The first event led to the start of Test cricket in March 1877 and the legend of the 'Ashes' in 1882. The second, to the legalisation of over-arm bowling in 1864.

Eleven English cricketers embarked on the 'Great Britain' at Liverpool on October 20th 1861 and set off on the long journey to Australia. Two years earlier a side of English professionals had made a short tour to North America, but this was the first time that a touring team had travelled to the other side of the world.

The sponsors of the tour, Messrs. Spiers and Pond of Melbourne, had sent their representative to England earlier that year and Mr. Mallam approached H. H. Stephenson with the request that he would collect a team together and go to Australia with the idea of pioneering cricket of international standard in the colonies. The terms arranged for the players were £150 each and full expenses for the tour, and when one remembers the value of the £ in those days it was a very handsome reward.

Although the programme arranged consisted of only twelve matches, six of which were won, four drawn and two lost, the tour was a success in every way.

On their arrival in Australia G. Wells of Sussex, who had travelled out earlier, joined the party which consisted of: H. H. Stephenson (captain), W. Caffyn, G. Griffith, C. Lawrence, W. Mortlock, W. Mudie, T. Sewell (all of Surrey), R. Iddison and E. Stephenson (both of Yorkshire), G. Bennett (Kent) and T. Hearne (Middlesex). The side was strong enough for the task in hand, but several leading cricketers had declined the long arduous trip.

The tour opened with a match against XVIII of Victoria at Melbourne on New Year's Day 1862. At one stage of the match a crowd of 25,000, each of whom had paid half-a-crown for admission were watching the play, and they saw the tourists win by an innings and 96 runs after totalling 305 (G. Griffith 61, W. Caffyn 79).

Travel in Australia was still somewhat primitive at that time and, for the second match of the tour, against a side picturesquely known as 'The Ovens', the players had to make a journey of 200 miles inland to Beechworth in a coach drawn by six greys.

As the home side were dismissed for totals of 20 (W. Caffyn 9-9, G. Bennett 11-10) and 53 (G. Wells 8-10, C. Lawrence 11-38), the English team (total 264) won in a

Roy Webber was a British cricket scorer and statistician. After World War II, in which he served with the Royal Air Force, he decided to turn what had been his hobby into his profession. He had the necessary proficiency with figures, having previously been an accountant.

I am grateful to Andy Leuerweek for sending the article featured here. It was first published in 1962.

canter. At the conclusion of this match Griffith played a single wicket game against XI of The Ovens and won in the easiest fashion possible. The XI batted first and each batsman collected a 'duck', the only run scored being a no-ball. Griffith scored 6, two wides made the total 8, and won on first innings as the game could not be played out.

The eighth match of the tour brought the first defeat, XXII of New South Wales and Victoria winning by 12 wickets at Sydney. Scoring ruled very low, the tourists being dismissed for 60 and 75, the locals replying with 101 (C. Lawrence 9-36) and 35 for nine wickets. Towards the end of the tour a second game was lost, XXII of Castlemaine winning by three wickets in an exciting finish. The tourists could muster only 80 and 68, but the locals scraped home with totals of 54 (G. Griffith 13-18) and 96 for 18 wickets (G. Griffith 9-28).

A three-day match played at Melbourne was titled
THE WORLD v. SURREY

The former winning the toss, totalling 211 (G. Bennett 72) in their first innings and winning the game by six wickets.

At the end of the tour Charles Lawrence accepted a coaching engagement in Sydney, and this undoubtedly played a large part in the quick advance of Australian cricket. In 1868 a team of Aborigines under the managership of Lawrence visited England—the first touring team to leave Australia.

And what did Spiers and Pond make out of their little venture? It was stated that they made a profit of £11,000 after paying all expenses, a figure that is slightly fantastic when one realises that many tours do not reach that figure. In fact, the 1950-51 M.C.C. team to Australia and New Zealand made a profit of only £3,842.

First-class cricket overseas was limited to one match—the annual meeting between New South Wales (76 and 109) and Victoria (182 and 5-0) at Melbourne, which this year resulted in a ten wickets win for the home team.

The cricket season of 1862 was, by modern standards, moderate. Only 36 matches which rank as first-class were played, the results of the various teams being as follows

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost
All England XI	1	1	0	0
Cambridge Uni	2	1	1	0
Cambridgeshire	5	2	0	3
England	2	1	1	0
Gentlemen of Kent	1	0	0	1
Gentlemen of North	3	2	1	0
Gentlemen of South	3	0	1	2
Kent	8	2	0	6
MCC	6	3	1	2
Middlesex	2	0	0	2
North	4	3	1	0
Nottinghamshire	4	3	1	0
Oxford University	3	1	0	2
Players	2	1	1	0
South	2	0	1	1
Surrey	12	5	2	5
Sussex	4	3	0	1
United North of Eng	1	0	0	1
Yorkshire	4	2	0	2
Total	72	30	12	30

It is interesting to note that nine matches were played at both Lord's and the Oval, three matches at each of Cambridge and Nottingham and two each at Brighton, Canterbury, Manchester and Sheffield.

Scoring ruled much lower a century ago and the 36 matches played averaged 500 runs and 33 wickets each—last summer the respective figures were 813 runs and 30 wickets. In fact, the total figures for 1862 were as follows:

Runs scored 18,035 (including 1,024 extras).
Wickets lost 1,215 - average of 14.18 runs per wkt.
Dismissals in field 555 caught. 42 Stumped. 69 run out.

The summer provided several new records. For the first time an innings total of 500 was recorded, and,

also for the first time, a match aggregate of 1,000 runs was reached. I. D. Walker became the first batsman to score a century on debut in first-class cricket, while J. Wells also became the first bowler to take four wickets in four balls. All in all, it was a memorable season for statisticians and historians, so that the following short summary of the best feats of the summer is of more than usual interest.

High Innings Totals:

503: - England v. Surrey (Oval)

370: - Middlesex v. Surrey (Oval)

318: - Surrey v. Middlesex (Oval)

309: - Cambridgeshire v. Surrey (Cambridge)

Low Innings Totals:

44: - Yorkshire v. Surrey (Oval)
45: - Cambridgeshire v. Nottinghamshire (Nottingham)
46: - M.C.C. v. Sussex (Lord's)
46: - Kent v. Surrey (Canterbury)
47: - Sussex v. Kent (Brighton)
48: - Cambridgeshire v. Surrey (Oval)

High Match Aggregates:

1042 for 40 wkts. Surrey v. Middlesex (Oval)
942 for 38 wkts. Gentlemen v. Players (Oval)

Low Match Aggregates:

198 for 36 wkts. M.C.C. v. Sussex (Lord's)
250 for 30 wkts. Kent v. Cambridgeshire (Chatham)
259 for 32 wkts. Kent v. Surrey (Chatham)

Centuries:

192* E. M. Grace - M.C.C. v. Gentlemen of Kent (Canterbury).
134 T. Hearne - M.C.C. v. Sussex (Brighton)
121 W. Bury - Gentlemen of North v. Gentlemen of South (Nottingham)
118 R. Daft - North v. South (Lord's)
117 Thomas Hayward - England v. Surrey (Oval)
102 I. D. Walker - Middlesex v. Surrey (Oval)—debut match
100 A. H. Faber - Gentlemen of North v. Gentlemen of South (Lord's)

Carrying Bat Through an Innings:

63* (143) W. G. Nicholson - Gentlemen of South v. Gentlemen of North (Lord's)
192* (344) E. M. Grace - M.C.C. v. Gentlemen of Kent (Canterbury)

Four Wickets with Consecutive Balls:

J. Wells - Kent v. Sussex (Brighton)

Hat-Trick:

H. M. Plowden - Cambridge U. v. M.C.C. (Cambridge)

Eight or More Wickets in an Innings:

10-69 E. M. Grace - M.C.C. v. Gentlemen of Kent (Canterbury)
9-29 James Lillywhite - Sussex v. M.C.C. (Lord's)
8-12 R. C. Tinley - Nottinghamshire v. Cambridgeshire (Nottingham)

8-16 G. Tarrant - Cambridgeshire v. Kent (Chatham)
8-25 W. Caffyn - Surrey v. Yorkshire (Sheffield)
8-26 G. Tarrant - North v. South (Lord's)
8-29 James Lillywhite - Players v. Gentlemen (Lord's)
8-31 G. Wootton - M.C.C. v. Sussex (Lord's)
8-33 W. Slinn - Yorkshire v. Surrey (Sheffield)
8-45 G. Tarrant - Cambridgeshire v. Surrey (Cambridge)

Fourteen or More Wickets in a Match

15 - 56 G. Tarrant - Cambridgeshire v. Kent (Chatham)
15 - 78 R. C. Tinley - Nottinghamshire v. Cambridgeshire (Nottingham)
15 - 146 E. M. Grace - M.C.C. v. Gentlemen of Kent (Canterbury)
14 - 46 G. Wootton - M.C.C. v. Sussex (Lord's)
14 - 57 James Lillywhite - Sussex v. M.C.C. (Lord's)

Bowlers Unchanged in a Match

H. Stubberfield (6-40) & James Lillywhite (14-57)
Sussex v. M.C.C. (Lord's).

The 1862 season opened with visits to both Universities by M.C.C., and the county programme with the Surrey v. Yorkshire match at the Oval on May 26th.

The first important game was the meeting between the All England XI and United North of England XI at Lord's on June 9th, the former winning by four wickets. With the exception of George Parr most of the leading players of the day were in the two teams. R. Carpenter (63*) was top-scorer in the United's first innings of 126, but H. H. Stephenson (70*) took the All England XI to a total of 203. The latter were finally left to score 53 runs to win, but lost six wickets for only 14 runs, the seventh wicket pair hitting off the rest of the runs.

The summer was far from good and rain interfered with most matches, the scoring ruling low, but none lower than the M.C.C. (46 & 52) v. Sussex (64 & 36-6) game at Lord's. This game provided the unique sight of not a single bowling change in the game, Stubberfield and James Lillywhite for Sussex and G. Wootton (8-31 & 6-15) and J. Grundy (1-28 & 0-17) for M.C.C. Wootton's success can be likened to that of J. C. Laker at Manchester in 1956—all but one of the opposition lost their wickets to his bowling.

Cambridge, who had enjoyed the better share of a rain-ruined draw with M.C.C., had no difficulty in beating Oxford by eight wickets in the University match at Lord's. Cambridge (171 & 52-2) enforced the follow-on, Oxford (64 & 158) partially recovering after a first innings failure. R. A. H. Mitchell, who scored 37 and 52

for Oxford, was by far the top-scorer of the match, the next best being 32* by H. W. Salter, last man in for the Light Blues.

W. Caffyn returned one of the best bowling analyses for Surrey v. Kent at Canterbury, taking seven wickets at the cost of only one run each in a spell of 24 overs (20 maidens). Caffyn was nearing the close of his career in England, however, as he stayed in Australia at the end of the 1863-64 tour and it was some years before he returned to play again for Surrey.

The Gentlemen (276 & 211) v. Players (244 & 211-8) match at the Oval ended in a draw, the first in that series of matches since the game at Lord's in 1839. This was an even and exciting game, as at the end Players needed 33 runs to win with only two wickets in hand. The Gentlemen started badly, but John Walker (98) and F. Lee (35) shared in an eighth wicket stand of 110 and F. P. Miller (55) added power to the closing stages of the innings. Thomas Hayward (77) was the main bulwark of the Players' first innings.

History was made in the Sussex v. Kent match at Brighton towards the end of June, Joseph Wells of Kent becoming the first bowler to take four wickets with consecutive balls in first-class cricket when he dismissed J. Dean, S. A. Leigh, C. H. Ellis and R. Fillery shortly after the game had started. Wells thus gained a niche in the records of cricket, although he played only seven times for Kent, and his son, H. G. Wells, became one of England's greatest writers.

The Gentlemen (130 & 69) v. Players (110 & 246) match at Lord's that season was restricted to players of less than 30 years of age on both sides in an attempt to even up things, but all to no avail as the Players won by 157 runs. The Gentlemen had not won a game since 1853, when they were victorious by 60 runs at Lord's, and it says much for the esteem in which these games were held that they weathered the storm of onesidedness. C. D. Marsham played nine times at Lord's, but was never once on the winning side.

The Surrey v. North match at the Oval in early August provided several points of interest. G. Anderson (57 for North) made a drive for eight, but it is not recorded whether overthrows were included, so it seems safe to assume that it was in fact a direct hit. There are several instances of a drive for seven without overthrows at the Oval, so that an eight is not impossible. All the slow scoring has not been confined to recent years, as R. Carpenter batted 315 minutes to score 91* for North, who in the end won the game by ten wickets. One final point, it was the first game for Surrey by H. Jupp, who during the 1860s and 1870s had strong claims to being the best professional batsman.

The Oval was in the news again a week later when Surrey (209 & 318) beat Middlesex (145 & 370) by 12 runs. The game provided an aggregate of 1,042 runs,

but ended in sensational style when Middlesex were left to score 383 runs to win. Such a task was out of the question by the scores of those years, but one young batsman playing in his first match in first-class cricket had other ideas. I. D. Walker, who had batted at number seven in the first innings, this time went in first and scored 102 out of the 258 on the board by the time he was lbw. G. Hearne (65*) enlivened the closing stages of the match and Middlesex fell only thirteen runs short of their target.

E. M. Grace dominated the annual match M.C.C. v. Gentlemen of Kent at Canterbury. Although not a member of the M.C.C., he was allowed to play and by the time the game ended Kent must have regretted their hospitality. Grace was soon into the fray, taking 5-77 in Kent's first innings of 141, but dominated M.C.C.'s innings by scoring 192* and carrying his bat through an innings of 344. But even better was to come, as one batsman was absent in Kent's second innings and Grace claimed all ten wickets at a cost of 69 runs. An innings of 192* and fifteen wickets in a first-class match has only been bettered once—G. Giffen scored 271 and took sixteen wickets for South Australia v. Victoria at Adelaide in 1891-92.

But the first-class season ended in sensational style in the England v. Surrey match at the Oval. England batted first and reached 503 (J. Grundy 95, E. Willsher 54, R. Carpenter 94, Thomas Hayward 117), the first time that an innings of 500 had been recorded in first-class cricket. But it was not scored at a very fast rate, as it lasted for five minutes short of ten hours and ended at 5.30 p.m. on the second afternoon. Grundy batted 250 minutes for 95, the first and second wickets fell at 124, Grundy was out at 185 and the fourth wicket went down at 338.

Willsher started the bowling when Surrey went in to bat late on the second afternoon and, after bowling two overs without fault, was no-balled at the start of his third over by umpire John Lillywhite. This happened five more times, after which the bowler threw the ball down on the ground and the nine England professionals left the field. Willsher had been no-balled for lifting his arm above the shoulder when delivering his left-arm pace bowling. Play was not resumed that evening and on the last morning, as John Lillywhite refused to change his mind about Willsher's action, G. Street stood as umpire.

Lillywhite's action forced M.C.C. to amend the laws in 1864, allowing over-arm bowling for the first time, the bowler thus gaining full freedom in action. Twenty years were to pass before the question of throwing again raised its ugly head in the 1880s - but that is another story.

Roy Webber

Hampshire Champions by John Arlott

On Friday the first day of September in the Year of Grace one thousand nine hundred and sixty-one, there befell in Hampshire such a cricket party as few counties have ever known. Its ramifications were vast, spreading to the villages and hamlets, and to pubs which barely boast a local habitation or name. Hampshire for the first time in their history were County Champions. That feeling had not been known there since the days of the eighteenth century when Hampshire often played All England for a purse of guineas, and not infrequently won.

But for any Hampshireman now alive, this was a new experience. From the outer edge of Farnborough to the threshold of Parkstone; from Woolton Hill to the place where Hayling Island looks across a narrow inlet to Sussex there was celebration. Even the Isle of Wight drank the health of mainlanders. Reserve players of village teams flexed their muscles, rebuked their women-folk for lack of enthusiasm, and strode out to take their due share in the festivities. The eleven men—and their reserves—who had represented the county in the crucial match against Derby at Bournemouth that day, heaved a brief—but very deep—sigh of relief and turned to the libations their captain was already pouring. No one could quite believe it. It could not be truly savoured, it was too impossible: but it was on the news: it must be right. Let us celebrate. Faces swam in out of the night, hovered for a moment—or an hour—and disappeared again. Paths crossed and crossed again, some of them long and involved, and not always well observed, until the revellers reached their beds that night. Tomorrow Yorkshire were the opponents—but today the Championship had been won; nothing else mattered.

After 66 Years

The mist of champagne bubbles round that day is subsiding—though it is due to break out again at frequent intervals during the winter. But at least we may now observe the achievement a little more clearly than during the fortnight immediately after it was sealed.

The quantity of what W. G. Grace used to call ‘the widder’ that was consumed in celebration of the event might seem extravagant in some counties. In Yorkshire the winning of the Championship is by no means unusual. Indeed, letters received from some of that county’s supporters seem to indicate that they regard it as their constant right—which must make their players’ lot a hard one. Surrey’s seven-year sequence of wins reduced many of those who had queued up for membership in the earlier period to so blase an attitude that they did not even bother to go to see the later triumphs.

But for Hampshire the occasion was unique; the county’s first Championship, after 66 years in the

When I received the feedback on the 2021 Wisden a few contributors mentioned how much they missed John Arlott and recently I found this article, a piece by the great man on Hampshire’s first championship success.

competition. In another sense it was a bridge across almost two hundred years since, through the Hambledon club, Hampshire last stood at the top of English cricket.

The Poorest of the Counties

Much that is superficial—and more than a little nonsense—has been spoken and written about Hampshire’s performance in 1961. Perhaps the outstanding facet—yet the least remarked—lies in the fact that Hampshire is by far the poorest of the first-class counties. Every other has a flourishing supporters’ club, a Test ground or a large membership. Two of them have all three. But Hampshire have existed for years on a shoe-string economy with a small staff, low wage levels and no outside source to save them from using their shrinking capital to make good their annual losses. Had they had even one third of the supporters’ club-football-pool revenue of at least eight counties, they could have engaged, during the past few years, at least three young players’ whose promise they recognised but for whom they could not even afford summer-wages. Attendances for the Australians and the Yorkshire match were good. But the Championship can rarely have been won before smaller crowds than those at Bournemouth for the game with Derbyshire: while, at Southampton in particular, some magnificent third-day finishes drew barely enough spectators to pay the gateman.

Thus, by comparison with counties whose revenue from football pools enables them not only to maintain large staffs, but to bid successfully for young players with offers of high and long contracts, Hampshire’s team-building emerges as a remarkable feat.

At the recruiting level, Arthur Holt, that kindly cricket enthusiast, has chosen wisely and coached well. Of the sixteen players who appeared in county matches in 1961, nine—L. Harrison, Gray, Sainsbury (Pictured, Right), Barnard, Wassell, Heath, Burden, Timms and B. Harrison—were found in local cricket,



while Shackleton came as a colt on trial: all ten were developed on the county staff. White and Livingstone had been briefly on the Warwickshire staff; Horton with Worcestershire; Baldry could not find a regular place with Middlesex. Ingleby-

Mackenzie elected, as an amateur, to play for the county in which his family had deep roots (his father played tennis and hockey for Hampshire). Only Marshall was engaged as an established player.

"Play it Tight"

There is a widely accepted idea that Hampshire won the Championship by what is called 'carefree cricket.' Certainly their captain sees to it that there is a lively atmosphere in their dressing room and their hotels. It is true, too, that Marshall, Ingleby-Mackenzie and Barnard go for their strokes, while Shackleton and White have often made quick tail-end runs. But the rest of the batsmen do not exceed average county rates. At least half a dozen counties can, and often do, score faster. Above all, Hampshire's outcricket is hard. Desmond Eagar—always desperately short of bowlers—had to 'play it tight.' In his early post-war years as captain, his main bowling strength lay in the two spinners—Bailey and Knott. When they went, Shackleton was discovered, Cannings returned from Warwickshire to his native county, and the Hampshire attack was based on the accuracy of that pair in bowling to a thoughtfully-placed, but usually defensive, field which was drilled to a high standard of efficiency.

Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie (Pictured, Right) - who first played for Hampshire in 1951—was brought up in that era for seven years before he took over the captaincy. He absorbed that tactic of making runs hard to get for the opposing side, and has continued to apply it.

Three Wins After Declarations

There is a widely held view that Hampshire won largely in contrived finishes by scoring fast in reply to declarations. In fact, of the 19 wins, only three—against Surrey, Gloucester and Essex—were achieved after opponent's third innings declarations. Surrey lost only six wickets in their two innings at The Oval: but their final declaration left Hampshire—who had scored only 190 in the first innings—308 to win: the runs came largely through a fine 153 by Marshall. Against Gloucestershire, in a match curtailed by rain, Hampshire declared their first innings 80 behind and, after Milton's declaration (with eight wickets down), made 199 at 88-an-hour and won with three minutes to spare when White and Shackleton hit 37 for the ninth wicket in 12 minutes. Essex declared only to give themselves time to bowl Hampshire out. Having taken a substantial first innings lead, Bailey set Hampshire—with Marshall injured—241 to win and reduced them to 35 for four wickets. Then an all-or-nothing innings

by Ingleby-Mackenzie supported by Marshall, who against medical advice, hobbled out with a runner, turned imminent defeat into a quite astonishing victory.

For the rest, of the 19 sides beaten, 12 were bowled out and beaten in the fourth innings - ten of them after Hampshire had declared.

The wins over Gloucester and Essex - with Hampshire still going for the runs when they seemed beaten - were characteristic of Ingleby-Mackenzie's attitude that, if the slimmest chance of winning existed, he would flirt with defeat to attain it. The ten victories after Hampshire declarations indicate probably his most precise skill as a captain—the calculation of a fair chance (for both Hampshire and their opponents) of a finish. He will set a team runs they ought to get, and yet beat them.

Hampshire have attained their recent successes in three-year cycles. In 1955 they were third, in 1958 second, in 1961, first. In 1955, the batting proved too thin: in 1958, dropped catches at crucial times cost them first place to Surrey. In 1961, the maturing of White as a genuine fast bowler added a 'killing' quality—especially against tail-ends—that the earlier sides had lacked. The development of Livingstone and Barnard gave the middle-order a strength it had not had for over twenty years and the catching, without being brilliant, had no such fatal lapses as in 1958.

Greater Playing Achievement

Among his friends, Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie does not answer to—and is not addressed by—any of the strange sobriquets found for him in some newspapers. He is simply 'Colin,' 'Ingleby,' 'skipper' or, at most, 'the young man.' To be sure, he backs horses; and he does

many other things that young bachelors do. He enjoys life in general and, though sometimes the responsibilities of it weigh somewhat heavily upon him, he tries to enjoy his cricket, too. County cricket—especially captaincy—makes some otherwise pleasant people truculent, pompous, jaded, or over-cautious. Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie has not allowed it to have any such effect on him. His greatest playing achievement is often overlooked. The dropped catches that cost Hampshire the Championship in 1958 made a deeper impression on him than he ever voiced. He has never been such a 'tiger' or such an intense director in the field as Desmond Eagar. But he set to work, within his limitations, to improve his own fielding. In 1961 he



brought off at least four run-outs by hitting the stumps direct with long throws: apart from their immediate effect, those efforts made an impact on the rest of the team.

He is no deep strategist: at times it seems that he lets a match drift to the point of disaster. That may be

because the problem of what will win the 3.30 is on his mind: certainly he seems to concentrate more on the game in hand by about six o'clock, when all the racing results are through. But he always judged declarations well. He has, too, solved some potentially explosive human situations by infusing them with laughter. He is utterly likeable—quite often lovable—and, surely, without an enemy. Behind his politeness—which is fundamental rather than formal—there is a genuine wish to like, and to be liked. He sometimes goes to prodigious lengths to avoid hurting people—including bores and puritans—and he has learnt to cover up his rare angers until they evaporate. In a nutshell, he has been a successful captain of Hampshire not through any profound knowledge or study of cricket, but because he is, essentially, a kind person. Moreover, he is by no means as naive as he pretends: merely averse to parading his native shrewdness.

Ideal Balance

As to playing strength, he had an ideal balance in 1961. In batting, he led with the brilliant Roy Marshall, a laconic enthusiast who might emerge, on figures, as the most effective batsman in England if he did not choose to ride the whirlwind and attack bowling which others are content to check. In support, the orderly Jimmy Gray made many unspectacular runs, took valuable wickets and held some good slip catches. Henry Horton wielded the straightest bat in England with an unflagging hunger for runs and a steady devotion; a philosopher-bachelor, he never failed to work out the reason for his dismissal and to ponder it while he faithfully scraped his bat: only run-outs—to which he is sadly prone—left him with no philosophic answer to his self-questioning.

Danny Livingstone quietly learnt that the exotic strokes of second eleven play are, for the moment, at least, uneconomic in county cricket. He made his thousand runs patiently; he will make more—and make them more headily—when he has settled into the first-class game.

Peter Sainsbury, that spruce cricket-fanatic, remained a superb short-leg fieldsman and, while he experimented to recapture his former effectiveness as a bowler, became a batsman of infinite guts with a slowly increasing range of safe scoring strokes.

Completely Devoted Cricketer

His contemporary and room-mate, Mike Barnard (Below, Centre), had seemed to reserve his best batting performances for matches against the tourists and Hampshire could feel that, nine years after his debut, he had not made good his early promise. But suddenly, in the match with Warwickshire at Southampton that stamped Hampshire as a Championship side, his play flowered in a century which turned the game and, from then, he became an effortlessly fluent, fastscoring batsman of infinite value.

Leo Harrison missed several matches through a finger injury: and played in a number more in considerable pain from it. But he regained some of his old, grittily resistant batting form, kept wicket usefully, and observed the game as shrewdly as ever. One of the few pre-war players remaining in the Championship, he is a wise, combative and—for all his attempts to conceal it—completely devoted cricketer.

Derek Shackleton is a perennial miracle of precision, stamina and resource. In the decisive match he rose above the fatigue of having bowled more overs than anyone else in England and, on a wicket which gave

him no help whatever, cut through the Derbyshire batting to carve a win from a very hazardous position. Quiet, patient and absorbed by bowling, 'Shack' belongs in the same line as a great Hampshire bowler of the past—Alec Kennedy—who similarly seemed to bowl on beyond the limits of human stamina, yet still retain accuracy and penetration.

David White is an old-fashioned fast bowler, giving all he has to give, unsubtle but determined. His hat trick against Sussex at Portsmouth concentrated the winning of a match within five minutes: and, if

his long stints of 1961 bowled more weight off him than seemed comfortable, he parted with it cheerfully.

Alan Wassell is a natural cricketer, maturing at amazing speed as a slow left-arm bowler in the classic mould, relying on length, control and variety. He holds some good close catches, might become a useful batsman—and could well step a class higher than county play. Modestly certain of himself, he has taken to first-class cricket as by instinct, and added thought to his gifts.

Mervyn Burden, a better bowler in 1961 than ever before, found new confidence in the May and June matches when he proved highly effective: after that he bowled little—too little. Denis Baldry had his least successful season for Hampshire; but he played a fine



and courageous innings against Yorkshire, fielded handsomely in the covers and accepted being dropped with a good heart. Malcolm Heath was the third seam-bowler, brought in for 'green' and hard wickets, when he bowled with steam to spare, and human humour. Brian Timms, the reserve wicket-keeper, had less luck than in 1960, but his day will come. So, too, will Bernard Harrison's: a grafting batsman with a good and long record as opener for the second team, he made his first first-class century against Oxford University and will score more. He must take the next batting vacancy in the side and should hold it for many years to come.

It is not easy to argue that, man for man, Hampshire were a better team than Yorkshire or Middlesex. Indeed, it may well be said that, as substantially the older side, most of them reached their playing peaks this year, while many of the Yorkshire and Middlesex

players should go on to greater heights. But Hampshire had been through the mill before—in 1955 and 1958—and failed: this time they proved the best equipped side temperamentally. When all other arguments have been adduced—and when we remember that, fortunately, the weather had no real effect on the competition—the fact remains that Yorkshire and Middlesex faltered on the run in—and Hampshire did not. There were a few trembling hands and some occasionally frayed nerves but, when it was all over, at ten-minutes-past-four on Friday the 1st of September at Bournemouth, relief bubbled over in laughter. The laughter, in truth, was headier than the champagne, and more memorable—and not merely because it involved no hangover.

John Arlott

The Wisden Collectors' Club Website has been re-launched and I hope you like it. The First WCC auction of the year is taking place and please click [here](#) to have a look at the auction lots. Every single item in the auction including an original 1896 Hardback and original paperbacks from 1878 and 1880 began the auction at 0.99p - none have a reserve or a BUY-IT-NOW price. Every single lot has been put up for auction by WCC members for the total benefit of other members. 20% of the final price of each lot (10% of the 1896 hardback) will be donated to The Alzheimer's Society and every single time a bid is placed a further 10p will be donated by the WCC...so bid in small increments and the kitty will get bigger. The WCC Auction is [HERE](#)

If you would like to join the WCC so you can bid in the auction, you have three options:

A Full Membership until December 31st 2021 £10, please click [HERE](#)

A Full Membership until December 31st 2022 £18, please click [HERE](#)

A Full Membership until December 31st 2023 £30, please click [HERE](#)

If you need any help or guidance please contact me - details below

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By Mail: PO Box 288, Buckden, Cambridgeshire PE19 9E

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The VERY USER-FRIENDLY Cricket Quiz

Thank you to everyone who has taken part in the first three rounds of the VERY USER-FRIENDLY Quiz. There are individual prizes for each round and for those of you who take part in every one, a big prize at the end.

The winners from Round Three are

First prize

Colin Handley 54 points

Second Prize

Lee Taylor 52 points

Third Prize

Anne Copper 51 points

124 of you have entered all three so far and so here are the top 20 and the bottom 5...those in the middle, you are one or two answers from being heroes or not-heroes.

The questions for Round Four are as follows.

These matches begin on May 27th - all answers have to be in by 10am on the 27th.

1: - Which of the following four teams will score the most runs in their respective match:

Durham, Derbyshire, Leics or Middlesex (whether an innings is completed or not)? 10 points

2: - Which of the following four teams will take most wickets in their respective match:

Lancashire, Surrey, Gloucs or Worcs (whether an innings is completed or not)? 10 points

3: - Across all CC matches how many teams in the first innings will score 150 or less? 10 points

4: - What will be the TOTAL number of wickets that will fall on Day 1 in the following two matches: Warwicks v Notts and Sussex v

Northants. 1 point for every one you get right and a bonus of 10 for the correct answer.

5: - How many batsmen in the Lancashire v Yorkshire match will score between 50 and 100 runs? 1 point for every one you get right and a bonus of 10 for the correct answer.

6: - What will be the total number of wickets to fall be in the Durham v Essex match?

1 point for every one you get right and a bonus of 10 for the correct answer.

7: - How many bowlers will take 6 wickets or more across all matches? 1 point for every one you get right and a bonus of 10 for the correct answer.

8: - Tie breaker, what will be the lowest first innings score across all matches?

1	Mark Mojsak	131
2	Hilary Richardson	129
3	Bob Pook	127
4	Ian Knowles	125
	Sandra Bowden	125
6	Mark Hilton	122
7	Neil Fraser	120
8	Joe Wilson	117
	Steve Nicholas	117
10	Colin Morris	115
11	David Hutchinson	113
12	Steve Garrett	111
13	Chris Rowsell	107
14	David Ackland	104
15	Jeremy Beckworth	103
	Trevor Bedells	103
17	Michael Epton	101
18	Steve Chrispin	98
19	Matthew Thorne	92
20	Arthur Parker	88

AND

-	Simon Freeman	66
-	Cameron Anderson	66
-	Liz Merrill	65
-	Mike Hawkins	62
-	Frank Darby	61

**Please, if you think I have missed you or put a wrong score down for you, contact me by email and I will try and help*

