



THE SUSSEX MARTLETS

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March 2021



Stuart Ritchie declares . . .

After two years as our Treasurer and six as Chairman, Stuart Ritchie steps down from the Committee at the 15th March A.G.M.

"The Sussex Martlets has been an important part of his busy life," writes our President, Brian O'Gorman. "He has devoted a great deal of energy to it, displaying great enthusiasm for the Club and for its members. He has played cricket with success, for both the main side and the Over-40s, with many useful and innings-reviving scores. He is a splendid partner on the golf course (at West Sussex and Piltdown) and has revived the real tennis.

Stuart has been very concerned to ensure a proper social presence and welcome for visitors in the Martlet Tent at Arundel, particularly this year for O.H.Js, as well as raising a table for their Lord's dinner.

He has undertaken many hundreds of hours of administration for the benefit of all and the Club owes him a great debt of gratitude."

To which one might add that he has also most recently overhauled our database and overseen the building of a new website, which his business is most generously sponsoring.

And so to the future. As our club rules require, the Committee has met to discuss and recommend a successor ahead of the forthcoming A.G.M. The outcome of these deliberations is here presented by Brian O'Gorman:

"The Committee is delighted to report that our Social Secretary of recent years, Paul Walker, has accepted our nomination to be the next Chairman and we hope that you will support our recommendation at the meeting."

Paul has been on the Committee since 2016 and has worked tirelessly at the most difficult role of Social Secretary for the past 4 years, organizing Martlet dinners and gatherings at Hove and Arundel. For those who have not had the pleasure of playing cricket with him (or being represented in court by him?!), see page 3.

THE CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW 2020



I announced at the beginning of last year that this would be my final season as Chairman of the Sussex Martlets. It seemed to me that six years as Chairman, and prior to that two years as Treasurer was enough, but more importantly, every organisation needs renewal if it is

going to succeed.

Of course, none of us could have anticipated the year we have just had, with sport and in particular cricket, being suspended for half our season. Our response once the first lockdown was lifted was truly amazing. Having kept every game in the diary, suddenly we had a cricket season on our hands and the remaining places in the fixture list were then backfilled with any games we could arrange. Our thanks in particular go to James Rufey at Arundel Castle, who enabled us to play five games at our spiritual home and in effect facilitating our own cricket week, commencing with the August Bank Holiday. We played six games of cricket in seven days, four at Arundel, one at Hurlingham and finally at Petworth Park.

The highlight of our "cricket week" was of course the Bank Holiday Monday when the Sussex Martlets played the Junior Martlets. John Bettridge's excellent report records the proceedings of the day. Aside from an excellent game of cricket (I was very pleased to be batting with Toby Pullan, as we turned a Martlets' collapse into a competitive total), it also seemed to me that the day embodied everything that the Sussex Martlets represent. There were some 200 spectators at the ground, of whom fifty were Martlets, to watch an enthralling game of declaration cricket. The pitch-side marquee hosted an excellent lunch and our influence throughout the Sussex cricketing community was recognised through our guests: Sir Rod Aldridge (President of Sussex C.C.C.) and his wife Carol, Jon Filby (Chairman of Sussex Cricket Foundation) and his partner (now fiancée) Alison, David Bowden (now M.B.E. and former President of Sussex C.C.C. and Chairman of the Sussex Cricket Foundation) and his wife Pauline, together with Bob Warren (current Chairman of Sussex C.C.C.).

Reflecting on the past six years, or eight depending on your point of view, it seems to me the key points have been as follows:

- Sussex Martlets Cricket has been positioned as being aspirational and inclusive whilst respecting our traditions. This is an appealing proposition to the better cricketers in the Sussex cricketing community and consistently draws a body of players wanting to play our style of cricket on the pitches we play. Throughout this period, we have seen a renewal of

the playing membership and an increase in the number of our players actually playing cricket for the Club.

- The cricketing results have been improving, with the Club winning as many matches as are lost – demonstrable results such as these only add to the Club's standing within the Sussex cricketing community.
- There has been a shift in the fixture list towards qualitative rather than quantitative. This has seen our continued presence at Arundel Castle, but also at a number of other notable grounds including Wormsley, the home of the late Sir John Paul Getty, the Hurlingham Club and Warnford, with our great friends the Hampshire Hogs. It will be no surprise to members to learn that the demand for opposing sides to play us at Arundel Castle remains insatiable.
- We have raised the profile of our schools matches by including two school sides in our Arundel fixture list. In the past, having just one school match a year there sometimes meant a decade elapsing between visits. This has now been reduced to 5-6 years – and has led to heart-felt compliments from directors of cricket at the schools as a result.
- Our activities continue to expand or be re-established. Notable particularly is the establishment of an Over-40s side, which goes from strength to strength. The golfing society has had an influx of new players, which in time will overcome the classic home advantage of our opposition. The Club also now has "home course" status at West Sussex Golf Club and this has clearly aided our standing with the golf clubs we play, as we are now able to offer a reciprocal match in the autumn. The tentative re-establishment of a real tennis section continues, based at Petworth House Tennis Court.
- Technology has become our friend. Two new websites in the eight years, the latest last year, rightly convey the impression of a well-ordered cricket club. Facebook has become the platform for our news with an immediacy not previously experienced, and WhatsApp has come to the aid of many match managers in raising their sides.

Leadership can be a lonely job, but in the case of the Sussex Martlets, the Chairman has the great advantage of the Club's President as a sounding board. I have been blessed by two great Presidents, first Chris Snell and now Brian O'Gorman, who I am pleased has been offered an extra year as Club President. There are many others involved in keeping the Sussex Martlets in good heart – too many to name but they know who they are. The Club's finances have had their ups and downs, but I am pleased to report they are now restored to historic levels.

Any tenure of length will also have its sadnesses. Our Patron, Lady Mary Mumford (as known to most of us, but latterly Lady Herries) passed away in April 2017 (to be succeeded by Johnny Barclay D.L.). We have also lost a number of notable Vice-Presidents including Hubert Daggart, Sir John Donne, Keith Jenkin, Derek Semmence, David Gibbs, and Geoff Seaton. It can be difficult to accept the inevitable passage of time when good friends leave us, but a new band of Vice-Presidents is emerging to help maintain the traditions of the Club.

And finally... shortly after the time you read this, a new Chairman will be installed. It has been a tremendous privilege to be the Chairman of this great Club and I am grateful for all the support I have received over the years. I wish you all well and I look forward to seeing you on the cricket field, golf course or a real tennis court in Sussex at some time in the future. Long live the Sussex Martlets!

Stuart Ritchie

PAUL WALKER (Chairman-elect)



In 2020, that most strange of years, one of the most bewildering experiences for me was to be invited to consider becoming Chairman of the Sussex Martlets. Stuart Ritchie had decided to stand down, after years of valiant service and much hard work.

I was first introduced to the Martlets in 2001. Just before settling down to Sunday lunch at the home of my then fiancée's godmother, Eve Harrison, I was summoned to the bedside of her husband Eddie. This legendary Martlet had noted my interest in his cricket memorabilia (the bed was downstairs in the sitting room, as Eddie was nearing the close of his earthly innings) and said "Oh, you're from Yorkshire, you must be able to play cricket! You must sign up as a candidate for the Martlets." So I did.

For those members who don't know me very well, here is a potted history. My origins are perhaps humbler than many of the members of the Sussex Martlets, past and present. However, as I told those present at the 2019 dinner, there is cricketing history in both my family and my more illustrious in-laws'.

I was born in Huddersfield and lived as an infant in the village of Kirkheaton. A.A. Thompson, the sports writer, was once asked who was the greatest cricketer of them all? He had answered: "Nobody knows the name of the world's greatest all-round cricketer. All we know for certain, is that he batted right-hand, bowled left and was born in Kirkheaton."

He was referring to Wilfred Rhodes and George Hirst. Rhodes played 58 Tests between 1899-1930 and was the oldest player to appear in a Test match, at the age of 52 (there is hope yet for some of our Over-40s squad). He made a world record 1,100 1st class appearances and took 4,204 wickets. Sixteen times Rhodes recorded doubles of 1000 runs and 100 wickets in an English cricket season.

Hirst wasn't far behind. He achieved the same feat a mere fourteen times! After an incredible career with Yorkshire and England, Hirst was the Eton College coach from 1920-38.

My father didn't quite match these heady heights, but he did captain Kirkheaton and help them win the Sykes Cup on two occasions, before crowds well into their thousands (there wasn't much else to do in West Yorkshire in the 1970s). His uncles played first-class cricket, which spared them a life working in the woollen mills.

No great cricketing ability (as those Martlets unfortunate enough to have played with me will no doubt agree) was passed on to me. However, I was imbued with a love of cricket, Huddersfield Town F.C., rugby league and the idea that through sport so much joy and so many lifelong friendships can be achieved.

My teenage years were spent in the town of Knaresborough in North Yorkshire. The local comprehensive (apparently) forged my A-Level results and I persuaded U.C.L. to accept me onto their Law course. London was an eye-opener, as was a year off coaching the Uni women's football team, working for a firm of solicitors in Tottenham and attending (and being immersed in) the Trinidad carnival. Oh to be young again!!

After the Bar finals I became a criminal barrister and have been practicing since 1993. I'm lucky to be involved in an exciting, interesting, if slightly underappreciated (letters to the Legal Aid Agency please) profession.

As I type, I can see a photograph of Brian Close in our sitting-room at home. He's at Lord's in the 1960s being presented to the Queen by Ronnie Aird.

Ronnie was the Secretary and later President of the M.C.C. and was my wife Victoria's grandfather. His education and indeed life was slightly different to mine: prep school at eight, Eton, Cambridge (no degree sat for or attained); a hero in W.W.2. (winning the M.C.), county cricketer for Hampshire and then many years at that small cricket club in NW8.

Ronnie went on to help set up the Friends of Arundel Castle Cricket Club with the Duchess of Norfolk and

one of her late husband's closest friends, Colin Cowdrey.

Victoria's brother, Ian MacDonald, was at Eton with Johnny Barclay and they played at Lord's together. Ian played Martlets cricket, both as a junior and a senior. Having moved to America in the 1980s, Ian returned for a Martlets cameo in the centenary match at Hambledon in 2005, when he kept wicket. He took a catch off my bowling. I remember it well, as I believe it was my only wicket that season!

That memorable match wasn't the only cricketing link between Victoria's and my family. 1920, Ronnie's final year at Eton, was George Hirst's first year as the school's cricket coach. He was described by Len Hutton as "the finest cricket coach in the world" and it was said that his enthusiasm inspired young players and his humour and kindness led the boys to worship him. Much like our own John Bettridge! For me, it's a lovely thought that Ronnie benefited and developed both as a cricketer and a person under the influence of a man from that same small village of Kirkheaton.

For me, cricket isn't so much about personal achievements and milestones, although those things matter up to a point. Cricket is about people, about friendships, about feelings and memories. We may not be able to recall the exact stats of various matches we've all been involved in, but we can all recall how a great (or simple) catch, a match-winning (or saving) innings or a brilliant (or fortuitous) spell of bowling made us feel.

Those feelings can be born or rekindled when we play, officiate in or watch cricket. This is especially true when one considers the breath-taking beauty of the many stunning grounds the Martlets have the good fortune to play on each year: Goodwood, Warnford, Petworth and Sheffield Park, to mention just my favourite quartet.

Then there is of course our spiritual home of Arundel. My hope, if elected by the membership, is to strengthen Martlet bonds with F.A.C.C.C. and with the many schools we are lucky enough to play at and against. I hope to be able to continue our club's close links with the Sussex Cricket Foundation, who do such incredible work.

It is essential that we continue to uphold those core values that make our club so special. Fairness, respect and sportsmanship, which are sadly often missing in many sports (including on occasions cricket), are the bedrock of the Martlets. We play in a certain way. We attract decent cricketers, both in terms of their talent and their character.

However, we must strive to be inclusive and welcoming to cricketers of all backgrounds, culturally and socially.

The composition of the Junior Martlets needs to be widened further and members will be encouraged to reach out to promising young cricketers.

The Over-40s have gone from strength to strength and there is an increasing demand for fixtures each season. Selection for their games is almost the equivalent of a Willy Wonka golden ticket.

I am keen to encourage regular Martlet tours and there are plans afoot in this regard.

The present chairman will be a tough act to follow, as he leaves the Martlets in a position of strength and influence on and off the cricket field.

With the support and encouragement of the members, many of whom I am proud to call my friends, I will certainly be giving it my best shot.

Paul Walker

THE PRESIDENT'S PIECE



Watching cricket is a pleasure, particularly in Sussex with its wealth of clubs and attractive grounds.

The truncated season meant a late start, but the games seen made up for it with much verve, skill and enthusiasm on display – a credit to all concerned.

These are some highlight memories amongst many. When cricket started again it was plain that it had been missed and all wanted to make up for lost time.

My first visit to a Martlet match was at Goodwood, a keen contest, against many Priory Park players. Then to Horsham to see a convincing ten-wicket win against the Nomads and East Grinstead for a well-fought victory against the Cryptics. Later came a visit by the Getty's X1 to Arundel, a stirring contest, based on a sensible declaration at 245 – the right number to make a challenging situation.

We helped the Old Hurst Johnians celebrate their 100th year, again at Arundel, and a remarkable game, adjusted to a two-innings match ensued, which was fully reported on the website, as were other matches.

The size of the gathering and appreciative comments made showed how much this recognition of the O.H.Js meant to them, especially in recollection of their stalwarts: Keith Jenkin and Derek Semmence. It was very sad to learn of the passing of so many Martlets this year, who feature in the obituary section. They have been notable contributors to the Martlet cricket history.

I was also able to attend some Over-40s matches, starting at Rottingdean and these are a most welcome addition to our programme.

Looking to the future, naturally we welcome the new Martlets from the Juniors, who have benefitted so much from John Bettridge's committed enthusiasm.

Golf continues to flourish and the resumption of real tennis gives much satisfaction.

The much rearranged fixtures list meant a great deal of work and all credit and thanks must go to the Committee, match managers, scorers and umpires. We are greatly in their debt for providing our enjoyable programme. We have a special club.

Brian O'Gorman

TREASURER'S REPORT — Covid Rules!



Thankfully, at the time of writing in mid-December (the editor's pleas for articles get earlier every year in a valiant effort to get this newsletter out in a timely fashion!) it appears that this may not be the case for much longer and that in time the vaccines, and all the other restrictions on our activities we have endured, may get this terrible virus under control.

However, 2020 activities for Martlets have definitely been conducted under Covid rules imposed by governing bodies to allow us to participate as safely as possible – I can't say that, when I started umpiring over 40 years ago, I ever envisaged having to request the players every 6 overs to "Sanitise!" On the plus side, I have not had to handle any sweaty items of clothing or try to find somewhere to stow all manner of items that players have decided to bring on to the field of play!

However, as this is the Treasurer's report, I had better let you know what effect this extraordinary year has had on the Club's finances. In April we had no idea what activities might take place and the Committee made a decision that we would not actively pursue under/non-payment of 2020 subscriptions until we knew what level of participation was possible. Our golf season was drastically curtailed, mainly as the social side of matches was not possible, but we did still hold one match and two golf days which were enjoyed by those taking part. On the cricket side, thanks to the hard work of Alan Newman (Fixtures Secretary), match managers and others, we did manage to schedule 29 matches between mid-July and mid-September, which compares very favourably with the average of approximately 45 matches in a 5-month season. Although certain expenses, e.g. insurance, are payable even with no

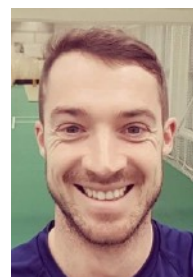
participation, with the level of subscriptions already received and a reduction in costs for catering & ground hire etc., early indications are that we will achieve at year-end the forecasted surplus of at least £2.1k and possibly as much as £5k. This means that the Club's reserves at the start of 2021 will probably exceed £10k, the level agreed at the last A.G.M. as being appropriate for our Club. It is also pleasing to note that our Vice-Presidents have made further donations to the Harrison/V.P. Fund of circa £700 and this, coupled with the non-expenditure of the forecasted £500, leaves this Fund standing at circa £7.2k.

On reviewing the situation in October, the Committee decided that full subscriptions would be payable and the task of asking members to complete payment of the 2020 subs at their appropriate level was started. However, due to technical problems with the change-over of databases, this general notification to members did not occur. If you believe you have not paid or have underpaid your 2020 subscription, please contact me to confirm the amount due. We will be re-doubling our efforts to transfer all payments to the Direct Debit system. When you read this, hopefully in mid-February, you should have already been contacted and if you have not already done so, please action the request to make the transfer. Under present plans there is no intention to alter the subscription levels in 2021, but I am considering a review of the new members recruitment policy including the joining fee, the Under-23 transition policy and an incentive for paying by Direct Debit. If you have any suggestions on anything to do with subscriptions payment, they would be most welcome.

I will close this year's tome with a request to Honorary, like myself, and Life members, who are not required to support the Club financially with an annual subscription, to consider sponsoring one part of our activities e.g. provision of match balls for one or more matches at a cost of £17 per ball. Any contributions will allow the Club to control the costs of providing cricket without unreasonable increases in subscriptions.

Mike Charman

REVIEW OF THE SEASON



I think it's safe to say that the year of 2020 wasn't as straightforward as we normally expect for a cricket season, let alone a normal year in general. So, as we managed to play 17 fixtures including hosting 5 fixtures at our beautiful home ground of Arundel Castle, I think we can count ourselves very, very lucky. The weather was kind to us in the half season we were able to play with only 3 fixtures called off for rain, and 65

different players represented the Martlets in the course of the season. With a good spread of results of won 5, drew 6 and lost 6, I believe a lot of positives can be taken from such a turbulent year. Yes, we weren't allowed the diversion many relish in these wandering games called lunch and tea, and the ever-present changing room 'banter' was moved to an outdoor location, but the essence of the game remained unchanged: we were allowed to bowl a small, hard red ball at 3 stumps in the ground 22 yards away. That is all we wanted, and to many this made the summer of 2020 worthwhile. It certainly made mine.

In this report I will give a summary of a few of the 17 games played in the Martlets' calendar, mainly from 9 of the games that I had the privilege of playing.

The season didn't start particularly brightly with a 10-wicket defeat by the ever-dangerous Goodwood, but in fact, I think it was the competitive push that the Martlets needed to remind ourselves that, yes we do play cricket for fun, but the competitive nature and spirit of the game is fundamental to our success as well. This inspired our own 10-wicket victory against Nomads, as openers Tom Haynes and Toby Pullan chased down over 200 in an unbroken stand with both scoring tons. Another noticeable contribution on the bowling front was youngster Ryan Trotter with 4-24 off 7 overs on an excellent wicket at Horsham. We then had the third possible result of the season with a draw against Cryptics, an excellently fought game with toing and froing as each team pushed for victory. No 50s or 3+ wickets were registered in the game, which showed that there were many contributions from the Martlet men.

The beautiful ground of Broadhalfpenny Down was our next fixture and this was a pleasure to play in, albeit in 30-degree-plus heat: a beautiful hill-top ground with plenty of spectators wandering round the boundary

edge. The Martlets took the advantage of batting first in the blazing heat and amassed plenty of runs before an early declaration inside 40 overs, Rebbetts top-scoring with a fiery 89* coming in at number 7. The Martlets were struggling for victory with only a few overs left, but Jordan Shaw's pace took the last 3 wickets for very few runs, showing his real potential again this season. Another victory for the Martlets and a well-deserved drink a stone's throw away from the boundary edge at The Bat and Ball Inn – some say that was where cricket originated. I'll let you do your own research into that!

Some regular participants were emerging for the Martlets, which created a strong nucleus to the side: Rebbetts, Shaw, Murray, Carter, Pullan, Ashworth, Ritchie all played 5 or more games, which created some reliability and consistency, improving Martlet performances and results week on week.

The Martlets took down the mighty Brighton Brunswick, who we look forward to playing against at Hove again once Covid-19 passes – sooner rather than later hopefully!

The Martlets racked up the runs at East Grinstead C.C., with three players all going past 50 and with Rebbetts left on 49*. I would have liked to have seen the club records of how many times the Martlets have had four players go past 50 in the same innings! Campopiano, Peters and Shaw all reached this milestone. Brunswick never looked like getting close, as Peters and Murray took three wickets a piece.

However some midweek losses followed, as Yellowhammers, West Chilt. and the Frogs all took down the Martlets, although there were still some notable performances: 4 wickets for Ben Twine against Yellowhammers, young Felix Horsham with 3 wickets against Chilt. and Rebbetts taking 3 wickets against the



Broadhalfpenny Down under pressure from Rob Carver (wkt) and Jonny Heaven, with John Ashworth coiled and ready to swoop!

Frogs. Our outgoing chairman registered an excellent 49 against the Frogs to drag us out of a terrible position early on, with three rain delays within 35 overs! I would have loved to see Stuart raise his bat one final time before departing as chairman.

Thankfully we were able to return to our sacred home of Arundel to host our annual Vice-Presidents' Day against the Juniors, which once again proved to be an excellent day. The Juniors were looking to keep the trophy after a win off the second to last ball in the previous year, but were put under pressure by the seniors as they scored freely, declaring on 219-6. The Juniors lost wickets regularly throughout but scrapped their way to a draw, ending on 171-9. Ben Davies showed his class with the ball taking 4-35 off 9 overs, while the immaculate Mike Murray took 1-8 off 10 overs!

The Juniors' game started a run of 5 games at Arundel; a huge thank-you as always to the Friends of Arundel Castle Cricket Club for the outstanding facility we have the privilege of using regularly each season. The Band of Brothers were next to visit this iconic location and brought a strong side to suit the surroundings. They batted first and scored in excess of 250, with only Rebbetts keeping the Brothers' batsmen at bay, taking 2-12 off 10 overs. The Martlets never looked like chasing down this target, but did manage a draw, ending 9 down, with Rebbetts and Murray surviving the last few overs together.

George Read took advantage of excellent batting conditions to register the fourth Martlet hundred of the season, as the Martlets drew against the Hurlingham Club.

Another draw followed against the magnificent Getty's XI, who brought the likes of former England player Jamie Dalrymple to Arundel. Sam Carter scored an excellent 50, as he showed his class and experience once again in Martlet colours.

A couple of losses and rain cancellations followed, leaving a late fixture against Worth as the last fixture of the season. What a glorious day it was for it too, in late September. You can certainly see why the cricket season can go on a bit longer into autumn now September has turned into such a fine month. This reorganised fixture against the youth of Worth always proves an excellent game, and this didn't disappoint. The Martlets opted to bat first, but lost a wicket in the first over to an excellent away-swinging from a right-arm seamer opting to bowl round the wicket to both right and left handers! This brought Darryl Rebbetts to the crease, who had had a mixed season with the bat either scoring below 5 (4 times) or above 35 (4 times) and nothing in between! Thankfully this time it was the latter, as he batted for the duration of the innings scoring 132*. The Martlets were always in control, but couldn't dismiss the Worth

batsmen quickly enough to get the win. There was excellent bowling from Paul Walker again, as he took another 3 wickets. It was an excellent season for Paul, as he came top of the bowling stats with 9 wickets at an average of 16!

The Martlets most consistent batsman this season was the ever-progressing Jordan Shaw. He had five scores in excess of 35 and showed why he is in hot pursuit of a career with Sussex C.C.C. To go with his 80 m.p.h. rockets, it will be great to see Jordan go on and turn those 30s and 40s into 100s.

So in summary, a real success of a season; after all we only technically had half a season's worth of cricket, but it's safe to say everyone who played made the most of every minute on the field. You will find below the stats for the top performances from the season, but I think this year especially it goes way past the top performances. Our grateful thanks are due to everyone who helped organise, run, play, spectate, score and officiate the games put on by the Sussex Martlets. It was a truly astonishing effort by all to get the amount of cricket we did.

I can't wait to get out and hopefully play a full season next year.

Darryl Rebbetts

LEADING BATTING AVERAGES

Batting (Qualification: 5 innings)

	Innings.	N.Os.	H.S.	Runs	Average
D. Rebbetts	9	4	132*	358	71.60
T. Pullan	5	1	109*	183	45.75
J. Shaw	8	1	65	269	38.30
S. Carter	8	0	62	168	21.00

Centurions: Darryl Rebbetts (132*), George Read (110), Toby Pullan (109*) and Tom Haynes (101*).

LEADING BOWLING AVERAGES

Bowling (Qualification: 25 overs / 9 wickets)

	Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wkts	Average
P. Walker	32	5	148	9	16.44
J. Shaw	41	4	161	9	17.88
M. Murray	62	14	205	11	18.63
D. Rebbetts	57	7	247	9	27.44

5 wkts in an innings: Seb Street (5-33)

OVER-40s CRICKET

Played 7, won 3, lost 3, drawn 1.



The season that almost never was turned out better than we could ever have expected. On the field we were a little inconsistent but, for this year at least, that really took a back seat.

From a personal point of view, the months of lockdown 1.0 were made distinctly more miserable by the ever increasing likelihood that we were going to get no cricket at all in 2020. When basketball was ok but our 'vector' meant that, even spread out across a field, we were 'super-spreading', it felt like all was lost.

Never mind the sanitising and rolling the ball straight back to the bowler, any kind of cricket would have been good for me. I would have played in a mask if that's what the E.C.B. had wanted. I would even have played in snorkel and flippers, frankly.

By the 15th July we were back on and playing at Rottingdean. At that point, other than the Australian touring sides who could be forgiven for giving it a miss, we had only lost one fixture.

I'll say this for Covid-19, it turned out to be a match manager's dream. I think I had 14 players for that game in an hour-and-a-half. We were the first Martlets game of the season and it was fun, but the fact that it was happening at all was better. A lot of grins on both sides.

On the pitch it was a great start. Walker and Christmas got the 35 that we generally get retired on in the Over-40s, and Nick Beechy was classy for his 38. Nick went on to take 3 wickets, as we bowled them out for less than 100 and an easy win. Also this was the first time I had played with Ashers, which was great on and off the field.

On to Cuckfield and the return of Lucky and Jeremy McGahan, and the welcome addition of Oliver Bell (seamers always welcome). Lucky and Oliver (2-26 each) kept them to 128 and then Michael Loveday continued his assault on the season with 38 after 33 the week before. Jeremy (35), and then Malik and I knocked it around for a bit to get us over the line. I love Cuckfield. Lovely people, lovely ground.

Into August and off to Horsham to play against the 40 Club. An interesting one this, as up until this point we had comfortably seen off our opponents, but we knew this would be a little different. Even with the introduction of Deggsy, Dave Messenger and Nick Ratcliffe, we couldn't get past the youth and exuberance of a side clearly just too good for us. It's a shame when that happens, but as we get more experience as a side and as we get a few more Martlets

clicking over 40, I really believe that we will be better able to compete with sides like this.

12th August and off to Streat and the legendary Stan Spiegel. On this occasion he didn't manage to rip through us and we posted an unassailable 191 in 35 overs with Loveday, Ritchie and Messenger all retiring on 35. Jeremy was the pick of the bowling with 2-15 off 6, but a joy to have Guy Keeling back (love a seamer).

Then to Petworth, always a joy and always great to have Walker skipper the side. Not quite sure how we failed to win with Beechy, Jackson, Murray, Messenger, Wills et al, but it was an honourable draw in the end.

We lost at St James' and then we returned for Bushell's last-minute second game at Streat on 16th Sept. Having played so well the first time round, we inexplicably threw it away with the bat this time. Loveday told me that, when facing the 80-something Stan Spiegel, I looked like a hypnotised snake in a charmer's basket. Fairly much. They bowled us out for 117, and there was no way back from there.

Be it Covid-related or not, the most pleasing part of the season was the ease with which we got sides out and the fact that we had more than 30 Martlets represent us over the 8 games. That and the opportunity to play cricket with such an outstanding bunch of people.

If it were not for the uncertainty, we would already be inking in a tour for 2021, but that's still in our plans. Onwards and upwards next year. Can't wait.

Phil Savage

OVER-40s AVERAGES

Batting	Innings.	N.Os.	H.S.	Runs	Average
M. Loveday	5	2	38	141	47.00
P. Walker	2	0	48	86	43.00
S. Ritchie	3	1	50	85	42.50
D. Messenger	3	1	39	67	33.50

Bowling	Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wkts	Average
J. McGahan	28	2	133	6	22.17
D. Messenger	19	1	118	5	23.60
D. Cashinella	22	2	140	5	28.00

JUNIOR MARTLETS 2020



Hope for some cricket in 2020 swung back and forth throughout the early part of the summer. The politicians described the cricket ball as a "Covid vector", which seemed to me somewhere between the realms of sci-fi and Monty Python!

Anyway, we were told that there was no chance of recreational cricket starting until 1st August, although explosive experts later dismissed the potentially warlike qualities of the ball as myth and that led to a political U-turn to allow cricket to start in mid-July. By then it was too late to save the bulk of the Junior Martlet games, which were scheduled for the latter half of the month. Arundel, however, was a beacon on the horizon. The date had to be changed but Bank Holiday Monday was fixed for the annual clash and Club Day at the Castle.

Despite missing a couple from the initial selection, a nonetheless handy Juniors side assembled eager to defend the trophy that was won last year for the first time. Skipper Ryan Trotter won the toss and dutifully inserted the senior side.

The right-arm, left-arm seam opening attack of Aiden Drew and Hugo March proved very steady and they kept a gag on the openers. Drew had John Ashworth caught behind by Joe Willis in the 11th over. Sam Carter and Jordan Shaw briefly accelerated but after adding 23 runs Rafe Liebers struck a vital double blow in his second over by trapping Carter lbw, before capturing the vital scalp of Darryl Rebbetts, via the safe hands of Sam Clark. Ben Davies and Jordan Shaw doubled the score before Jack Trubshaw had the benefit of the lbw appeal against Shaw. With 10 minutes to go before lunch, Toby Pullan came to the wicket; a bit late you may think for him to come in, but he'd been doing time for having arrived late at the ground, having hitched a lift with the dramatic member of the Martlet bowling attack! Despite having been encouraged at lunch to pile into seconds by the Juniors' manager, Toby's batting was free-flowing in the afternoon and he top scored with 57. Two runs later the declaration came at 218-7.

Joe Willis and Anish Padalkar opened up for the Juniors, with Michael Murray taking the new ball for the senior side. Always a sly move to start with a spinner; it's just not in the opening bat's contract! Disconcerted, Anish fell for the trick in the first over! Willis and Sam Clark began to recover the equilibrium, but the latter had the rough end of the lbw law. This brought Oscar Jago-Lewis to the crease and he and Joe were accelerating well until Oscar hit over one that didn't bounce from Ben Davies. Rafe Liebers at 6 played some fine shots and brought about a change in momentum that might

have helped to see the Juniors home, but after he went for 28 the tempo fell away and the gulf widened. By this time the hitting power was probably not there to reach the target. Ryan Trotter decided to play a captain's sheet anchor role. Jamie Hamilton stayed with him for some time.

I would say at this point the option of the draw is seldom part of schoolboy cricket these days, so the mentality for a bit of grind of that sort is not necessarily an inborn part of the younger players' game. However, Ryan and those who followed showed admirable determination in forcing the draw and thus, with nine down at the end, retaining the trophy. As Brian O'Gorman, the President, said in his speech at the end, "Don't forget a draw is a result." I certainly admired their spirit.

For me, it was certainly a heartening note on which to end my 10-year tenure as the Juniors' manager. There is certainly a tremendous enthusiasm to play Martlets-type cricket at the junior level and for me, above all, it has been great fun. That is just what any game should be at any level.

My thanks go to the many players, their parents, grandparents and members of the Club for their hearty support over the years.

Sussex Martlets 218-7 dec. (Toby Pullan 57, Jordan Shaw 42, Ben Davies 36, Stuart Ritchie 28*. Rafe Liebers 2-21, Ryan Trotter 2-31, Aiden Drew 2-33.)

Junior Martlets 171-9 (Joe Willis 44, Rafe Liebers 28, Jamie Hamilton 19, Oscar Jago-Lewis 18. Ben Davies 4-35.) **Match Drawn.**

John Bettridge

JIMMY ANYON



The Committee are delighted to announce that Jimmy Anyon has agreed to take on the job of managing the Junior Martlets from John Bettridge.

Jimmy is a Lancashire lad, who attended the Loughborough U.C.C.E. before becoming a professional cricketer first with Warwickshire (2005-09), before joining Sussex (2010-16), for whom he took 199 first-class wickets.

Persistent injuries unfortunately forced an early retirement and he joined the staff at Hurstpierpoint College, where he now is in charge of the cricket.

SUSSEX MARTLETS v JUNIOR MARTLETS (Arundel Castle, 31st August)

The Vice-Presidents' Day, rebranded as Club Day, was well attended with everyone determined not to let covid conditions get in the way of our annual pilgrimage to the Castle.



Adrian & Gabrielle White raise a glass with Mark Harrison, with Ham Whitty looking on wistfully...



Martlet blazers with in-built social-distancing function — as demonstrated by Ron Pateman, Robin Carr, John Goodacre & Brian O'Gorman



Martlets XI



The President's Trophy



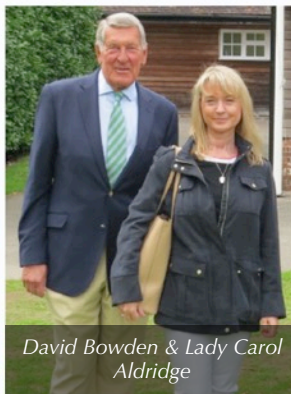
Junior Martlets XI



The Presidential address...



The Darryl Rebbetts Fan Club annual outing



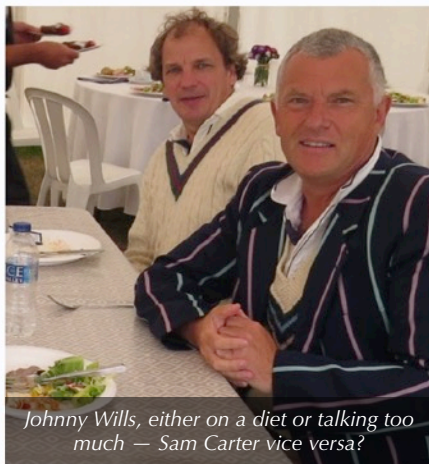
David Bowden & Lady Carol Aldridge



Sir Rod Aldridge (President, S.C.C.C.), Pauline Bowden, Bob Warren (Chairman, S.C.C.C.)



Renira & John Barclay with James Rufey (Secretary, F.A.C.C.)



Johnny Wills, either on a diet or talking too much — Sam Carter vice versa?



Mike Charman and Jon Filby (Chairman of Sussex Cricket Foundation)

JOHN BETTRIDGE

We can't let John go without marking his ten-year tenure as manager of the Junior Martlets (2011-20) with an interview:

DD: What are your favourite memories of playing Martlet cricket yourself?

JB: Amongst my favourite excursions was the one to Itchenor to play a country house game against Robert Green's XI – and the wonderful lunch! The Herstmonceux game was a regular one and then there was the annual trip to play Midhurst in Cowdray Park. There was always a major polo game on the adjacent pitch, with its loudspeaker commentary. Concentration was regularly interrupted by words such as, "His Royal Highness is haring down the right wing"!

DD: Who were the most outstanding Junior Martlets of your time in charge?

JB: Early on, Marcus Campopiano made some big scores for us, including a century in the Arundel game and a match-winning ton against the Babes of Kent (as they were then) on the Nevill at Tunbridge Wells. Joe Ludlow made his initial appearance as an off-spinner, but was prolific with the bat in subsequent seasons. There was great consistency about Toby Pullan's batting and he too topped three figures on two occasions. Sam Cooper was a danger man to have in your side, because if the strokes really flowed the ball went a long way. Harry Moorat had an outstanding season in 2016. Toby Shepperson was more than likely to have been the man of 2020 in the season that never was, although his performances in recent seasons have hit the headlines.

Amongst the bowlers, the Juniors have had some fine exponents of the various dark arts: Henry Cope's left-arm wrist-spin – and we've never been short of a quality leg-spinner with Eddie Blake, Ben Candfield, Jack Troak and Will Collard filling the role over the years. Ben Heber and Bertie Foreman have been most effective in the off-spin department.

The spinners were well-supported by a clutch of handy 'keepers, numbered amongst whom were Brad Gayler, Jo Gilligan, Rob Cope and more recently Mason Robinson.

As regards seamers, I'd pick out Jamie Hutchings, Joe White, Dominic Keats and James Brehaut as major contenders for the opening spot, with George Read as a fine first-change.

There have been some of whom I saw less than I would have liked, because of a clash with county commitments. George Garton comes to mind here. He played in most of the games as a 14-year-old but thereafter was needed elsewhere (!)

Those are just a few, but there is a lot of talent on the way up: Joe Willis, Oscar Jago-Lewis, Anish Padalkar and Hashim Riaz are names to follow for the future.

DD: What do you see as being the future of Junior Martlet cricket?

JB: There is a real enthusiasm to play for the Juniors and people do seem to be hooked once they've experienced the Martlet recipe, which involves playing good cricket on pleasant grounds, but possibly without the pressure that can come in school and county games. So, there is a future.

I would like to see someone succeed where I have failed, and that is to stir up more interest in East Sussex. I can also see a time, perhaps not that far away, when there will be a Junior Martlet girls' side. There really is a lot of girls' cricket being played in schools as well as clubs now.

DD: What has been the recipe for your success as a Junior Martlets manager?

JB: I have been exceedingly lucky in being able to find captains who have been just the type of individual for an occasional side. They've had a love for the game; been welcoming and encouraging on the field and tried hard to involve everyone as far as possible. That has left new players wanting to come back and play again.

DD: Finally, what do you feel has been your greatest achievement with the Juniors side?

JB: Quite simply the number of former Junior players who have carried on playing Martlets cricket for the senior side once they've left school.

And for that the Club is eternally grateful.

There are many Martlets, who can trace their involvement with the Club back to a telephone call from John and, as one of his Junior protégés, **Marcus Campopiano** says, John is "the hardest man to say 'no' to in cricket!" adding (and I sure he speaks for many), "John is someone who you always want to help, because of his true love for the game. A great servant of the Club and he has helped produce many fine Martlets. Thank you John!"



Nick Wisdom with footballer Nigel Clough (son of Brian and winner of 14 England caps in the 1990s) and assistants at the opening of his new shop in Haywards Heath in 1998.

NICK "WIS"

Wisdom Sports, the cricket specialist in Haywards Heath, has supplied Sussex Martlets kit for more than 40 years. The shop was founded by Nick Wisdom in 1977. In this article, Nick recalls his years running the shop and his retirement, which includes establishing an exhibition about his father, the much loved comic actor Sir Norman Wisdom.

I played two first-class matches for Sussex in 1974, but when it became clear that I wasn't going to make the grade as a full-time professional, I opened a sports shop instead. The idea had come to me while I was still trying to make it as a professional, while I worked at a sports shop in Lancing which was run by Tony Buss, also a Sussex cricketer.

My playing career might not have worked out as I hoped, but cricket was always my passion and over the years I built up the cricket department at Wisdom Sports. Saturday mornings in the shop were a real get-together of Sussex club cricketers – people asking who others were playing that day, plenty of banter flying around. That's the sort of environment I like.

The role as kit supplier to the Martlets goes back a long way. Early in the life of my shop I was approached by someone on the Martlets committee who said that the club's kit supplier, Dege in London, was not very interested. So I bought up all their stock, which even included club bow ties.

I always remember Eddie Harrison, the long-time secretary and president of the Martlets, coming in one day. He was quite a formidable character and he threw his Martlets cap across the desk at me and said, "For goodness sake young man, get the right pink! It's an Eton pink, not a Charterhouse pink." Of course his cap was so faded that there was no pink left at all. I had to open up the crease to try and get the correct colour match. That cap is still on display in the shop, in fact.

Sports shops aren't really like that anymore – not now that people buy most of their kit online or direct from the manufacturers. I always sensed that change coming, but I knew that if I could give a really good service, a lot of customers would keep coming back.



Father & Son. Nick, aged 6 months, wearing a suit given to his father by the cast of 'Paris to Piccadilly', which was his first London West End show in 1952/53.

I always got excited about cricket kit. I still do. I used to get a real buzz in September when I went to the cricket suppliers' show at Lord's. As a cricket obsessive I was like a kid in a candy shop – all those new bats, pads and gloves to select my stock from. I kept a good range and people could always get what they wanted when they came in to Wisdom Sports. Even with repairs, people knew that they could crack their bat on the Saturday, bring it in on the Monday and have it back for the following Saturday. Of course, if they bought the bat online and brought it to me, I'd tell them that they had to take it back to where they got it from!

I retired in February 2018. Having founded the shop in 1977, I felt like I had done my time. The shop is now run by Richard Harding, who also owns Intersport in Lewes. I still do the bat repairs though.

Retirement has given me the time to get involved with my family history. My father was Sir Norman Wisdom, the comic actor. He died, at the age of 95, in 2010 but he left behind a huge collection of memorabilia including hand-written comic scripts dating back to the 1940s, when he was in the army. I started going through it all and realised there was some really good stuff, so I started putting an exhibition together.

The exhibition has been on display in five or six venues now, including the Isle of Man, where he lived and Epsom, where he used to stay when he was on tour. I'm hoping to take it down to Dover, where he was brought up. It's been really well received. We're thinking about moving to the Isle of Man, so it may be that the exhibition ends up there on a permanent basis, if I can find somewhere that will have it.

As I child, I don't think I really understood what a huge star he was. What brought it home was when my mother took me and my sister to watch one of his new films, 'A Stitch In Time', in 1963. I've never heard laughter like it. There were a lot of children in the audience and the screams of laughter were incredible. Then at the end everyone got up and applauded, which I've never seen before in a cinema. I thought, "My god, they're clapping my father. He must be a bit bigger than I thought!"

*As told to **Josh Burrows***

Nick was the Martlets' leading run-scorer in 1981 with 414 runs. He has scored two centuries (in 1981 and 1992) and took 12 wickets in the 1983 season. In 1994, in recognition of his contribution to the Club, he was elected a Vice-President. Both his sons, Lawrence and Greg, have followed in their father's footsteps in playing for the Martlets.

THE GOLFING SOCIETY 2020



This is my first report as the new Hon. Sec. of the Martlets' Golf Society, and I was hoping that I would have had more golf events to report on than I have. Without doubt 2020 has been a difficult year for us all, as we have been adjusting to living and playing sport in the Covid-19 pandemic.

In early 2020 Adrian White asked me if I would take over as Hon. Sec. of the Martlets' Golf Society, which I was delighted to accept. Adrian ran the Golf Society for nine years succeeding Ham Whitty. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Adrian for his stewardship of the Society, during which time he was instrumental in securing West Sussex G.C. as our home course, which is all the more poignant as it is the home of the Gilligan Putter. This trophy is played for annually between West Sussex and the Martlets and can be seen hanging in the club's new orangery, denoting which side last won the match by the direction the head of the putter points. The Martlets now have three fixtures at West Sussex: a match against an invitation side, the match against the club and finally a reciprocals' match against the match managers and captains of our host clubs. The acceptance of the Martlets by West Sussex is greatly appreciated, as this was one of the early matches back in the 1930s, when West Sussex was established. Adrian has also presided over a period when a number of new members have been inducted into the Golf Society, thus strengthening its playing membership.

On to golfing activities for the year. The first lock-down deprived the Golf Society of all of its Spring fixtures; it was not until June that we were able to get on a course and play some golf. This came with our annual Martlets' golf day at Manning's Heath, which was run by Robert Reed. The day was bright and sunny with a gentle breeze, the course was in fine condition — a perfect setting and a much welcomed opportunity to

play some socially-distanced golf. The day was won by Chris Gray with a commendable 40 points, followed by Andy Rogers with 35 points. Afterwards everyone gathered on the Club terrace in the sunshine for a socially-distanced get-together to sample some of the very nice red and white wines from the Club's wine estate.

The next Martlets' fixture was a reorganised day at West Sussex in September, when we would normally have the reciprocals' match. Stuart Ritchie took the initiative and organised an extra golf day for members of the Golf Society, and sixteen players competed in a Foursomes Stableford winners takes all format. A super roast lunch was provided by the chefs at West Sussex, whose menus make West Sussex the envy of many clubs of higher standing in the U.K. Braving what turned out to be some heavy autumn squalls, the pairing of James Goddard and Peter Jones ran out as winners on the day, with 28 points.

The final fixture of the year was at Rye on the 11th October. The Martlets took an eight-man team, which was half that which played in 2019 match, due to Covid restrictions. The result was no better, as the Martlets lost for the 4th year in a row to a strong Rye team, who lunch better than Martlet sides. Even with a break in the wet October weather and favourable conditions with Rye's greens running slower than normal, the Martlets were not able to capitalise on this and went down 5½ to 2½.

We will look back on 2020 as a year of lost sporting opportunity. Looking to the year ahead, the Golf Society has secured all of its fixtures well ahead of time and we look forward to getting back on the course in April for our fixture v West Sussex G.C.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank those of you who supported the three Martlets fixtures in 2020 and I hope to see many more of you at our matches in 2021.

Robert Forster



A view of the 18th hole from the club house at Rye Golf Club.

A (MARTLET-TRAINED) ENGLAND OPENER!

Norman Philpot played a lot of cricket for M.C.C., Wimbledon, the Free Foresters, Incogniti and the Sussex Martlets from the early 70s and through into the mid-90s, always maintaining a certain vigour (he never admitted to being over 30!) In 2009 he became a Vice-President of the Club.

Little did most of us know but, back in 1996, his fellow Old Johnian Mark had asked Norman if he would be godfather to his son, Dominic. If he said nothing of this at the time, Norman has made up for it since, regularly informing anyone who would listen that his godson was 'special'. The response, 'Oh yes Norman, of course he is!' has finally rebounded on us all, as this year Dominic Sibley has proved beyond doubt that he is rather special.

So here is the back-story of how a Martlet fostered the career of an English International, and an opening batsman at that – as told by Norman:

"There was a time – for 20 years or so – when Susie and I spent most of our year in the South of France, where we had a boules court which was extended and cultivated to make a more than adequate cricket net;

with the addition of a bowling machine and a perfect climate, a proper foundation was laid to enjoy one of the essentials that La Belle France lacked.

So it was that the boy, from age 7, came every year with his father for a week's sport, which included a prize for the victor ludorum; while sports played included swimming, diving, table-tennis and pétanque, the prime thrust and purpose, however, was facing the dreaded bowling machine. Needless to say, as the years rolled by, 'the boy' grew in stature and talent to the point that at the age of 14 he felt the need to play with bigger boys; having moved on to Whitgift School, he was snapped up by Surrey and the rest is history."

Norman is now Dominic's number one fan and proudly points out that Dominic "equalled or even beat W.G.'s record by scoring a double-hundred for Surrey in a championship match against Yorkshire while still at school and [unlike W.G.] studying for his A Levels. Having been the highest run-scorer in the championship last year by some measure, his elevation to the England squad seemed only fair and reasonable, and he has more than justified his selection by recording two Test centuries already."



Mark & Dominic Sibley with Norman Philpot and 'the dreaded bowling machine'

Norman met up with his godson in September 2020 on Dominic's 25th birthday and asked him a few questions on behalf of 'The Martlet'.

NP: What are your ambitions now you have become an England player?

DS: A long-term place at the top of the England batting line-up and I really want to finish with an average in the high 40s; being an opening bat, which I believe to be the hardest job in the batting department, I will be perfectly content to have achieved that.

NP: You seldom appear uncomfortable facing seriously quick bowling – unlike me who remembers facing John Snow in an Old Boys' game in the distant past, taking cover alongside the square-leg umpire! Who is the fastest bowler you have faced so far?

DS: I reckon the Windies' quickie Shannon Gabriel was fairly sharp, but there are others I am keen to have a look at.

NP: Given all the overs of top-class left-arm spin from me over the years, how come you had problems with the 'very ordinary' Mitchell Santner in New Zealand?!

DS: No comment!



Godfather & godson share a drop (?)

As Dominic disappeared into an extended period of training before the winter tours, Norman ends with this assessment of his talented godson:

"He is a very relaxed and well-balanced individual, who clearly can cope with the pressure of continuous cricket but – and rightly in my opinion – is disappointed and a little disturbed when he scores a hundred yet receives a poor press and negative comments about his technique! Nonetheless, he is now 'public property' and must learn to live with this feature that accompanies success. Fortunately, he is a thoroughly decent fellow and easily able to handle most tricky deliveries on and off the field!"

Credit where credit is due, Norman has done his bit to help him on his way and his pride in Dom's success is obvious to all.

Desmond Devitt

OBITUARIES

JOHN HARTRIDGE (1931-2020)



I first met John in the mid-1980s when I moved back to Sussex and started umpiring local cricket and John was the scorer for Lewes Priory C.C., at that time one of the top teams in the Sussex League. Our paths continued to cross, with him in that role and a similar one with the Sussex Martlets.

In late 1994, in my role as Assistant Secretary of Sussex C.C.C., I was informed by Frank Ketley, the then 2nd XI scorer, that he was standing down and my knowledge of John's scoring skills meant I did not have to look far for Frank's replacement – John having already stood in for Frank on previous occasions. John was approaching retirement from his profession as an architect and negotiated with his partners in the firm that he could work part-time in the cricket season. Thus in April 1995 John was appointed as 2nd XI scorer, a post he held until the start of the 2002 season when he was promoted to 1st XI scorer upon the retirement of the late Len Chandler. John unfortunately experienced some health problems in 2004 and these, coupled with an increased workload, led to him suggesting that he and I shared the duties for 2005. Although this arrangement worked reasonably it was not to either of our likings and, being the gentleman he was, John graciously took early retirement at the end of 2005. Thus he served a relatively short time in the 1st XI role, but in that period achieved something never done before and by definition will never be repeated – he had the honour in 2003 of being the Sussex scorer when Sussex won the County Championship for the first time in its history.

John's love of cricket was passed on to his son Charlie, a fearsome all-rounder, and in turn to his grandson Andrew – he was justifiably proud of both of them as he was of his other children.

A sad loss of a devoted servant of Sussex cricket.

Mike Charman

KEITH JENKIN (1931-2020)



Keith achieved prominence as a cricketer with Hurstpierpoint, where he was captain of the X1 in 1949.

Progressing to Sussex Young Amateurs, he used to recall playing against the Yorkshire Colts – including Fred Trueman and

Ray Illingworth – sharing in a partnership with Derek Lattey (another Martlet luminary) of over 100, drawing the comment from John Samuels (*Sussex Daily News*) that there was an echo of the presence of Walter Hammond in his driving. Keith always had stature and poise in his physique and stroke-play and a commanding aura.

Keith soon made his presence felt with the Martlets and was naturally included in the Martlet team selected to play Sussex at Hove on the occasion of the Club's 50th Anniversary in 1955. He was always making runs and was a bastion for the opposition to overcome.

Keith went on the Martlets' tour to South Africa in 1972, which proved, though most enjoyable, a hard and testing expedition with a very high standard of play, intensified by South Africa's isolation at that time. They had much to prove at cricket and in virtually every match we were opposed by a Springbok player, the young ones selected for the cancelled tour to Australia in particular having a special incentive. Fast bowlers Vincent van der Bijl and Michael Hanley proved a handful, but all this left Keith unruffled and he made many big scores.

Batting against Keith enabled one to observe his scheming bowling – off-breaks and floaters – taking many wickets. He greatly enjoyed the company of cricketers and golfers and, when younger, was a very strong defender at hockey; to my surprise, I came across him on the hockey pitch at Lagos, where he was working for a spell and I was on my way home from National Service.

Keith soon returned to U.K. and kept up playing for the Martlets for many years, only falling away when he moved to live in Hertfordshire and then playing for Radlett. Keith remained keenly interested in cricketing matters.

For many of us, the last time they met up with Keith was at Hurst's Centenary Dinner at Lord's only five weeks before he passed away. A fitting last act for a man the Hurst cricketing community liked to call "Special K."

Especially when Martlets gather at the close of play to chat, we will remember him with respect and affection.

Brian O'Gorman

Keith scored 5,500+ runs (including 5 centuries) and took 300+ wickets for Sussex Martlets (1948-91). Only Eddie Harrison & Brian O'Gorman equal his record of 5,000 runs + 300 wickets for the Club.

He is our joint fifth highest run-scorer and seventh highest wicket-taker. He was our leading wicket-taker in 1955 and 1958 – Peter Hartland

Brian O'Gorman adds: "There exists film, of the '72 tour and of Keith and myself opening the batting at Newlands in Cape Town. This is part of a larger body of film including Sussex v Australia 1938, the Oval Test of the same year – Hutton 364 – and shots of events at Hurst. It is to be hoped that this may be available to members in due course."

DAVID MORDAUNT (1937-2020)



We mourn the passing of a very considerable cricketer and Martlet regular for several years.

His first contact was with the Junior Martlets and a match against Horsham stands in the memory back in 1953. The usual strong and interesting Horsham mid-week side was reinforced by the well-known Sussex player, Charlie Oakes, and one of the many fine players from that family associated with the Club from groundsman (Alfred) to Charlie and Jack, both prominent and successful Sussex professionals, pre and post war.

To young cricketers the professional presence can be inhibiting, but on this day David set about Oakes's bowling without any restraint. Many boundaries and several sixes were added to his account in a score of in excess of 50.

Of rangy build, David caught the eye. His sense of natural timing, together with his stroke-play and power were compelling; he was clearly destined for greater things. His bowling was sharp and testing and he could bowl a ball to get one out, so that on reflection it was difficult to think how it might be dealt with if given a second chance. He was also a swift and dynamic fielder. This ability was shown in an early match for Sussex at Worthing. The last tail-end batsman offered a mighty hit, which swirled to a very great height. The catch would complete the innings. It went straight up, so properly it should have been the keeper's catch. David was underneath waiting for it. He pounced it safely and turned, expecting some recognition from his team-mates, only to find the whole Sussex team were at least two-thirds of the way to the pavilion, having been totally confident in the outcome!

David was one of four of my exact contemporaries whose skill far exceeded the average standard. Rex Neame (Kent), Don Beckett (Combined Services, Army and Berkshire) and Tony Lush (Sussex) were the others. All were all-rounders and perhaps lacked opportunities in the period of a change to an all-professional game in the early sixties.

A quick glance at Martlet records reveal something of David's prowess. Five centuries and 150 wickets came

his way. In 1958 he came out top of the averages with 65.1 – he achieved an average of over 50 in two other seasons as well.

One lasting memory is of an occasion when David was teaching at Stowe and had to seek to be excused from duties to play for us against Worcester College, Oxford. His headmaster duly gave permission, but stipulated that he had to be back in time for the pre-term staff dinner in order to hear his headmasterly address to the staff. So David reckoned the match had to be finished early, and obliged with a rapid 138* and a very early declaration. He followed this with a spell in which he took 8 wickets for 60 runs. He got back to Stowe in time, after a memorable one-man show.

So many happy memories. He will be sadly missed.

Brian O'Gorman

In his first game for Sussex C.C.C. (against Oxford University) David was caught going for a fourth six when on 96. In 19 first-class matches for the county (1958-60) he scored over 500 runs and took 19 wickets.

*David played 40 times for Berkshire (1964-74) and has the distinction of being the first Minor Counties player ever to win the 'Man of the Match Award' in what was then the Gillette Cup, having hit 60, including four sixes off Bill Athey – **Peter Hartland***

JOHN NIXON (1949-2020)



It was very sad news indeed to hear that John Nixon had passed away recently, leaving a significant void in the lives of those who knew him.

Always a gentleman, John balanced the subtleties of having total integrity with a wry sense of humour. Fiercely loyal to his friends and a natural leader, his sound judgement meant he was often the person that people went to for advice on any issues in their lives.

In his professional career, John worked from a young age until his retirement for one of London's largest trading houses, Smith New Court. As a senior executive of the company he actively managed businesses around the world, across Asia, Africa, Europe and America. His style was inspirational and his communication second to none; always delicate in his delivery, but with wisdom that rubbed off on everyone who was lucky enough to work for him.

A single-figure golfer for many years, and a Martlet for much of his retirement, he could easily have turned to the sport for a living. Unfortunately though, this would have compromised the many other interests he had, be it as a talented cricketer, footballer, tennis player and, doubtless to say, anything else he chose to turn his mind to.

A good friend and a great man, we will miss you 'Knocker'.

Mark Bowden

GEOFF SEATON (1926-2020)



Geoff attended Denstone College in Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, and then went on to play first-class cricket for both Oxford and Cambridge Universities; it is said that he was the first person ever to play for both. At Cambridge, Geoff played five matches for them in 1947 without getting a Blue. His highest score of 51 against Sussex came in 1947. Trevor Bailey was among his teammates that day. Geoff then joined the Army, serving in the Royal Engineers and was sent by them to Oxford, where again he played for the University, a total of 3 matches in 1957. He was, as may be imagined, a stalwart of Sapper Cricket and, on leaving the Army, qualified as a solicitor and came to live in Sussex. He was a welcome addition to Martlet cricket, always a smiling and gracious presence.

Geoff's most successful season for the Martlets was 1968 when he scored 307 runs. He also made 243 runs in 1963, when he scored his only century for the club. Geoff was also responsible in 1984 for depositing Sussex Martlet scorebooks (covering the seasons 1926-53) with the West Sussex Records Office in Chichester. They lay undisturbed there for more than twenty years, and have since proved invaluable in the compilation of historical records for the Club.

I first met Geoff in 1998 in my first year as a new member at West Sussex G.C., where he was captain in 1992. On meeting him, he put me completely at ease and introduced me to many members to help me on my way. However, my warmest memory of Geoff was when he presented me with my Martlets' tie after lunch at West Sussex G.C. in our annual match at Pulborough. Geoff's words to me that day were quietly spoken and will forever guide me in the spirit of Martlet golf. Little was I to know that I would have this sad duty of writing this tribute to him.

We will remember Geoff – a Vice-President of the Club since 1989 – as a very fine cricketer and a force to be reckoned with on and off the golf course.

Robert Forster

DEREK SEMMENCE (1938-2020)

The passing of Derek Semmence leaves a gaping hole in our Martlet world. Peter Hartland's summary of his career in club colours describes well his contribution in figures:

"Derek's career with Sussex Martlets spanned 35 years (1978-2013). He scored over 7,500 runs for the Club. Only Brian O'Gorman has scored more.

His eight centuries have been exceeded only by Messrs. Meads, Davies and Peacock. Four of these tons were [not so tactfully!] against the Old Hurst Johnnians. I recall Derek telling me once that he scored 96 centuries in all cricket.

Derek was the leading Martlet run-scorer in 1984, 1986-88 and 1993. He also took over 100 wickets for the Club.

A regular member of the Sussex Over-50s championship team (1988-2001), Derek scored over a thousand runs during this time and took more than sixty wickets. His best bowling return was 6-30 against Essex at Three Bridges in 1998. During this time Sussex reached the semi-finals in 1988, 1996 and 1998, and were runners-up to Kent in 2001.

He was also a member of the Over-50s 2nd XI which won their championship in 2003.

Derek then represented Sussex in Over-60s cricket, turning out for the first, second and third elevens. In 2010 an Over-70s competition started up, initially with just three teams before expanding; Derek was captain of Sussex as they carried off the first three titles."

However, this is to say nothing of his career as a professional cricketer, playing at various times for Devon and Northumberland as well as, of course, for Sussex, for whom he remains the youngest player (aged just 18) to have scored a First-Class ton in 1956.

Even more importantly, it says nothing of Derek the man. **Toby Peirce**, who was to go on to play for Sussex on 69 occasions, is one of many who benefited as much from Derek's inspiring presence as his coaching skills:

"I was one of the many Derek coached; in my case it was the Sussex age-group he managed over a number of years. We were doubly lucky, as we also had the use of his peerless pitches at Hurst throughout our early years of representative cricket.

With regard to cricket, it was his unparalleled passion and respect for the game that inured itself upon you.

For any team with Derek's involvement, there was an unbending understanding that his players would show respect to both the opposition and the game itself. Derek was talking about the Spirit of Cricket a generation before the M.C.C. dreamt up the concept.

However when thinking of Derek, it is not primarily his coaching that is recalled. Over a number of years it became clear that this respectful approach to the game was not merely out of his passion for it, however real that may have been. It came from Derek's personal qualities as a human being; he showed fairness, politeness and kind regard for all those fortunate enough to meet him. It was who he was, and it made him a pleasure to know.

I will always remember the nut-brown features, the ready smile, the shock of white hair above and the bow-legged gait beneath. That creaking laugh was part of my youth, and now that Derek has gone, it feels as if a part of my childhood has gone with him."

Derek was too big a man for a short club obituary to do him full justice, and so the Martlets, in conjunction with Sussex C.C.C. are producing a book in his honour, which it is hoped will be out this coming summer.

Desmond Devitt

SIMON REES (1933-2020)

Dr Simon Rees F.R.C.P., F.R.C.R., who died aged 87 on 30 November 2020, was a man of many talents.

Born in Carmarthen, South Wales, the son of a dentist and a pianist, Simon was educated first at St. George's Windsor, where he was head chorister, and then at Harrow.

He won a choral exhibition to Gonville & Caius College Cambridge, where he read medicine, and went on to Westminster Medical School (for whom he once took 9-23 against Hampstead). After gaining membership of the Royal College of Physicians, he trained as a cardiac radiologist at St. George's Hospital, on Hyde Park Corner. He later became a consultant radiologist at Barts and Director of Radiology, Brompton & National Heart Hospitals.

Simon, who did not win a place in the Harrow XI, was 6 ft 3 in., slightly stooped, bespectacled, and bowled off the wrong foot, mostly in-swing medium-pace. He played for M.C.C., Harrow Wanderers and the Sussex Martlets in the early 1960s. His best performances for the Martlets were 7-66 (all bowled) against the Staff College at Sandhurst and 6-39 v Bradfield Waifs in 1963.

Simon and his family lived at Treyford near Midhurst, an ideal base for his two other great enthusiasms: foxhunting and real tennis. He revived the Charlton Hunt Club, which had been founded by the Duke of Monmouth in the late 17th century, but had all but expired, and played real tennis at Petworth House and Lord's.

In 1973, Simon co-authored, with Keith Jefferson, *Clinical Cardiac Radiology*, at the time the authoritative textbook on the subject (and he himself wrote the 2nd edition). He also wrote *The Charlton Hunt: A History*.

Dale Vargas

NIGEL SMITH (1943-2020)



Nigel typified all that is a Martlet: he was passionate about sport all his life, playing cricket, hockey and golf; he was a great competitor whether on the hockey pitch, where he amassed over 100 caps for Sussex, or as a deceptive leg-spinner and sound batsman on the cricket field, or as a handy golfer at his beloved West Sussex, where he became captain in 2006, having worked tirelessly on various committees.

Those of us who knew Nigel through work, sport or just socially, were fortunate to gain a deeper insight into the qualities that made him the leader that he was. Nigel captained the Chichester Priory Park C.C. and was President of the combined Chichester Priory Park Cricket and Hockey Club, as well as being chairman of the West Sussex Lord's Taverners Group.

One of my fondest memories of Nigel was his generosity at the bar at Crowborough Beacon in the first Grant Skinner memorial match, where after lunch he proceeded to encourage his partners for the afternoon to partake in some Kummel, forgetting that his partner, a new young Martlet, needed no more lubrication after a convivial lunch. The poor young lad told me afterwards that he saw three golf balls at his feet on the first tee for the afternoon round and chose to hit the middle one.

We will miss Nigel dearly for all of those wonderful qualities he possessed that many of us aspire to.

Nigel you will be deeply missed.

Robert Forster

GEOFFREY WILLIAMS (1944-2020)



Geoffrey Williams, who died on 15 April 2020 in London, was a fine schoolboy sportsman at Hurstpierpoint. In his last year (1961-2) he was captain of cricket and hockey, and secretary of rugby. He had wanted to become an actor but was persuaded otherwise by his mother and, after reading law at

Trinity College, Dublin, became a City solicitor. He specialised in aviation, leasing and finance at Norton Rose. In 1982 he left with two contemporaries to found a new firm, Watson, Farley and Williams, which remains one of the major law firms in England.

He played his cricket for Oatlands Park in Surrey (now defunct) as a batsman/wicketkeeper, was selected for the Surrey Young Amateurs, and played wandering cricket for the Free Foresters, Sussex Martlets, Frogs and Grasshoppers. He also appeared in the O.H.J. cricket week at Hurstpierpoint. In retirement he turned out occasionally for the Over-40s XI at Cuckfield, near his home on Wineham Lane, Bolney, and where his sons were colts. His last years were blighted by motor neurone disease. He leaves his wife Susan and their three children, James, Katherine and Edward.

Both of his sons were Junior Martlets under John Bushell, and Edward also played for the seniors. Geoffrey's final Martlets appearance was against the Willow Warblers at Charterhouse in 2004. Having driven Edward to the ground, he found the Martlets one short. After much persuasion, he took the field in whites too large for him, and boots too small. He held on to a skier at mid-off and, at number eleven, blocked out the last over (from a Durham U.C.C.E. bowler) to save the game.

James Williams

NEW MEMBERS 2020/21

The Club welcomes into membership:

Dave Messenger (Barns Green C.C.)

Graduating Juniors:

Nathan Cooper (Christ's Hospital, Littlehampton)

Rafe Liebers (Hurstpierpoint College)

Toby Shepperson (Hurstpierpoint College and Lindfield)

Wilf Tunley-Lo (Hurstpierpoint College)

Golf: **Tim Woodcock**

Stuart Ritchie

As always, ideas and articles for *The Martlet* are gratefully received.

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