

SHERBORNE

PILGRIMS

2003

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***** A REMINDER OF RULE 4 *****

“It is the responsibility of any person playing for the Club in any sport to have in place adequate public liability insurance cover.”

CLUB NOTES

I found myself wondering not long after the dinner in March to mark 80 years of the existence of the Sherborne Pilgrims what John Carey, the guiding light behind the foundation of the Club, would have made of his progeny so many generations on. He would, I feel sure, be pleased that there was a sense of camaraderie that surrounded so much of the Club's activities, pleased too that the sport played was to a reasonable standard given the pressures on amateur games that were never a problem in 1923. (He might have blanched somewhat at the thought that the Association brand of football was being played by the Club, but we must all bow before the great god of the round-ball game these days.)

Above all, though, I suspect that he would have been most pleased that the Club was a thriving concern and a support to the School, the latter of which was so dear to his heart. That support has been arguably never more appropriate in recent months, as the School has had to deal with that most awful of trials, the death of a Shirburnian while still a pupil. James Harding's shockingly premature loss after an accidental collision on the Upper in November playing for the XV affected everyone who heard the news, whether they knew the teenager or not. The death of a child is always desperate, but somehow it carries greater tragedy when it comes as the result of that child pursuing a leisure activity that he loved.

Rugby remains a sport that can be dangerous, despite the immense advances in safety that the Rugby Football Union have enforced over the past two decades, and none of us who have played the game would deny that. Yet no one can expect a schoolboy to take the pitch at 2.30 one Saturday afternoon and within 24 hours to be gone for ever. Simon Eliot deserves much credit for his adroit, sensitive handling of an impossible situation, one not helped by members of my own profession making allegations that lacked substance and can only have caused further pain. James would surely have been a fine Pilgrim and we must all mourn his early death.

He was remembered at that 80th anniversary dinner at the East India Club, which was enlivened by a quite hilarious speech from Andrew Wingfield Digby. Drawing on his wide experience of Pilgrims cricket (in particular) and other Sherborne-related reminiscence, Wingers underlined the point that the best choice of speaker can often be found from within. He claimed at the outset that he would not speak for very long but he must have been on his feet for a good half hour and did not lose his audience at any stage, whether young or old. It was a masterful performance from the Reverend and one that will be hard to beat when the Club gathers again in black tie to celebrate the next milestone as the centenary draws closer.

The East India offered the usual solid backdrop for a fine evening of chatter, nostalgia, food and wine that continued for some on to the bars and dance floors of less magisterial establishments into the small hours. While there was a good turnout, it should be a priority for the committee next time to consider some imaginative devices to encourage a greater clutch of younger Pilgrims to attend. I understand the potential restrictions that might deter some – finance, university commitments and so on – but I suspect that ensuring greater awareness of how much fun the occasion is might also help to persuade waverers.

Although he was not exactly an original member of the Club, John Tallent is one of the closest links between the present and that 1923 foundation. His contribution to Sherborne School over nine decades is celebrated in the following pages; my only regret in putting the article together was that space constraints prevented me from addressing rather more of John's work than has been the case. He has been a central figure both for Club and School in the twentieth century and thoroughly deserves the tribute that we pay him on page 10. The reminiscences of John sit pleasingly alongside Simon Wilkinson's beautifully judged tribute to Micky Walford at the service of thanksgiving held in the School Chapel last June. My thanks to Simon for allowing the Club to reproduce the text in this booklet on page 5.

Reading through the collected reports of the Pilgrims year in the past few weeks has been an encouraging pastime. I will not claim that unalloyed success has come to the Club – the year I can write that in these pages will be a big one indeed – but if there is a common thread that binds much of the activities of Pilgrims on sports fields arising from the reports that appear later in this booklet, it is one of enjoyment. You do not have to understand the in-jokes (I suspect not even those "in" on the joke always do anyway) to realise that Pilgrims tend to find each other's company congenial and also find their sport congenial, too. This much, to paraphrase another stalwart of the Club in those early years, Alick Trelawny-Ross, is a great gain.

That a sense of fun permeates those reports is in no small measure the result of a great deal of hard work on the part of those match and sport managers who toil away trying to put together a team for each occasion (mostly successfully). Once more we should applaud their efforts, since without them the Club is a much diminished unit. That thanks should also extend to the sister – although from an all-boys institution it really ought to be brother – organisations that cater for golfers and sailors, both as ever thriving societies. Congratulations go to the Golfing Society for winning the Brent Knoll Bowl in March.

Highlights from the year include another decent run in the Cricketer Cup that saw the Club lose in the quarter-finals to an Old Wellingtonians side that was given rather more of an easy ride than might have been the case, although as Rupert Bagnall's report makes plain, if injuries and absences are taken into consideration,

it was not a poor effort on the Pilgrims' part, and the Club's record in the competition over the past five years stands comparison with all but the likes of the perennial winners, Tonbridge. This year we begin the campaign at Brighton on June 15th and in Rupert's last season of stewardship of the cricket operation, perhaps this one can be the breakthrough year. It would be a worthy tribute to his tireless work.

Certainly the Pilgrims XI will be much enhanced if Jimmy Adams is available for the Cricketer Cup, given his century for Loughborough UCCE in the first week of the season. Yet Hampshire have first call on Jimmy this summer and if the first County Championship match is anything to go by, he will be opening their batting rather than the Club's. Congratulations are in order to Jimmy, though, for becoming only the third product of Sherborne to play county cricket since the war (and for a third different county), following in the footsteps of David Sheppard and Nick Peters.

Will Hargrove and Jimmy Cheung make continued strenuous efforts to sustain the rugby and hockey respectively, with not inconsiderable success, while the MacIver brothers and Jonathan Powe keep their sports more than honest. Particular mention here should be made of the squash team's strong showing in the Londonderry Cup, reaching the semi-finals for the second year in succession.

It has been a hopeful refrain in Club Notes that the website will soon be "ready". It has proved a longer than anticipated process to find the optimum way of maintaining this branch of the Club's output, and although internet surfers will have been able to find www.sherbornepilgrims.co.uk since April 23 of last year, it has not been a reactive beast (interesting though the statistics section is for those cricket junkies). Steps have been taken to remedy this defect, since any website – unless purely archival – is only as good as its last update. With valuable input from Richard Gould and Janey Goddard in the School's nerve centre, we are getting there.

My thanks for help in compiling this year's booklet must go to all contributors but especially to Charles Eglinton and Barbara Spencer, who keep me on the straight and narrow in editing and typesetting the whole. I would draw members' attention to the date of this year's AGM, which will take place on Saturday October 18th at 12.15pm, immediately after the committee meeting, and before the XV play Marlborough. It remains for me to wish all members of the Club continued success and enjoyment in whatever sporting pursuits they choose throughout the year ahead.

Robert Hands
April 2003

NEW MEMBERS

Applications were accepted from the following leavers in June 2002:

A G A Bartlett (c Hockey, Cricket), S R C Bennett (m Hockey, Cricket), J C Britten (m Rugby, Hockey, Cricket), C E Brock (d Rugby, Hockey), A H McC Budge (c Hockey, Cricket, Squash), T R Chamberlain (c Rugby, Cricket, Soccer), C M Dupont (g Rugby, Cricket), L R R Edlmann (g Rugby, Hockey), W P Fegen (g Hockey, Cricket), E D I Findlay (m Rugby, Soccer), P J Franklin (d Rugby, Soccer, Athletics), C J S Hart (c Rugby, Cricket, Soccer), P A G R Hedderwick (f Rugby, Swimming, Athletics), C P J Hoare (b Tennis, Squash), J R Hood (a Rugby, Soccer, Cricket), E J Horder (b Fives, Athletics, Rugby), H N L B Hunt (c Rugby, Hockey, Cricket), R W Jordan (g Cricket, Soccer), N H A Lee (c Golf, Hockey), O W Luard (d Rugby, Hockey), T G P Mackay-James (h-d Rugby, Cricket, Golf), T W Matthews (m Tennis, Squash, Soccer), G T W May (d Rugby, Soccer), J N Miéville (a Rugby, Athletics, Soccer, Hockey), C O M Mullineux (m Golf, Soccer), D D O'Connor (m Soccer, Golf), A O Okeshola (g Rugby, Soccer), M H Paulson-Ellis (g Rugby, Hockey, Cricket), A B T Pope (a Shooting, Tennis, Soccer), N M Pothecary (m Soccer, Rugby), C Q R Pushman (c Rugby, Cricket, Soccer), W J K Russell (d Rugby, Cricket, Hockey, Squash), P J C Shaw-Brown (c Rugby, Soccer, Tennis), V Singh (e Cricket, Fives), J R W Sykes (a Fives, Athletics, Cross Country), P A L Thom (m Cricket, Golf, Soccer), T H Wynn-Jones (c Hockey, Tennis).

Other new member: J P Kershaw (b 1987-92).

OBITUARY

M A R Collins (g 1933-38), T Fenwick (g 1927-32), L G Green (g 1929-33), J K J Holman (g 1935-39), A D Pickering (a 1949-54), R T Thomas (b 1951-55), R R C Walker (a 1931-34), T S Zealley (a 1940-45).

MICKY WALFORD (1915-2002)

Set out below is the Address given by Simon Wilkinson at the Thanksgiving Service in the School Chapel on June 8th 2002.

There will be no one here who has not read Micky's obituaries, no one therefore who is not aware of many of the details of his remarkable sporting career. First, however, and even though none of us can be in any doubt about Micky's sporting credentials, let me just quote E W Swanton, for so many years the magisterial "Voice of Cricket". Swanton rated Micky as one of the two outstanding Oxford sportsmen of the decade leading up to the Second World War (the other being the South African H G Owen-Smith). The Oxford sides of those years were, moreover,

teams to be reckoned with. Swanton recalls one particular rugby match in terms so vivid that we can almost see it for ourselves. “The steam was rising from the sweating packs on an autumn afternoon of driving rain and mud when the 1935-36 All Blacks came to Iffley Road. Oxford, with three quarters of the game gone, were only a point behind. Micky Walford makes a sudden break from his own half and feeds the blond figure outside. Down the right touchline, straight towards us in the pavilion, flaxen hair streaming, streaks Alex Obolensky with his unique flash of speed. Amid the high-pitched squawks of the boys of Summer Fields and the Dragon School clustered behind the goals, he rounds Gilbert, the great full back, and touches down beneath the bar. John Brett kicks the goal, the Varsity lead 9-5 and visions arise of the first defeat ever administered to these mighty New Zealanders on English soil.” It was not to be. With one supreme effort, the All Blacks scored a try. It was converted, and the All Blacks won 10-9. But that reference to Micky was typical – inventive, imaginative, seeing the opening and generously making way for others. Whilst he always played to win, it went without saying that he exemplified at the same time the highest standards of sportsmanship.

I recently heard a word, new to me, on the radio: “lifty”, Durhamesque for “nimble”, apparently. Well, Micky was “lifty”. He was also, to quote from an article in *World Sports 1949*, “as quick on his feet as a whippet”. To it he added as much technical accomplishment as careful attention to inspired coaching could produce. This nimbleness kept him accident-free. His only recorded mishap took place in his first term at Sherborne, not gloriously on the field of battle but ingloriously while showing a fifteen-year-old pupil how to tackle. Micky broke his collarbone.

It was, of course, the sheer prodigality of his talents which marked him out. He was an outstanding fives player. For quick recreational refreshment, he would grab a game of billiards. Captain of the 1948 Olympic hockey side, he took the team to the final. After the match, he was seen furtively leaving the ground clutching a cricket bag. He had to; he was playing cricket for Somerset the next day. Even as a teenager, he was approached by soccer talent scouts hoping to cajole him into signing professional papers. The Oxford soccer side bid for him, too. It wasn’t that he would not have played. He simply could not fit the games in. Perhaps it would have been understandable if all this success had gone – just a little – to his head. But of that, there was not a trace. And even with failure – and as a batsman he regarded being hit by the ball in that light – his sense of humour was never far round the corner. He remembered with satisfaction driving the great Keith Miller straight for four. The next ball from Miller was lethal – almost literally so – and hit him a dreadful blow close to the heart. Micky fell to the ground. He later recalled, “For the first five minutes I thought I was dead.”

Sport was far from his only considerable experience. He was exactly of the age that made him liable for war service. He joined up as a private in the Royal Signals. He

was posted to Blackpool and recalled with delight being admonished by a sergeant major for semaphoring like a fan dancer on the Golden Mile. He was commissioned in 1940, took part in the Normandy campaign and became Signals Officer in the 4th Armoured Brigade at the crossing of the Rhine. He was promoted Major in 1944.

At Sherborne, he was Housemaster of Abbey House from 1955-1971. It goes without saying that the games players were splendidly cared for. But what about those with no such inclination? It's true he had little natural feeling for the arts, but his House produced many fine actors, musicians and artists. He encouraged his boys to be busy, active, involved, engaged. It was lethargic loafing about that got short shrift from him. He often communicated as though by telegram. When I came to Sherborne, Micky put a note in the pigeonholes of new members of staff asking them whether they'd help with the rugger. Anxious to appear keen and co-operative, I wrote back that I would. My note was returned within the hour. "No use. Went to soccer school" and that funny squiggle of a capital M, as though the Biro had died in his hand!

For all his undoubted shyness, Micky could be very kind, very sensitive. I recall returning from an athletics match in which both Sherborne teams had, after a series of undefeated seasons, been beaten. I limped dejectedly up the hill home. The phone rang. It was Micky. "You'll feel miserable tonight, less miserable tomorrow and by Monday you'll be glad you're not dragging around the burden of that unbeaten record." How wise he was, and how comforting! If you had an altercation with Micky, probably caused by some clash in the games programme, you invariably received an invitation to have a drink with him that evening. There was never a mention of why you were there. Of course, apart from the drink, you were witnessing a practical example of the exhortation not to let the day go down on your wrath! And it was Micky who had taken the initiative.

Micky's last responsibility at Sherborne was as Second Master. The incumbents used then to discharge the obligations of the position largely in accordance with their own bent and inclinations. Micky's bent was not for paperwork or elaborate administration. He had, however, a marked talent for courage, for honesty and for loyalty to the School and to his colleagues. He was never manipulative, never self-seeking. He retained somehow his "amateur status" in all of this and with that his independence, so he had no need to toady or to present himself for favourable consideration. I imagine he would have taken the job when it was offered whether he was paid to do it or not. He was always approachable, always hospitable, and if your opinions chimed approximately with his own hunch, he would act. I once asked him in what manner he presented tricky suggestions to the Headmaster. He told me he never revealed sources. He would only say, "I've heard that..", or, "It has come to my notice.." He did not take the credit; equally, he protected the colleague.

In the latter years of his life, Micky's passion was for sailing. He completed at least fifty Channel crossings and many people, young and old, enjoyed his hospitality aboard *Davy Gam*. The stories are legion, and many involved outrageous breaches of the Health and Safety Act. He was using a new-fangled radar device for sailing through fog, and his crew were beginning to suspect he had no idea how to work it. With some relief, they at last heard Micky call out, "It's all right, I've got it!" "It" turned out to be the *Queen Mary* on her final voyage. His cooking, I am told, had to be endured to be believed; the ablutions arrangements were presumably modelled on what the custom was when the Rhine was crossed. Despite, indeed because of, such startling incidents, his crews have the warmest recollections of his exuberance and enthusiasm, and if we live on in the memories of our friends, such recollections will be amongst the most vivid for many of you here. And when he wasn't sailing, he was working for Ingram Investment Services, later Griffin Financial Services, making us all richer than the dreams of avarice. Thinking that my ignorance of the subtleties of the money markets might be a disappointment to him, I once sheepishly apologised. "Don't apologise," he said, "I prefer my clients to know nothing. We get through the business so much quicker."

Finally, I would like to quote from a charming reminiscence sent to me, describing Saturday evenings at Newland Corner in recent years. "Winter evenings in his study were a delight. At one end of the room, the television would be showing cricket, a live relay if England was in the West Indies. The volume would be turned up high, for Micky found his hearing aid a trial. At the other end of the room, the afternoon's football results would be being broadcast – the volume also high. Across his desk, the paper would be wide open at the following day's sporting fixtures. And Micky, light on his toes as in his palmy days, would be constantly circulating, bottle in hand, topping up his guests' glasses as he went, whilst simultaneously giving his report – shrewd, perceptive, but always generous – on the afternoon's match on the Upper. He knew all the names. Nothing escaped him. The whole was a quite unique spectacle. And the only damper on the proceedings would be if, true to his Northern roots, he heard that Middlesbrough had lost in the Premiership. He was a wonderful host."

When I was a little chap at school, our house matron announced to us one evening that she was leaving. "Don't go, dear Matron!" we howled. "What better thing can you do in the whole wide world than look after us?" "Look after my brother," Joy replied. And that she did for nearly fifty years. Dear Joy, we are immeasurably grateful to you. You have been an integral part of Micky's life and provided the warmth, the stability, the domestic security which allowed him to be what he was, and a warmth which we too have all so often and so richly enjoyed. I hope that part of your reward is to see the certain and deep affection, the wide and universal admiration in which Micky was so manifestly held, expressed in this service of thanksgiving for his long and valuable life.

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JOHN TALLENT REMEMBERS

“That boy will play for England one day.” At 14 years old, John Tallent had been identified as a star in the making – and not just by any ordinary judge. Although in 1925, G M “John” Carey was beginning to do battle with the cancer that was to kill him two years later, his rugby nous had not left him. Carey was watching the youthful Tallent run through his paces on the playing fields that would later bear the older man’s name and offered his verdict, although even Carey cannot have foreseen how influential a player Tallent was to become on the wider rugby stage.

Carey’s first impressions would have hardened had he lived to see Tallent not only lead the XV to their first unbeaten season for 20 years (six wins from six in 1928) but also form an integral part of The Green’s Three Cock team that wrested away the trophy from Abbey House for the first time since 1911 the term after Carey’s premature death. And Tallent left Sherborne to take up a place at Clare College, Cambridge, where he won three Blues and before graduating with a second in History had been capped by England, just as Carey had predicted.

In an era when caps can be accumulated like leaves at the base of a tree in autumn, Tallent’s five caps (and three tries) scarcely seem like much of an international career. Perhaps with more consistency of selection – never until the 1990s a strong feature of England sides – the young Blackheath back might have doubled, perhaps even trebled his haul. Undoubtedly the war ensured that his rugby career was curtailed, although by 1939 he had not been seen in an England shirt for four years. Still, by the standards of the time, it was an impressive decade at the top level.

Tallent saw war service in the Honourable Artillery Company, with whose Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment he landed, as second-in-command, in Normandy on D-Day. He subsequently was promoted to command 118 HAA and moved on to Holland where, after the cessation of hostilities, he was proud to captain his new regiment at rugby and cricket.

There followed an administrative career in rugby of immense distinction. Besides being President of the Rugby Football Union in 1959-60, Tallent was chairman of the Four Home Unions tours committee (effectively responsible for British Isles tours) for nine years, among which included the coruscating Lions of 1971 and the unbeaten tour of 1974. It must sometimes have been a genuine struggle to fit stockbroking into this busy schedule, but as so many did in the amateur days, Tallent managed.

In a life so well lived – and indeed still being lived in gentle retirement in Hampshire into a tenth decade – it is hard to condense Tallent’s talents into an abbreviated essay. So I make little apology for concentrating here on the Sherborne link that has run throughout Tallent’s life from adolescent to elder statesman: even

now, at 92 years old, he enjoys hearing news of Sherborne and Shirburnians. He remains a lively character, animated when discussing past and present. As schoolboy, prefect, Pilgrim and finally governor, Tallent has been a presence around Sherborne School going back some 80 years.

But it might never have happened. Born in Chislehurst in 1911, Tallent attended a nearby preparatory school, St Hugh's in Bickley. As the time neared for Tallent to move on to a senior school, his father called on the headmaster to discuss young John's future. The head was of the opinion that Charterhouse would be a good bet: high reputation, not far from Kent. (No mention, clearly, of the brand of football that the Godalming school preferred.) Tallent senior made the journey to inspect the premises and returned very depressed.

"We were there for more than an hour and he never once asked about you," Tallent senior told his son, disillusioned at the Charterhouse set-up. Sent homewards to think again, he asked around a few friends for alternatives. One of them, young John's godfather, told him that his brother had been at Sherborne and suggested it might suit the boy. Compared to the assiduous research undertaken by parents for their children today, this was almost offhand as a recommendation but it was one of the decisive moments of John Tallent's life. He took the scholarship exam, failed, but had clearly made a solid impression as he was accepted none the less and put into the scholarship form.

The adventure for young Tallent began in London, taking the train down to Sherborne where he was met at the station by the Rev. W J Bensly, the housemaster of The Green and himself an OS. Bensly, one of those mild eccentrics who were often to be found in public schools in that era, had brought his two-seater old Standard car and drove Tallent back up to The Green, in company with "Sam" Simmonds, who was to become one of Tallent's closest friends.

Bensly endeared himself to the impressionable new boys once back at the top of town by telling them: "I'm delighted that's over. It's the first time I've ever driven up Cheap Street." From that moment on, Tallent felt he had found a second home.

His time at Sherborne included one of the School's most searing upheavals of the 20th century. In several short weeks, both the Headmaster and the dominant staff member of the era were gone; while Nowell Smith's resignation from the headship that he had held with such distinction for 18 years was not wholly unexpected, that it should coincide with Carey's premature death was a huge blow. "It was a very worrying time for the School," Tallent remembered. "John Carey had held such an eminent position, not only from the rugger side but he was the senior housemaster."

Smith was replaced by C L F Boughey, a master at Marlborough who had been wounded in the First World War and a man who was soon struggling, both

physically and with the shadow of Nowell Smith always attendant. Coupled with the stock market crash in the late 1920s, here was a man ill-suited to the job, as Tallent remembers. “I didn’t really know Nowell Smith,” he said, “but Boughey was a mistake. He wasn’t of the calibre to have been a headmaster. But it was one hell of a difficult task to follow Nowell Smith, who was responsible for creating Sherborne as a modern school in the top bracket.”

Rugby, though, played the dominant role in Tallent’s life at Sherborne (his season in the XI in 1929 notwithstanding). Captain of the XV in 1928, he was part of the first team to work with Alick Trelawny-Ross on the Upper and even after more than 70 years, his praise of Trelawny-Ross is unstinting. “I have nothing but praise for what that man did,” Tallent recalled. “We were unbeaten and had one of the best sides Sherborne ever had.”

The doyen of Lyon House must have made a strong impression on Tallent because when he came down from Cambridge and landed a job at Stowe (then only eight years old as a school), he translated the reorganisation of Sherborne rugby that Trelawny-Ross had instituted in the late Twenties directly to the Stowe set-up. “Alick Ross had this thing about staleness,” Tallent said. “Playing rugger every other day, the young can get stale. So after the first month [of the season], he said, ‘John, I want you to keep away from the Upper today, take your boys for a walk to Yeovil. No running, just walking with a good stride. It’ll take your mind off rugger and there’s a café in the middle of town where I’ve booked a table for 30-35. Have tea and come back’.” Unusually far-sighted man-management for the time.

Tallent arrived at Sherborne the year after the foundation of the Pilgrims, and once he had left and taken up his place at Cambridge, he became one of its most enthusiastic members, running the cricket tour – when it was a genuine tour rather than the present arrangement of a week based in Sherborne – in the 1930s and playing both rugby and cricket for the Club. Although it might be said that Tallent the student was rather keener on play than work, prevailing attitudes meant that he was scarcely penalised, more humoured. Henry Thirkell, the Senior Tutor at Clare, said to him when the class results were published following finals, “John Tallent. How did you do it? [Pause] You got a second. God help us.”

If the career of John Tallent would never be possible today, that is more a reflection on the high-pressure, intense nature both of today’s sport and of today’s academic pursuits than on his immense achievements. That no Shirburnian of recent vintage could hope to cram in international rugby, teaching, stockbroking, distinguished war service, sporting administration at the highest level and much more is irrelevant. John Tallent is and remains a product of his times – and Sherborne has been the better for it.

Robert Hands

CRICKET 2002

Played 14: Won 4, Drawn 2, Lost 4, Abandoned 4, Cancelled 1.

Saturday May 18th, v The School, at Sherborne

Sherborne Pilgrims 168-7 (C G O Keatinge 53 not out); Sherborne School 169-2 (W J K Russell 80). Lost by 8 wickets.

It was a damp, fresh May morning that greeted the first game against the School: in fact, overnight rain had trickled under the covers, and on a length at the Pavilion end a distinctly helpful patch existed. The Pilgrims were confident after remaining unbeaten against the School for four years and agreed to bat. 15-love to the School.

It quickly became evident that in Mead and Dupont the School had found a pair of new-ball bowlers able to exploit the conditions. They would have been a handful on an ordinary Upper pitch, but on this one, 30-love to the School. John de la Hey and Ned Gammell both played very sensibly and enabled the Pilgrims to make a sound start, but as soon as they both departed, the match changed. A series of wickets fell reducing the Pilgrims to 68 for four at lunch. 40-love to the School.

The Pilgrims quickly lost Scott after lunch. It was left to Colin Keatinge and Jim Freeth to steady the ship. Keatinge had not picked up a bat in three years and then it wasn't even his. It didn't matter, he made it look easy and with Freeth's cavalier 25 the Pilgrims were back in the game. Keatinge ended on a fine unbeaten 53 leaving the Pilgrims 168 for seven off 50 overs. 40-15 to the School.

Russell and Jordan looked in no danger as they set off in pursuit of the Pilgrims score. Hamish Macaskill, making his Pilgrims debut, was almost guaranteed a five-wicket haul, having got lucky the night before. It was not to be: Russell was very harsh on his fourth and fifth overs, showing his strength off the back foot through the off side. Not even Freeth could turn the tide and the School were 90 without loss at tea off only 23 overs. More or less, game set and match to the School.

It took an extraordinary piece of brilliance to break the partnership. Russell played a late cut off Jim Warren; Dan Thorne set off in hot pursuit. One, two...oh no they're going to run five. Unbelievably, Thorne picked up the ball and hurled it back to the wicketkeeper in one movement with the result that Jordan was run out by a country mile or a country bumpkin, whichever way you look at it. Russell looked set for a well-deserved hundred when he gave it away. It was left to the School captain, Will Fegen, to add the finishing touches in style, including one enormous straight six.

Sunday May 26th, v Marlborough Blues, at Marlborough Match abandoned – rain.

Sunday June 2nd, Cricketer Cup first round, v Harrow Wanderers, at Harrow
Sherborne Pilgrims 287-5 (J R Tweedale 79, S Gillett 72, J D Ricketts 52);
Harrow Wanderers 258-8. Won by 29 runs.

Although the Pilgrims were underdogs on paper, the team visited North London with a strong self-belief born from excellent recent Cricketer Cup form. Ricketts had little hesitation in electing to bat as England's opening game in the football World Cup was due to commence at 11.30am. Early movement was expected from the overcast conditions and green pitch. Atwell and Tom Dowdall weathered the opening few overs, watching the moving ball closely. Atwell soon got into gear and started to rattle along rapidly, repeatedly striking the ball through the covers. A collective groan emerged from the dressing-room at 12.40 as Sweden equalised in the football and on cue, Atwell was caught for 36 with the score on 51. Dowdall followed 20 minutes later for a rather turgid 17 bringing Tweedale to the crease. He and Gillett batted sensibly until lunch, taken at 126 for two from 38 overs.

After lunch, the pair provided a masterclass in big hitting. They murdered the Harrow attack, plundering the ball to all corners of the ground: 90 runs came from the first 47 balls directly after lunch. Tweedale eventually fell for 79 having helped to add 155 for the third wicket – a Pilgrims record. Gillett made a fine 72 and Ricketts immediately picked up on the momentum, playing a series of mighty shots, seemingly toying with the Harrow field placings; the captain advanced to 52 in just 27 balls, allowing the Pilgrims to reach a commanding total of 287 for five.

In reply, Harrow got off to a rapid start, helped by some uncharacteristically wayward bowling from Rydon. Bagnall drew first blood, with the score on 56. He and Wingfield Digby did an excellent job applying the brakes to leave the home team on just 90 for three at tea (from 25 overs). With almost 200 required from the final 30 overs, the Pilgrims relaxed and the fielding, with the exception of the exemplary Rydon, became sloppy. Catches were spilled and runs conceded. Harrow accelerated but continued to lose wickets. Despite this, the Pilgrims total was always too large and the eventual winning margin of 29 runs perhaps flattered the home side who put up some brave resistance.

Sunday June 9th, v Radley Rangers, at Radley
Radley Rangers 42-1. Match abandoned – rain.

A damp and dark day was a great disappointment as the Pilgrims arrived at Radley. Hargrove elected to field despite the poor conditions. He did this in order to get as much play as possible. Will Wingfield Digby and the guesting Barke both

bowled well in difficult drizzly conditions. Wingfield Digby took the only wicket to fall before the game was stopped after 10.1 overs.

Sunday June 16th, Cricketer Cup second round, v Downside Wanderers, at Sherborne

Sherborne Pilgrims 183 (J R Tweedale 53; R Vyvyan 4-29); Downside Wanderers 92 (J W O Freeth 6-15). Won by 91 runs.

This match could have been played in January; such was the weather, the state of the wicket, and much of the cricket. The Pilgrims mustered a meagre total that proved to be more than adequate for the bedraggled visitors.

Downside inserted the Pilgrims to leave Adams and Atwell to cope with the extremely difficult conditions. The pair made the most of it, adding a half-century in the opening ten overs. Both soon departed for the warmth of the Pavilion to leave Warren and Tweedale at the crease. The run rate slowly died as the ball aged and proved difficult to get off the square. Warren was trapped leg-before and was followed shortly afterwards by Ricketts. The heroes of Harrow were joined at the crease but a repeat performance was too much to hope for.

As Gillett fell, Tweedale rose to the challenge: fuelled by a substantial lunch, Tweedale decided to put his “railway sleeper” of a bat to the task that one readily associates with him. He soon made the game look easy, as is his wont, but sadly fell for 53 as he was getting into his stride. The rest of the middle order offered little resistance, and it was left to the last pair of Nurton and Freeth to help to post a moderately respectable total of 183.

In reply, Downside mustered only 58 off the bat in a total of 92 from 46 overs. Rydon picked up a couple cheaply, Nurton bowled intelligently and with great control, but it was Freeth who was the pick. In 11 overs, he bowled with guile and control to take home figures of six for 15, dismissing four of his victims for ducks. Although the game was no spectacle, it was significant that the Pilgrims ground out another good result in difficult circumstances and advanced to the quarter-finals for the fourth time in six years, proving that winning is a good habit to get into.

Saturday June 29th, v the School, at Sherborne

Sherborne Pilgrims 163-8 (W R B Dawson 4-17); Sherborne School 164-7 (W J K Russell 59; T J Margetson 4-31). Lost by 3 wickets.

This was a popular fixture to play in. Even two weeks before the game, people had to be placed on the reserve list, in stark contrast to the May fixture when it was a struggle. Perhaps it was the thought of brighter weather, but more likely, word had filtered through that the School had a decent side filled with cricketers from one to eleven. This was definitely one of their strongest sides in the past few years.

The match was reduced to 45 overs and the start was pushed back to 10.30. It was a slightly embarrassed Pilgrims captain who arrived with flag and scorebook at 10.30 expecting an 11.00 start. He had, though, hoicked out an 8½lb pike from the River Frome on his way down! Luckily, Tom Dowdall and Tom Fegen were on hand to open the innings. As with so many Pilgrims innings, things went awry. Having been 65 for one, the innings deteriorated to 88 for six, the killer blow being Tom Dowdall leg-before to Dawson for a fine 45. It was only down to an excellent unbeaten 46 from Charlie Dowdall that the scoreboard recovered. Dowdall was supported by Chris Ward in a tenth-wicket partnership of 49, which left the Pilgrims on 163 for eight.

Russell and Jordan again enjoyed opening. This time the Pilgrims bowling was tighter and the fielding sharper. It was because of pressure that Tim Margetson induced a false shot from Jordan, well caught by Chris Hattam. Margetson began to turn the screw, supported by Tom Dowdall. Between them they shared six wickets, Margetson ending with figures of four for 31 and Dowdall two for 28. The end of the innings turned into a rollercoaster with the School made to work for every run. They came out the deserved winners with nine balls to spare.

Sunday June 30th, Cricketer Cup quarter-final, v Old Wellingtonians, at Sherborne

Sherborne Pilgrims 144-8; Old Wellingtonians 147-3. Lost by 7 wickets.

As is the fashion these days, the teams with the larger squads tend to win more, whilst those with a smaller group to choose from will often have successes early on before being found out as the season goes on. For Oundle Rovers in the semi-final of 2001 read Old Wellingtonians in the quarter-final of 2002. The Pilgrims team were short of regulars in Jimmy Adams, Ben Atwell, James Tweedale, Stuart Rintoul, Ed Elliot-Square, Mark Jackaman and Paddy Knechtli. (Holidays and injuries have a lot to answer for, how can they possibly take priority over cricket?) Quite clearly with these key players all missing, a truly outstanding performance was going to be needed against a strong Old Wellingtonians side that had defeated Eton Ramblers, the holders, in the first round.

On a very dreary day on which even skipper Ricketts would have inserted the opposition against his usual inclination, the Pilgrims were asked to bat. With two recognised openers missing, Tom Dowdall was pushed up the order to start the innings with Charlie Warren and very quickly all could see that it was going to be a struggle. In the fourth over of the day Dowdall left his second straight ball of the season; as with the first one at Harrow in the first round, he was bowled. Winder then got his second wicket of an excellent “straight-through” 12-over spell in his fourth over. Warren tried to push the fifth ball through midwicket to get the score moving – how it didn’t bowl him, nobody knows. Unfortunately Warren took this

as a cue that his luck was to be in that day and attempted the same shot to a same-looking next ball; it was slightly straighter – 16 for two from eight overs.

With so many “stars” missing there was a great deal resting on the contribution of Ricketts, unfairly so. So there was a sharp intake of breath in the eleventh over as Winder’s opening partner, Bishop, got a short one to quicken on to Ricketts before he had fully played his favourite pull shot, the result being an easy chance at square leg for one of the three Hodgson brothers representing the OWs. This brought Steve Leeke to the wicket to join Stuart Gillett and the two of them played well, Gillett desperate not to get out whilst Leeke looked in good form, pushing the ball around reasonably effortlessly in the conditions.

However negative a batsman Geoff Boycott may have been, he has it so right when he tells people to picture the scenario with two more wickets down before deciding whether or not they are in a good position. Leeke, having gone over the top in James Hodgson’s second over hitting the ball over mid on for four, tried the same shot in his next. This time there was a fielder waiting, Hodgson’s brother Charlie. 39 for four became 39 for five, as the incoming Charlie Dowdall was trapped leg-before first ball to the persevering Winder, still trundling up the hill.

If ever there was a time to stop taking risks it was now and sense prevailed as Will Wingfield Digby joined Gillett and the two of them began the process of trying to survive and accumulate runs in the 20 overs remaining before lunch. This tactic was almost entirely successful and thoughts of a post-lunch rally similar to Harrow were starting to enter everyone’s minds when Gillett was adjudged run out. Most were of the opinion that he was well in but three overs short of lunch the Pilgrims were struggling on 80 for six.

With 16 overs of the innings still left, we had to bat through our allocation and the excellent contributions, under the circumstances, of Wingfield Digby with a top score of 25, Rydon and Freeth made this possible. Indeed, for the ninth wicket Rydon and Freeth were only six runs short of a competition record in posting an unbroken stand of 49. The innings ended with the Pilgrims at 144 for eight in their 55 overs. Chew was the most expensive of the Old Wellingtonians’ bowlers as his seven overs cost 21 runs; none of the others even went for three an over, such was their accuracy. While this score represented a great recovery, our total was always going to be 50 runs short of a challenging target and with conditions overhead and underfoot improving the mood was hopeful rather than optimistic.

There were only two runs scored from Rydon’s opening over but two additional wides and four byes was hardly the tight start that the captain had requested. At the other end, Pexton couldn’t find his rhythm and had to be taken off after three overs, making way for Freeth, our second round man of the match, to take over at the bottom end. Freeth’s first over was the maiden needed and his second yielded the

even more important wicket that was so desperately sought. Sawrey-Cookson, leg-before for 17, but the score had already reached 45 and we were only in the tenth over. In Rydon's next over Tim Hodgson edged to Warren at slip and a well-taken low chance breathed some life into the game and sent a few shock waves through the Old Wellingtonians; 45 for two ... perhaps, perhaps?

The skipper Tom Newman was then joined by former Warwickshire stalwart Robin Dyer and that was that. The pair put on 84 for the third wicket, Dyer taking singles and dispatching the odd poor ball to the boundary, whilst Newman played a few more shots and took more risks in an innings that was still chanceless until he was bowled by Wingfield Digby for a match-winning 41. At 129 for three and with plenty of batting still to come Charlie Hodgson came to the wicket and scored 13 of the required 15 for victory and in the 37th over he hit Rydon for a boundary and a place in the semi-final.

In conclusion, we were beaten by a far stronger side. Whilst we were all extremely disappointed with our own performance it should not be forgotten that this was the quarter-final and it was never going to get easier as the competition progressed; the Pilgrims cannot expect to win with any side other than its best. We are good enough to win The Cricketer Cup but only with an injury-free side that is happy to keep the latter stages of the competition as available diary dates; bearing in mind the volume of absentees, three of whom missed all three rounds, this was another good season for the Pilgrims and we should not forget that our record in the past five years of the competition is bettered by only four other schools.

Just one other note; Rob Rydon is threatening to retire from playing for the Cricketer Cup side and thinks he is too old to play any more. Rob's performances over the past 18 or so years have been fantastic and on many an occasion he has single-handedly carried the Sherborne team as player and captain. This should not read as a playing obituary as he has much more yet to contribute: he still hits the wicketkeeper's gloves as hard as any bowler, his batting is still as good as ever and he made the youth of the team look very decrepit with his fielding at Harrow; no talk of retirement please Rob, you've got plenty more years yet.

Monday July 8th, v Old Blundellians, at Sherborne

Old Blundellians 92-2. Match abandoned – rain.

Torrential rain greeted the first day of the week and we were out of luck for the second time in three years. The Old Blundellians travelled many a mile for a long wait, lunch, some cricket and an early bath. For the record, Bagnall won the toss and inserted the opposition on a very damp wicket, the covers not having properly done their job, and soon accounted for Berry, trapped in front of his stumps for six. The OBs then took their score from 14 to 90 before the opposition's skipper, Andy

Giles, got out some 64 runs short of his usual score in this fixture. Moments later the constant drizzle turned to heavy rain and the game was abandoned.

Tuesday July 9th, v Butterflies, at Sherborne

Butterflies 182-7; Sherborne Pilgrims 154 (M A Shearer 54). Lost by 28 runs.

Yet again, the weather was the aggressor on the Upper as the rain lashed down in the morning. It was decided to have a 35-over game on the all-weather surface. The Butterflies started well against the Bagnall/Goodeve-Docker bowling pairing. Whilst Bagnall held a good line and length and bowled through his allotted seven overs for a miserly 19 runs, Goodeve-Docker was replaced after two overs in which he was savaged for 24 runs. Wickets eventually started to fall, with Crouch's miscellany at one end complemented by Thorne's nagging line at the other. Thorne accounted for the fifth wicket; a stunning, sliding catch at mid-on from Bagnall who had been awoken from his doze at mid-off. Two run-outs followed and the Butterflies finished on 182 for seven off their 35 overs.

Allen and Shearer opened the Pilgrims' innings. Allen was caught behind in the second over and Bramble immediately dismissed in exactly the same way. Shearer and Pugh then steadied the ship, putting on 87 in the next 12 overs, the former looking particularly at ease. However, both batsmen fell in quick succession leaving Scott and Hawkins to keep the scoreboard moving. When Scott was run out for eight the score was 150 for five off 30 overs, and victory in sight. As seems customary in these situations the Pilgrims left the field 154 all out from 31.3 overs, two wickets falling to very lazy run-outs.

Wednesday July 10th/Thursday July 11th, v Dorset Development XI, at Sherborne

Dorset XI 234-3 (B Lawes 119 not out, R Keates 96). Match abandoned - rain.

The middle two days were used for the first two-day game in recent memory. Unfortunately, less than two sessions were possible owing to the weather. The cricket played was almost as uninspiring as the weather. Despite being 234 for three at the bitter end, the Dorset Development XI struggled to score freely for most of the innings after some tight Pilgrims bowling, especially from Bagnall, had reduced the visitors to 23 for two. Indeed, for the majority of the first session, they were content to pat back gentle full tosses dished out by Will Hargrove.

There weren't many memorable moments bar some dreadful fielding, and the run-out of Keates, the dour South African member of the opposition, on 96. The rain was the winner this time. The most memorable fact about this game was that it was Dom Stober's first for the Club, having left the School 16 years previously.

Friday July 12th, v Dorset Rangers, at Sherborne

Sherborne Pilgrims 202 (D W Thorne 53); Dorset Rangers 196 (B Woodsford 88, R Morgan 61). Won by 6 runs.

After we had given the Rangers a player so that they had ten, all were entertained to a thoroughly enjoyable game. This also provided a welcome return to the Upper for Tom Ashworth, skipper of the XI in 1988, who was playing in only his third game of cricket in ten years! He duly opened the batting elegantly until Mark Goodeve-Docker removed his off stump having just done the same to Ben Scott. Even after the Rangers removed their ringer from the attack the Pilgrims continued to perish playing mostly silly shots, and were reduced to 103 for six at lunch with Thorne on 11. After lunch, Thorne played sensibly, and when Warren joined him at 142 for eight he cut loose and was eventually out for 53. Bagnall then joined Warren to put on 27 for the final wicket to post a respectable score of 202.

The Rangers were soon struggling at 39 for four, but Morgan found an ally in Woodsford to put on 91 for the fifth wicket. The next two partnerships put on 64 leaving the Rangers needing only nine to win with two wickets left, and Woodsford still at the crease. The big hitter skied an attempted match-winner to Bagnall (soberly standing at long-off). To disbelief, the catch was held, and it was left to Thorne to complete the victory by taking his second wicket.

Sunday July 14th, v Old Tonbridgians, at Tonbridge

Sherborne Pilgrims 99; Old Tonbridgians 100-3. Lost by 7 wickets.

One of the easiest reports to write, with seven of the Pilgrims dismissals caught in the deep; our batsmen clearly believing in hitting their way out of trouble. The openers, Wheatley and Chantrey, both fell to genuine dismissals but the rest were guilty of rash strokes and lack of patience. Newbery and Charlie Gammell were the only Pilgrims to show any real resistance, scoring 23 and 16 respectively. Dowdall Sr made 16 with three scoring strokes late in the innings but it was still not enough to reach three figures. Kemp's analysis of 8-5-15-3 looked very good but it was more careless batting than probing bowling. This was going to be a hard total to defend.

For the Old Tonbridgians, Hughes and Gunyon set about the opening pairing of Goodeve-Docker and Pexton with controlled aggression scoring 45 off the first eight overs and the first wicket did not fall until 90. Gammell took the wicket of Hughes, expertly stumped by Wheatley, and Dowdall Sr accounted for Gunyon soon after. All too little, too late. Crouch was brought on, presumably to allow Tonbridge to get on and finish the job but was treated with respect not seen in his cricketing career (3-2-1-0), before the winning runs came.

Sunday July 21st, v Charterhouse Friars, at Charterhouse. Cancelled.

Sunday August 11th, v Hampshire Hogs, at Warnford

Sherborne Pilgrims 171 (C D E Bazalgette 4-60); Hogs 116-5. Match drawn.

The Pilgrims won the toss on a green seamer at Warnford on an overcast day, but unfortunately had to bat as only six were present at the start. It was not a surprise therefore when the Pilgrims were reduced to 25 for two. Tom Ellen and Matt Hawkins then batted sensibly, both profiting from the vacant third man early on, the latter in particular with a selection of the latest late cuts imaginable. Ellen was caught down the leg side – somewhat unfortunately as it turned out, as Channel 4's *Cricket Roadshow* cameras were there and it was broadcast to the nation the next week (they had turned up to film us all eat!). Hawkins soon followed for 37, and when Tom Dowdall was bowled for two, the Pilgrims were teetering on 82 for five.

It took some sensible batting from Tom Rooke and Charlie Dowdall to take us to lunch. Unfortunately, Rooke was out soon after the interval, and Dowdall was made to look silly, being stumped attempting to hit the ball into Winchester from the tortoise-slow loopers of Bazalgette. De la Hey and Warren were out in similar fashion, and it was a disappointing score of 173 that the Pilgrims posted. Mark Goodeve-Docker opened the attack with aggression and was unlucky not to pick up a wicket or two, and at the other end Tom Dowdall bowled tightly and was rewarded with two wickets. Tea came soon after, and when Fradgley bowled Allom, and then did the same to the next two batsmen, the Hogs were reeling at 107 for five. Sadly, the light drizzle that had been coming down for a while got heavier, and the home umpire decided that it was too dangerous to carry on.

Sunday August 18th, v Bluemantle's, at Tunbridge Wells

Bluemantle's 226-9 (O West 104 not out); Sherborne Pilgrims 143-9 (West 5-32). Match drawn.

The Bluemantle's entertained the Pilgrims on a lovely August day. The Pilgrims inserted the home side with the hope of taking early wickets. Fradgley struck in the fifth over but then broke down, only to be replaced by Crouch, who struck in his second and third overs. Meanwhile, Tom Dowdall (one of three brothers playing in the match) took his first wicket at the other end to leave the opposition struggling at 60 for four. Unfortunately the Pilgrims could not capitalise on this situation and despite the fact that nine of the opposition only managed 90 between them, they were still able to declare on 226 for nine, with Ollie West 104 not out.

Things couldn't have started worse for the Pilgrims when Ed Bartlett played on to the second ball of the innings and Rich Dowdall was bowled for one. The score was soon 27 for four with Tom Ellen and Charlie Dowdall out; things never really got going despite some lusty blows from Charlie Warren, and when he was out for 47

with the score 90 for six, the victory target never looked possible. John Fradgley and John de la Hey both scored 25 to make things look more respectable. The match was saved, however, by Alec Bartlett who stuck around for ten overs while all those around him perished. He had also taken two wickets at the end of the Bluemantle's innings: great to see a young Pilgrim getting stuck in. The score ended at 143 for nine – outplayed but unbeaten.

Sunday August 25th, v NPL Lensbury, at Teddington

Sherborne Pilgrims 276-4 dec (E Kuhn 103 not out, W P Hargrove 56 not out, S Gillett 51); N P L Lensbury 120 (E Wesson 50, D J N Stober 4-35). Won by 156 runs.

Bagnall won the toss and elected to bat. The opening pair of Ben Scott and Matt Hawkins were chosen to complement each other, right and left handed. Sadly, Scott perished before the partnership had a real chance. Stuart Gillett came to the crease to join Hawkins; while Hawkins nudged and stroked the ball for ones and twos Gillett took a more four-or-nothing approach. Hawkins departed for 18 with the score on 44. Thereafter Gillett pushed on further completing 51 off 40 balls before becoming Salter's third victim of the day. Hargrove and Poulton (guest) then played steadily with a view to seeing out the morning session. Poulton perished on the stroke of lunch, taken at 138 for four.

After lunch, the spectators and Hargrove (at the non-striker's end) were witness to a feast of savage strokes from Emlyn Kuhn (guest). Hargrove resumed on 29. What followed was spectacular. Kuhn reached 50 off 24 balls; his second fifty took only 12 balls. He hit eight sixes and 12 fours in his 103 not out. No fewer than nine overs were hit for ten or more runs (including a 23 and a 24). The innings was declared at 3.10pm on 276 for four after 38 overs.

NPL Lensbury faced a not impossible task but early wickets put paid to their challenge. Goodeve-Docker opened the bowling with Tom Dowdall. Goodeve-Docker bowled a telling length taking the first two wickets. Dowdall kept the other end tight without bowling at his best. The first and second changes saw two old heads enter the fray. Bagnall, varying his pace and delivery type, snapped up two middle order wickets while at the other end the unflappable Dom Stober spun his way to four wickets with flight and guile prevailing over outrageous spin. His spell of 14-5-35-4 was very enjoyable from the find of the season. Crouch bowled very well but sadly didn't bowl enough of his wicket-taking full tosses to get on the scorecard. The NPL captain, Wesson, batted well for his 50, but we had a satisfactory win to end the season.

Reports by Ben Atwell, Rupert Bagnall, Pete Crouch, Will Hargrove, Charlie Warren, Will Wingfield Digby.

CRICKET FIXTURES 2003

Sat	May 17th	The School	Tues	July 8th	Butterflies
Sun	June 1st	Marlborough Blues (a)	Wed	July 9th	Dorset
Sun	June 8th	Radley Rangers (a)	Thur	July 10th	Development XI
Sun	June 15th	Old Brightonians (a)	Fri	July 11th	Dorset Rangers
		Cricketer Cup 1st round	Sun	July 13th	Old Tonbridgians (a)
Sun	June 29th	Cricketer Cup 2nd round	Sun	Aug 10th	Hampshire Hogs (a)
Sat	July 5th	The School	Sun	Aug 17th	Bluemantle's (a)
Mon	July 7th	Old Blundellians	Sun	Aug 24th	NPL Lensbury (a)

Cricketer Cup quarter-finals July 13th; semi-finals July 27th; final August 10th.

RUGBY 2002-03

This was an enjoyable season, although quieter than recent ones. One reason for this was the cancellation of the match against the Wales Deaf XV, occasioned out of respect for the memory of James Harding, who died days before the fixture was due to be fulfilled.

Sunday April 14th - Cystic Fibrosis Sevens at Chiswick

The tournament consisted of groups of three teams followed by knockout rounds for the top two in each pool. There was a plate for last in each group. After winning the group against weak opposition, the Pilgrims played well in the knockout stages; the quarter-final was the best match of the tournament, against a well-matched side in Old Verulamians. An awful refereeing performance (which neither side could understand) slightly spoilt a good fast game. The Old Verulamians scored under the posts from a blatant knock-on early in the second half; it is debatable whether this decided the game but it certainly did not help. Results in group matches: Pilgrims 27 London Welsh Social Side 0; Pilgrims 31 Magnificent VII 7. Second round: Pilgrims 38 Samurai 0. Quarter-final: Pilgrims 15 Old Verulamians 21.

Sunday September 29th v Oxford Medics at Oxford

Lost 14 - 20

A decent Pilgrims side gathered at the Warnford Hospital pitches in Oxford. The fixture was "created" after a discussion with Charlie Warren, who plays for the Medics (and played against the Pilgrims in this fixture).

It was a hot day and the rugby matched the weather, fast and free-flowing. At times the game resembled a mixture between sevens and rugby league. Both sides played well with good handling and the lead changed hands several times. In the last few moments Hargrove missed a kick at goal in front of the posts that would have taken the score to 17-15 to the Pilgrims. The Medics promptly went down the other end

and scored a try to make it 20-14 to the Medics. To make matters worse, Warren scored the winning try.

The Medics earned their victory by scoring four tries to our two (Pedro van Dunem and Guy Welby-Everard the scorers). The Pilgrims back division did particularly well to adapt as they comprised of six wings and a hooker. There were many good performances but two of particular note came from Chris Darke (tight-head prop) and Tom Moon (second row) both playing their first games for the Club.

Will Hargrove

HOCKEY 2003

Tournament on Sunday January 5th at Sherborne

v Wellington lost 0-1; v Marlborough won 2-0; v The School won 4-0

For several years the Pilgrims have been threatening to unleash a wicked demonstration of hockey on an unsuspecting School side – hockey of the kind of pace, quality and precision that was last seen on Sherborne soil with the School XI of 1996 vintage. Indeed, it is surely no coincidence that several of the players from those South Africa touring days are through university and able to commit more time to the old boys' hockey. On the evidence of this tournament, few would doubt that in the next two years a powerful unit could be created.

Benbow is an inspirational leader – he has a blend of force and dexterity that is matched by few and only a truly cold-hearted man could fail to be ignited by his infectious desire to win. There is no doubt that both Scott and Newbery (both of 1996 school pedigree) would have been selected in the tournament XI, had there been one. Their performances generated murmurs on the terraces likening them to a Brazilian footballing duo, such was their influence on each game.

Umpiring decisions did not go the way of the Pilgrims in the only game that they were to lose. Several chances were not taken, including the glaring miss by Cramp in the second half. This was to be his only error during the day as he soaked up everything thrown at him and the magnificent defence of Bartlett, Hunt, Colens, Edlmann and Budge. Bartlett is another one of those South African tourists of 1996 and his class raised everyone's level about him. At times his stick must appear like a felled redwood to opposition strikers as they try in vain to get past him, while his distribution and reading of the game is a treat for the connoisseurs.

It is very encouraging to see a good flow of recent leavers getting themselves involved in these games and undoubtedly the greatest satisfaction will have been felt by Hunt, Hayler, Budge, Edlmann and Fegen as they routed their old colleagues 4-0 in the final game of the tournament.

Team: Ed Benbow (captain), Alex Budge, Ed Bartlett, Phil Cramp, Paddy Gidney, Tom Fegen, Will Fegen, Henry Hunt, Will Hayler, Will Newbery, Henri Colens, Lawrence Edlmann and Ben Scott.

Sunday March 23rd at Sherborne

v School Colts A – Won 5-2

The morning produced a flowing game against the Colts A and an opportunity to be settled on the School's new Astroturf. The game started well for the Pilgrims as they set up a series of attacks and took the lead with a strike from a short corner. The Colts then came straight back with a breakaway goal and continued to threaten with a good passage of play. The Pilgrims regained the lead with an excellent move from the two front men, but again the Colts came back with another goal, catching the Pilgrims on the break and going into half-time level. The second half started at a fast pace and the Pilgrims were on the attack immediately. The pressure paid off as two quick goals took the lead to 4-2. A fifth goal was added to kill off the game and gave the Pilgrims a healthy win and confidence for the game against the 1st XI. The scorers were Hill (2), Cheung (2) and Gregory.

v School 1st XI – Drawn – 3-3, but won 4-3 on penalty flicks

The afternoon game against the 1st XI started off very tightly, with both sides giving little away. The Pilgrims gained a lot of the possession and this produced a number of penalty corners. The defence held out well but the Pilgrims managed to convert one of their corners. The game picked up in pace and the Pilgrims soon went 2-0 up after a series of passes that dissected the defence. As a result the Pilgrims played with a lot of confidence and went into half-time on a high.

Both sides came out in the second half very hungry, and wanting to get the important next goal. The Pilgrims earned two penalty corners, which the goalkeeper saved well. However, the Pilgrims persevered and they converted a drag-flick to the goalkeeper's left-hand side to go 3-0 up. Unfortunately, complacency began to set in, and the School continued to attack with pride, scoring a well-worked goal to get back into the game. They continued with the pressure, and forced the Pilgrims into several mistakes resulting in their second goal. With the momentum going their way, they continued to bombard the Pilgrims goal and they equalised with a slightly controversial penalty corner. The School were looking to win the game in the final minutes but they were denied by a series of outstanding saves from the Pilgrims' goalkeeper. The final whistle blew for a draw, but both sides decided to settle the game through penalty flicks. The Pilgrims were victorious with the School missing two of the five flicks. The scorers in normal time were Cheung (2) and Elliot-Square.

Once again, it was an excellent day's hockey, and a pleasure to see the teams wearing the new Club shirts and socks. I must thank Jeremy Wadham for organising the games and providing lunch and tea for the players, and also thank those who played in both matches.

Team: Jimmy Cheung (captain), Simon Hill, Matt Boucher, Tom Gregory, Will Newbery, Tom Wykes-Sneyd, Josh Simson, Al Beattie, Nick Cramp, George Bramble, Ned Gammell, Tim Clark, Ed Elliot-Square.

Jimmy Cheung

FIVES 2003

In keeping with the focused attitude of any results-driven manager, I am pleased to report that this year the bottom line has been of total quality – the Pilgrims fives team has registered yet another unbeaten season. Of equal importance is that, thanks to the synergy between the Pilgrims and RFA teams, we have had seven different old boys back on the courts over the two weekends of fives in February and March. (Not including a couple of ne'er-do-well footballers on their way down to their match against the School.)

The two official Pilgrims matches were hard-fought and exciting affairs with both hosts and guests eager to go the extra mile in order to stretch the points envelope. However, at the end of the day, the old boys beat both the School and Bow House by ballpark figures of 30 points. Much of this was due to the strong strategic fit of the pairing of Richard Green and James Rogers who, having made the 45-minute drive down from London on the Sunday, were in very good form.

The School are fielding a young but extremely able 1st IV at the moment and in the next two years I expect the matches will be very tight. When touching base only days ago I learnt that David Kirk and David Park (the School's first pair) have just won the National Schools Under-16 doubles tournament. A great achievement, and I am already looking forward to the time when they are playing for the Pilgrims rather than against them!

Our thanks must go once again to the School, and Mike Cleaver and Paul Carling in particular, for their hospitality and running such a smooth operation over the weekend – it is always a win-win situation coming back to Sherborne.

Nick MacIver

SQUASH 2002-03

In the first round of the Londonderry Cup, the Pilgrims took on an understrength Winchester side in early December. David Leakey and Jonathan Powe, at 1 and 3

respectively, managed to drop their first games, but both came through to win 3-1. Nick Aubin, Richard Openshaw and Tom Morgan, at 2, 4 and 5, all won 3-0.

The quarter-finals, against Barnard Castle, were played at Queen's, and despite being without Leakey through injury, and Powe with Army commitments in the United States, we came through 4-1 winners. Bryn Palmer and the evergreen Hugh Archer, back after a knee injury, won comfortable 3-0 victories at 4 and 5. Patrick Macintosh and Aubin had slightly harder matches at 2 and 3, but still came out 3-0 ahead. The best game came after the match result was decided, when Richard Bramble went down in a marathon, and very hard fought match, 9-7 in the fifth, to the experienced Barnard Castle No 1.

The semi-final was always going to be difficult against previous winners in Aylesbury Grammar, especially with two of our best players missing. Having discovered that four of their players were professionals, and their captain, a county player, didn't make their team, it was difficult to persuade those left to travel to Buckinghamshire for the inevitable thrashing.

Logistics meant the match had to be played over two weekends: Aubin and Richard Openshaw valiantly lost 0-3, and when Bramble had to retire with a stomach upset caught in Egypt two days before, it was decided that as the match was already won, Aylesbury would progress to the final without playing the dead rubbers.

A sad end to a good run, but hopefully we will be back at full strength next year, with much potential for the future as the School side is probably the best for 30 years, with the No 1 and 3 being 3rd and 4th formers respectively. The Pilgrims ran out 4-1 winners against the School in late March, veteran Angus Prentice pulling out a good win as a late addition to the team.

Jonathan Powe and Patrick Macintosh

TENNIS 2002

Champagne tennis, tears of joy, exhilaration and, most importantly, fun for all the family. All of this was somehow crammed into the afternoon of the annual match against the School. With hand signals perfected, strings tightened and shorts ironed, the tennis six strolled down from the Cross Keys after having had unintentionally large nibbles. Members of the crowd might have been astute enough to conclude that the Pilgrims had been through an intense training drive as the slick tennis engine roared into third gear from the start.

The line-up involved Richard Battersby and Nick MacIver taking the coveted first pair position, Toby Dean and Charlie Grant-Peterkin filling the second pair, while Henry Densham and Tim MacIver propped up as the third pair. Crisp volleys and

deft drop shots saw the first pair through the afternoon, and this made for a beautiful contrast with Dean and Grant-Peterkin, who decided that a heady mixture of brute force and agricultural strength would see off the opposition. Densham did well to endure the inconsistency of the author as together they ensured the lighter side of the game won through. A wonderful afternoon was enjoyed by all as the Pilgrims battled through to a 6-3 victory.

Tim MacIver

OLD SHIRBURNIAN GOLFING SOCIETY 2002-03

The winners at the three meetings were:

Summer 2002: Turner and Foot Putter (scratch) – Jimmy Cheung; Page Cup (handicap) – Rupert Whicker; Harry Croly Cup (under 27 Stableford) – Tom Williams; Jeremy Summerscale Tankard (School Stableford) – Charles Mullineux.

Autumn 2002: Captain's Prize – Gavin Webb-Wilson; Vice-Captain's Prize – David Watney; Greig Cup – Robin Arbuthnot; Autumn Cup – Justin Chantrey; Manning Trophy – Robin Amooore; Veteran's Salver – Robin Arbuthnot.

Spring 2003: Harris Vase (scratch) – Nick Aubin; Hempson Cup (handicap) – Gavin Prentice; Shaw 12 and over (scratch) – Jonathan Godfrey; Shaw 12 and over (handicap) – Howard Gill; Storrs Salver (veterans) – Simon Brown; Parry Cup (inter-house) – The Green; Shaw and Stables (foursomes) – Martin Macpherson and Gavin Prentice; Howell Williams Salver (combined rounds) – Gavin Prentice.

At the AGM, Ian Rosser was elected Captain, with Gavin Webb-Wilson and Peter Martin as Vice-Captains. Martin Macpherson said how much he had enjoyed his year as Captain, and went on to congratulate the Mellin team that had reached the final last July, and applaud the winning of the Brent Knoll Bowl the previous weekend. He concluded by congratulating John Youngman on being selected to play in his 40th Halford Hewitt the next week.

Matches v Clubs and other societies: Played 27.

Won: 11 v Lancing, Aldenham, Cheltenham, The School, West Sussex, Charterhouse, Cambridge University Stymies, Wrotham Heath, Blundell's, Highgate, Tonbridge.

Halved: 5 v The School, Saunton, Loretto, Radley, Royal Cinque Ports.

Lost: 11 v Sherborne, Rye, Woodbridge, Aldeburgh, Thorpeness, Woking, Malvern, Downside, Mill Hill, Repton, Marlborough.

Grafton Morrish 2002

Once again, the qualifying round at Royal Ashdown defeated us, although this time it was by a margin of two Stableford points. Our side was Rhys Francis and Stuart Gillett; Hugo Ambrose and Peter Martin; Philip Brown and Clive Martin.

Mellin Salver 2002

The weather was grey for the qualifying day and so were the results. For the over 65s, Richard Draper and Peter Southcombe started well but could not keep it going and missed out by a few points. Thomas and Richard Brayne, going for a hat-trick in the over 75s, had a bad day and also failed to qualify, again by a small margin.

The Mellin Salver team started the first round against Downside on the Friday morning, under leaden skies that turned to persistent rain for an hour or so, but not as bad as predicted by the forecasters. John Youngman and Mark Cannon Brookes, playing top, lost the first four holes and, although they got some back, lost by 3 and 2. The second pair of Simon Brown and Martin Ireland played some useful golf to be four up after 15 holes, at which point Brown set off for the next tee until reminded that the match was won! Meanwhile Mike Falconer and Gavin Webb-Wilson were never really troubled at the bottom and won by 4 and 3.

Hurstpierpoint had beaten last year's winners, Cheltenham, in the morning and so were our next opponents. A similar pattern followed with the top pair never in command, losing 3 and 1, the bottom pair continuing their impressive golf with a 7 and 6 win, so leaving the middle pair to get the crucial point. Brown and Ireland helped matters by chipping in twice and finished strongly to win on the 17th.

Saturday saw a cracking contest against Haileybury. Youngman and Cannon Brookes were level or one down most of the way before squaring at the 18th. As they went down the 19th, Falconer and Webb-Wilson had just won by 4 and 3. Youngman had a shortish birdie putt for the whole match that did not drop, and with Haileybury getting a birdie at the 20th, the match was one each. Brown and Ireland, who had been two up on the 16th tee, lost the 16th and 17th. An interesting half at the 18th saw them going down the 19th. Haileybury nobbled their drive and eventually conceded when they found an unplayable lie to the left of the green.

Our second final in two years was against an impressive Shrewsbury side that had sailed through the earlier rounds, and we could not halt their progress. Our top pair were all square after four, but then lost three quick holes which could not be recovered before losing 4 and 3. The middle pair paid too many visits into the trees which is fatal at West Hill and lost 6 and 5. It was left to Falconer and Webb-Wilson to keep the flag flying with some robust play and their fourth consecutive

win, this time by 5 and 4, and to become only the fifth Shirburnian pair to win all four matches since the Mellin started in 1960.

The most recent pairs to win all four matches were Martin Ireland and David Woolmer, together with Bobby Bridges and Peter Southcombe in 1991. Sam Simmonds and George Thomson first achieved the feat in 1968, followed by John Beer and Sandy Macpherson in both 1971 and 1972.

John Beer was once again at West Hill to see the team. It needs recording that he played in the Halford Hewitt 27 times between 1931 and 1970, and 20 times in the G L Mellin between 1961 and 1981. A truly wonderful contribution to Old Shirburnian golf.

Family Day 2002

Angus and Gavin Prentice retained the Peter Currie Cup at Woking on November 17th, with Marcus and Justin Chantrey the runners-up.

Brent Knoll Bowl 2003

The team started on the afternoon of Friday March 28th with a practice round in glorious sunshine, with the prospect of great weather for the weekend. As usual, the scratch Stableford provided Rhys Francis with easy winnings, going round in level par and giving sufficient funds to buy the wine for dinner!

A late start on Saturday morning, against Taunton, provided a gentle introduction, and an early enough finish to make time for lunch. In the afternoon, we played the Warwickshire Bears, who are always a good team to beat. John Youngman and Rhys Francis played great golf and were two under par when they won the top game on the 15th. The Bears won the second game by 3 and 2, so the match was level at one each. The final pair of Nigel Whalley and Nick Aubin were fighting hard, but one down with two to play. A birdie two won the 17th to square the game. The Bears drive on the 18th bounced out from the buckthorn and finished in the middle of the fairway, so they were a little fortunate at that point, but the hole was halved in four so off to the 19th tee. A delayed starting time for the round meant it was now nearly 7pm and getting dark. The 19th was halved in five after the Bears generously conceded our two-foot putt because, by then, it was dark, and we agreed to continue in the morning.

We returned at 8am to the 2nd tee after a shorter night's sleep, with the clocks having gone forward. A poor drive from Whalley left his partner at the bottom of a bank, while the Bears hit a cracker right down the middle. Aubin hit a great shot from the rough just short of the green, and the Bears missed the green in a similar place. The hole concluded when Aubin sank a downhill ten-footer, travelling at

high speed, for a four and the Bears had a similar eight-footer to halve and missed. By 8.15, the match was over, and we were all off to the 1st tee to start the semi-final against old adversaries in Clifton.

Youngman and Francis played magnificently at the top against Malcolm Lewis (a member of the 1983 Walker Cup side) and a full-time amateur from Gloucestershire, playing off plus one. Fortunately, John did not know or realise how good the opposition was, and played perfect golf to cruise to a 3 and 2 victory. The Clifton bottom pair were all over the course, allowing Whalley and Aubin to win 5 and 4. Hugo Ambrose and Peter Martin, all square on the 16th, agreed on a half to head for an early lunch.

The final against the Army was going to be tough as, even though they had players away fighting a war, the reserve team was strong. Their top pair were very good, and won 3 and 2, while their bottom pair played very badly, losing by 7 and 6. Therefore, it all rested on the Ambrose and Martin partnership. Having been three down after four holes, they played well, and a great pitch by Martin at the 16th secured a 3 and 2 victory, and the Brent Knoll Bowl for the Society.

In the last ten years we have reached the final of the Bowl four times and the plate three times, with only a solitary win in the plate in 1997. We had been waiting a long time to win the Bowl since the success 19 years ago. It is especially satisfying that three out of the six players this year were in that winning team of 1984.

The results v Taunton, Warwickshire Bears, Clifton and the Army were:
Rhys Francis and John Youngman: won 5&4, won 4&3, won 3&2, lost 3&2;
Hugo Ambrose and Peter Martin: halved, lost 3&2, halved, won 3&2;
Nigel Whalley and Nick Aubin: won 3&2, won at 20th, won 5&4, won 7&6.

Halford Hewitt 2003

Contrary to 2001, when all our early fixtures were either spoilt or abandoned because of the dreadful weather, this year's trial and Brent Knoll were played in abnormally pleasant conditions. The same could not be said of the forecast for the early stages of the Hewitt. Luckily we were drawn to play at Sandwich on Friday April 11th in supposedly better conditions but, perhaps unluckily, we were drawn to play Fettes, a team with a good Hewitt record and one that in two attempts we had lost to each time. This year the mood was good – we had just won the Brent Knoll Bowl, and also felt that when we had met Fettes two years ago we had not performed to our potential.

Ideal conditions prevailed for Friday's contest and the team of Rhys Francis and John Youngman, Philip Brown and Stuart Gillett, Hugo Ambrose and the debutant Nick Hyde, Clive and Peter Martin and Nick Aubin and Nigel Whalley soon had the

ascendancy in most of the matches. Francis and Youngman (the latter celebrating an incredible fortieth year of Halford Hewitt golf) were in confident mood and Youngman's putter was hot. They reached the hut (12th) three up and only a slight wobble at the 14th, when both players drove out of bounds, delayed the outcome. Youngman effectively shut the door on the 15th with a 30-footer for a half in four, and won the game 3 and 2 with a four-footer on the 16th. Gillett and Brown were also in control of their game with some solid and mature play. They had led all the way and finished in style with a tee shot to four feet at the 16th, also giving them a 3 and 2 margin. Two to Sherborne.

Behind them Ambrose and Hyde had played shakily to lose the 1st, and then recovered to win the next two with threes in a match which saw only one hole halved in the first 11, by which time they were two down. With Fettes holing out well, further losses at the 12th and 14th effectively put the seal on things. At about the same time the Martins had passed the hut three up and looking very comfortable. By their own admission some of the Fettes players and supporters were looking for their car keys. Only the very intrepid follow matches around the loop of the 13th, 14th and 15th – most preferring the obvious comforts of the hut. We were more than a little worried when the Martins walked up the 15th only one up (like two of the preceding three pairs they had also driven out of bounds at the 14th). Even more worryingly they walked off the 15th all square after some poor play gave Fettes the hole. Par play from Fettes on the final three holes gave them victory by two holes. Suddenly Fettes were putting away the car keys and, in the knowledge that our bottom pair were three down with four to play, the blood was rapidly draining from Sherborne faces.

Aubin and Whalley won the 15th and then the 16th, courtesy of a stunning tee shot to eight feet. Only one down – could we expect more sorcery from this combination? Sadly, Whalley's wand was under the wrong spell as he snap-hooked his drive on the 17th. They did not recover and lost 2 and 1. Whilst Fettes had won the match which they seemingly had no right to, it is fair to say that in recent years many of our pairs have inflicted exactly this misery on others.

So the plate competition (three pairs) for first-round losers, brought in two years ago, beckoned. But first we lunched, and then to Prince's. Brighton had no chance as we won comfortably. Next morning Clifton were beaten for the second time in three weeks, and St Bees stood between a potential Sherborne-Tonbridge semi-final at Deal on Sunday morning. Enter Fergus Watson, Sherborne's septuagenarian debutant, in for the flagging Rhys Francis. The form book suggested that the Ambrose and Aubin and Clive Martin and Hyde combinations should win, thereby giving Watson and Mike Farley an armchair ride to victory.

However, the top games were shared, and news came of a stunning rearguard action by the bottom pair. Reaching the 18th one down, a four was needed to take the

match to extra holes. We responded with a textbook four whilst St Bees struggled for a five. The 19th saw a fine drive from Farley whilst that from St Bees somehow cleared the tee then, incredibly, the rough until topspin took over for the next 260 yards. Both were then short in two before St Bees unexpectedly holed for a four leaving Watson a six- footer “left to right” to keep the match alive. He hit it hard and straight to the back of the hole. Off to the 20th but sadly the heroics finished with St Bees holing out from eight feet for par and Sherborne missing. Well done Fergus – the tie’s in the post! Thanks as ever to our supporters, but bad luck – you all missed the highlight.

The results v Fettes were: Rhys Francis and John Youngman – won 3&2; Philip Brown and Stuart Gillett – won 3&2; Hugo Ambrose and Nick Hyde – lost 4&3; Clive and Peter Martin – lost 2 down; Nick Aubin and Nigel Whalley – lost 2&1.

Reports by Hugo Ambrose, Philip Brown, Peter Flory and Nigel Whalley.

OLD SHIRBURNIAN SAILING SOCIETY 2002-03

It was a year when hospitality rated higher than results: whether in London (at the Boat Show), or on the Hamble (for the Midsummer Rally and Cruise), or Beaulieu (for the Boys Weekend), good food and drink, company and sailing predominated. As it always does in this most friendly of societies. When it came to match racing, however, there was less success than the OSSS has been accustomed to.

The Western Trophy was resurrected this year after several years’ hiatus; the revival did not get off to the strongest start when Canford turned up at the venue, the Spinnaker Sailing Club, a day early. This left just Sherborne and Winchester to do battle on April 28th: it was a well-matched contest in tricky conditions, although it should be noted that Winchester could muster only three crew members and had to be supplemented by friends and Stephen Wilkinson. Winchester, perhaps encouraged by the presence of Wilkinson, prevailed narrowly and thus became the first to wipe the dust from the Western Trophy shield.

Our narrow defeat in that trophy was later followed by a wider margin at the Harrow Arrow Trophy. Despite a young and enthusiastic team, Sherborne finished sixth on the Saturday and thus missed out on the Gold Fleet of the top four. The Sunday saw better form and a tidal misjudgement was all that prevented victory in that class. Sixth overall was thus the final result in the Arrow, although it was a great weekend’s sailing. Bradfield took the trophy home.

The first Stanger-Leathes race of the new season, when the dinghy racing talent of the OSSS is pitted against the School’s first team, saw the School start promisingly and take the first race but the experience of the older (if only just older) team prevailed in the subsequent two races to seal victory. This was a welcome

competitive race after the disappointment of Stanger-Leathes III earlier in the year – cancelled because the School, under pressure from exams, could not raise a team. In addition, the St Vaast rally had to be cancelled partly because of Nick Ware sustaining an injury that was common in 2002 – namely breaking his metatarsal.

Commodore Bob Macdonald has announced that, after more than 20 years at the helm, he will not be standing for re-election at the AGM. He has been a tremendous servant of the Society and deserves the gratitude of many OS for his help and encouragement on and off the water. The Society is keen to hear from any OS, recent or not-so-recent, who might be keen on joining their sailing activities.

SCHOOL CRICKET 2002

One risks the accusation of being gloomy when one reports on a team that many would regard as successful but which failed to defeat the two strongest sides on the circuit. Perhaps this is as it should be if the standard of cricket is to continue to improve and challenges are to be presented to the XI that follows this one.

Make no mistake: the boys played some excellent cricket under pressure. It was a failure to achieve success against King's Taunton and Millfield that prevented the team from being seen as outstandingly good. The King's Taunton game was close and we lost by only one wicket; the Millfield game was abandoned owing to rain when we were facing a heavy defeat.

It was also a season best remembered for breakages. Will Fegen, the captain, must surely have broken any previous bowling record by recording the astonishing figures of six wickets for four runs against Blundell's. Rob Jordan certainly equalled Peter Langly-Smith's record of batting through an innings (against Clifton) and probably broke other records during his vigils at the crease during the season. The author of this report broke his arm conducting a coaching session. Who would think that a little bit of leather and a piece of wood could cause such devastation? If I tell you that the culprit is more used to handling a gun than a cricket bat, it puts the accident into perspective!

There were the usual numbers of broken hearts. Batsmen were dismissed making the same errors of judgement as they had the week before, and the week before that. Bowlers were frustrated when their labour went unrewarded. And fielders influenced the outcome of a game by missing a catch or not completing a run out.

There were, occasionally, broken relationships when the demands made on some of the boys caused a conflict of interests. Like a broken arm, these can be mended, but some take longer than others. It is the frustration that limits success on the field that is my immediate concern. Elimination of technical errors, experience, good judgement and success will not, and never can, be guaranteed nor will they happen

overnight. My earnest wish is that boys continue to play the game and set themselves goals to attain on the cricket fields of this country, and sometimes farther afield. It was good to see Torben Rankine, a World Cup representative for Portugal, anxious to play Pilgrims cricket during his visit to England.

It has become a hobby to predict, bordering on obsession, which boys will progress from a junior B or C team to represent the XI on the Upper. An equally enthralling pastime is predicting which boys will continue to play the game after they have left school. Too often the spirit of Old Shirburnians on cricket fields is willing but the flesh is weak. One is too often disillusioned in the ensuing years but still one has to remain the eternal optimist. There are reasons to retain confidence from the evidence of the performance of the Pilgrims in The Cricketer Cup and the enthusiasm by members of the team (many very recent leavers) who played in the two matches against the School during the season. The news that four of last year's XI were playing cricket in South Africa or Australia brightened the dullest day during the winter months.

Will Fegen must be given enormous credit for his handling of the team on the field this year, but has to learn to appreciate that a captain's responsibilities also continue off the field. It is one of the hardest tasks in sport to captain a cricket team. Cricket has become so scientific that a captain of today has to work hard – gone are the days when a captain could change the bowling by the clock or set the field in the same position for every batsman. Will has enormous potential to influence the outcome of any game and should be considered for Cricketer Cup games next season.

I deliberately avoid writing a report that either sings the praise of or criticises individuals. Match reports, I trust, transfer knowledge of the adjustments and the areas of improvement that need attention. Each boy's end of term report reflects the contribution he has made to the success of the team and to Sherborne cricket in general. The results that follow highlight the individual performances.

There is little doubt that as a side we bowled far better than we batted. Only three half-centuries were scored during the season and only one batsman scored more than 300 runs. Once again a lack of technique prevented batsmen occupying the crease and building an innings. Positive cricket is encouraged with the playing of shots. Perhaps we take for granted that they have been coached to play an orthodox forward and backward defensive shot. But should we have to concentrate on these basic skills at first team level?

Lack of technique was exposed on the last day of the Festival at Cheltenham. It was a wicket that helped the bowlers, and especially the Cheltenham left arm spinner. When the ball turned slowly, Sherborne batsmen were totally bemused. Hopefully

they will have learnt from the masterful innings played by Mali Richards who demonstrated the skills required to bat on a wet wicket.

The fact that our term finished a week earlier than those of the three other schools at the Festival meant we were deprived of four first team regulars, and our most successful bowler, Will Dawson, was struck down with appendicitis after the second day, all of which handicapped us somewhat. However, it did provide an opportunity for aspiring Colts to experience the extra demands of first team cricket.

And yet the bowling was generally good, which allowed us to defend some comparatively low totals. All the bowlers showed good control of line and length and moved the ball around either in the air or off the wicket. Three of the main bowlers return next year, which should provide optimism, especially if you think, as I do, that bowlers win matches and batsmen save matches.

Mike Nurton

Results: Played 17, Won 9, Drawn 2, Lost 4, Abandoned 2.

April 18th	St Andrew's College 160-7; Sherborne 72-6.	Drawn – rain.
April 20th	Sherborne 163-6; Sherborne Town 81.	Won by 82 runs.
April 27th	Sherborne 110; Millfield 87-1.	Drawn – rain.
May 4th	Canford 202-7; Sherborne 203-8 (T P Cracknell 53).	Won by 2 wickets.
May 5th	Sherborne 213 (W J K Russell 69); Free Foresters 91 (C M Dupont 4-4).	Won by 122 runs.
May 7th	Sherborne v King's, Bruton.	Match abandoned – rain.
May 11th	Sherborne 176-6; King's, Taunton 177-9 (W P Fegen 4-34).	Lost by 1 wicket.
May 16th	Sherborne 157; Bryanston 142.	Won by 15 runs.
May 18th	Pilgrims 168-7; Sherborne 169-2 (W J K Russell 80).	Won by 8 wickets.
June 8th	Sherborne 123; Clifton 80.	Won by 43 runs.
June 15th	Sherborne 171-6; Taunton School 85.	Won by 86 runs.
June 22nd	Blundell's 53 (W P Fegen 6-4); Sherborne 55-2.	Won by 8 wickets.

June 26th	MCC 226-4 dec; Sherborne 162.	Lost by 64 runs.
June 29th	Pilgrims 163-8 (W R B Dawson 4-17); Sherborne 164-6 (W J K Russell 59).	Won by 4 wickets.
July 7th	Sherborne 144; Marlborough 148-7 (W R B Dawson 4-65).	Lost by 3 wickets.
July 8th	Sherborne v Haileybury.	Match abandoned – rain.
July 9th	Cheltenham 172-8 dec; Sherborne 72.	Lost by 100 runs.

SCHOOL CRICKET FIXTURES 2003

Sat	April 26th	King's, Bruton	Sat	June 7th	Millfield (a)
Sun	April 27th	Sherborne Town	Sat	June 14th	Taunton (a)
Sat	May 3rd	Canford	Sat	June 21st	Blundell's
Sun	May 4th	Free Foresters	Sat	June 28th	Winchester
Thurs	May 8th	Bryanston (a)	Wed	July 2nd	MCC
Sat	May 10th	King's, Taunton (a)	Fri	July 4th	Trinity GS, Sydney
Sat	May 17th	Pilgrims	Sat	July 5th	Pilgrims
Thurs	May 22nd	Clifton (a)			

July 7th–9th Festival with Cheltenham, Haileybury and Marlborough at Marlborough.

SCHOOL RUGBY 2002

Results: Played 11, Won 8, Lost 3.

Canford	Won	12 - 7	Marlborough	Won	18 - 16
Bishop Wordsworth's	Won	13 - 0	King Edward's, Bath	Lost	18 - 41
Downside	Lost	12 - 26	Bryanston	Won	26 - 13
King's, Taunton	Won	18 - 10	King's, Bruton	Won	24 - 0
Wellington	Lost	6 - 75	Blundell's	Won	25 - 20
Clifton	Won	26 - 13			

As the summer term progressed a feeling passed through my mind that the rugby term was not going to be easy. Even as we arrived in Cornwall for a pre-term tour, that feeling seemed to be even stronger. With the sun shining, basic skills were very much at a premium. The warm up game against Truro School showed just how enthusiastic the group could be, without actually playing much constructive rugby.

The winning of this game and the following warm-up games back in Sherborne did not fill me with any degree of confidence although it was beginning to emerge that there was a distinct spine to the side. Mike Clapp at hooker, David Poraj-Wilczynski at No 8, Will Dawson at scrum half and Tom Cracknell, the captain, at fly half gave us something to work on and a platform to develop from. Players were being selected to play a very simple system, get the ball and hopefully a ball carrier over the gain line; there was even talk of kicking the ball into areas of the field that would force the opposition to attack from a long way out. At this point members of Bow House felt we would do well to achieve a 50 per cent record.

Canford, Bishop Wordsworth's and King's, Taunton were all beaten in a very convincing manner, although the scores may not have given this impression. The Downside match, with their London Irish contingent, was lost although there was a feeling that we had played as well as we were allowed. The influx of top players proved to be more than we could handle.

The match at Wellington showed the opposition at their best: to put it mildly, we were out-muscled. It proved to be a very dark couple of hours. The feeling after this game really showed exactly what this group of boys were like. They put this loss behind them and stated which path they were going to take. The season could easily have collapsed, but to their credit, they went on to win matches against sides who were considered to be much stronger.

The re-introduction of the Marlborough fixture proved to be a great success at all levels, including a very tense finish for the XV. A late drop goal attempt was all that separated the two sides. Bryanston was a magnificent defensive performance, allied to the ability to counter-attack from depth. In truth, we out-tackled a side that felt they should have beaten us. A similar game followed on the Upper against King's, Bruton, when the conditions were so bad it was hard to play any constructive rugby. In the midst of these matches, we lost to a very professional side from King Edward's, Bath.

Wins against the odds are generally uncommon in schoolboy rugby, the mindset is such that it is almost accepted those which you will win, and those which you will lose. It is entirely to the credit of this group that they refused to accept that sides were unbeatable, hence the number of games which were won against all expectation. They certainly deserved all the plaudits that came their way.

The performance against the strongest Blundell's side I have come across was quite outstanding. Everything that was being worked on in practice appeared on the field. The retention was superb, the continuity excellent, all of which resulted in three well-taken tries. Everything then paled into insignificance with the tragic accident to James Harding. Sport, in this case rugby football, is a wonderful thing to be part

of until something such as this happens. The friendships and enjoyment are overtaken by the risks involved in any form of contact sport.

Any doubts I had about this group at the start of the season were dispelled by the performances on the field and the strength they showed off it. No other School team has ever experienced such a devastating loss. My hope is that the boys will continue in the sport of their choosing and show the same enthusiasm and determination that James Harding did throughout his time at Sherborne.

Finally, I would like to pass my thanks to Tom Cracknell for his excellent style of leadership. Captaincy does not always come naturally; to gain the respect of your side is by far the most difficult task, something that Tom achieved without losing his good humour. A great deal of the season's success was down to him.

I would also like to thank Don Rutherford, the new Director of Coaching for all his help and advice. His depth of knowledge from his years with national sides has been a great bonus to both the boys and myself. A great addition to the coaching staff.

David Scott

SCHOOL RUGBY FIXTURES 2003

These had not been finalised at the time of printing. The fixtures will be on the School's website (www.sherborne.org) in September.

SCHOOL HOCKEY 2003

Results: Played 14, Won 5, Lost 8, Drawn 1.

King's, Bruton	Won	3-0	Canford	Lost	2-5
Monkton Combe	Lost	1-2	Exeter	Won	3-2
Dean Close	Lost	2-3	King's, Taunton	Lost	1-2
Bryanston (County Cup)	Won	2-0	Millfield	Lost	1-4
Canford (County Cup)	Lost	0-1	Wells Cathedral	Won	3-2
Taunton	Won	6-2	King Edward's, Bath	Drawn	1-1
Bryanston	Lost	2-3	Pilgrims	Lost	3-3
					(3-4 penalties)

It is so much more enjoyable to write a positive report when one is asked to review a sporting team's season, and even more so when the team in question so thoroughly deserve it, as the 2003 1st XI certainly did.

When considering the potential talent on display at the start of the term there were some encouraging signs based on a number of individuals returning from last year, especially in the defensive area, but in general the really high-quality, natural hockey players capable of achieving representative honours did not exist. Rob Hill and I were aware that a number of important areas were going to need to be sorted out: in particular, where the goals were going to come from. In the end we needn't have worried, at least in part.

What really characterised this team and made them such a pleasure to coach was their fantastic attitude towards hard work on the training ground, as well as the very professional approach that they brought to every match day. Whilst this is a great credit to them all, David Poraj-Wilczynski, the Captain, must be recognised for his excellent leadership, both on and off the field. As a coach you cannot ask for any more from a team than that they give 100 per cent in everything that they do, and this team clearly succeeded at this.

As already mentioned, goals were always going to be a problem, and always had been for this particular age group. To progress in one year from someone with a talent for missing the goal from impossibly close angles, to scoring 14 in 14 matches including eight matches in a row, is a great achievement, and Alex Gold, with his trade mark "slap", certainly helped towards solving this problem, but he needed support and this was rather light in coming from other outfield players. The other major weakness (and undoubtedly the most frustrating element of the season) was our inability to score from penalty corners. Repeatedly we would play good hockey into the "D", force a foul, and then waste the opportunity. All the good hockey being played would therefore go unrewarded and we would fail to put the opposition under pressure, and even win games that we had dominated. The team practised and practised their drills but unless you have the ability to do the three basic elements of inject, stop and hit consistently well, no threat is established and all other scoring chances will be difficult to create. The arrival of the fantastic new floodlit Astroturf will make a massive difference to these skills as finally the boys throughout the School will be able to practise them without worrying about whether they will lose their front teeth!

At the other end of the pitch the defence did perform admirably, although there were times when a lack of pace and strength in the tackle let them down. However, with goalkeeper Nick Southwell growing in confidence through the term, and getting back to his "Daily Mail" shot-saving best, and Gavin Thow marshalling the troops in front of the back three, the goals that were scored against us had to be good and hard-worked for by the opposition. A significant number of these, and often very important ones, came from the one or two outstanding players that many of the opposition seemed to possess. These players were inevitably at least West of England standard, and possessed the ability to control the game as well as create and score goals from out of nothing. Where are these players at Sherborne? The

hope is that with the new pitch, a continuation of success throughout the School (this has been the most successful season by the School for many years), further investment in coaches, particularly from among the staff in actively supporting and taking an interest in such a major part of the School life, that class players will begin to emerge in the not too distant future.

The policy of the coaches and this team was to play fast, attacking hockey that would make the most of the pace available at the front. To succeed at this the midfield have to work very hard indeed and this they did, focusing on the task at hand with great determination. Often this area of the pitch is where many of the opposition “star” players are to be found, and it is to the midfield’s credit that rarely were they given any time or room to demonstrate their talents.

I have deliberately chosen not to single out too many individuals, as this group of players really do deserve the collective praise. They all improved their personal hockey skills considerably, played for the team at all times, and behaved in an impeccable manner, being excellent ambassadors for hockey at Sherborne. I also know that they thoroughly enjoyed it, and in the modern sporting world this is perhaps forgotten as the main reason why we all play our sport. I hope to see many of them back playing for the Pilgrims in years to come, when they may even have the privilege of playing on the same side as their old coach (should the body be able and Jimmy Cheung very understanding).

Finally, I would like to thank Jeremy Wadham for all his excellent efforts in driving hockey ever upwards, Rob Hill for the high quality of his expert coaching and all the boys involved on the Upper. It has definitely been a most enjoyable and rewarding term.

Alistair Hatch

**THE SHERBORNE PILGRIMS COMMITTEE
2003**

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Club colours can be obtained from Alan Willows at:
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Tel. 01935 810506.

RULES

(as approved in December 1997 and subsequently amended)

1. The Club shall be called “The Sherborne Pilgrims”.
2. All OS who are members of the OS Society shall be entitled to apply for membership. Members of staff who are members of the OS Society may be invited to become an honorary member.
3. With the exception of honorary members who shall pay no subscription, all new members shall pay a life subscription, which shall be determined by the Committee.
4. The objectives of the Club are to promote and encourage all forms of OS sport, and to keep members in touch with one another and with the School. It is the responsibility of any person playing for the Club in any sport to have in place adequate public liability insurance cover.
5. The Officers of the Club shall be the President, who shall hold office for three years, two Vice-Presidents, the immediate Past President, three Trustees, the Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary, if appointed.
6. The Committee shall be the Officers of the Club, two representatives from the School staff, up to 24 ordinary members, and such others as may from time to time be co-opted.
7. Ordinary members of the Committee shall retire after three years’ service, but are eligible for re-election.
8. The Club bank shall be the Sherborne branch of the NatWest Bank.
9. All investments shall be held in the name of a regulated nominee company, or in the names of the Trustees.
10. The financial year-end shall be March 31st and an Annual General Meeting must be held by the end of the calendar year. An income and expenditure account, together with a balance sheet, shall be produced for approval at the AGM.
11. A Committee meeting shall be properly convened on three weeks’ notice and be quorate with eight or more members present.
12. In exceptional circumstances the Committee shall have the right to refuse an application for membership.