



SUSSEX CRICKET SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FOUNDED: 1965

CHAIR: DAVID BOWDEN MBE

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Any views expressed in the newsletter are those of the writer, not those of the Committee of the Society.

www.sussexcricketsociety.org

Hon. Secretary

Currently vacant

(While vacant the role will be split between committee members)

Newsletter, Membership

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Hon. Treasurer

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Dates for 2023 /24

Thur 19 October

AGM 2.15pm

followed by talk from Jon Filby

Wed 15 November Afternoon

Tea, 2.15pm speaker Mark

Ramprakash MBE

Thurs 14 December Lunch,

Speakers Patrick Ferriday &

James Mettyear

Wed 10 January 2024

Lunch,

Speaker David Gower OBE

Wed 14 February, 12noon

Lunch, Speaker Geoff Miller

OBE

Wed 3 April 2.15pm

Afternoon Tea Paul Farbrace,

Head coach, Sussex Cricket.

The January lunch event with David Gower was a success on all fronts - David's talk, the lunch itself and an impressive turnout. Ivor Evans has again contributed a full account which appears later in this newsletter.

Our next event - a lunch on 14th February with Geoff Miller OBE the speaker promises much as well. Places are still available at the time of writing. A booking form was issued with the last newsletter. To book and pay (£35 per person) contact Barbara Eagles by 6th Feb, by phone, email or post letting her know any dietary requirements and seating preference. Barbara's contact details are 4 Champions Row, Wilbury Ave, Hove, BN3 6AZ, email eagles202@btinternet.com, phone 01273 778988

For this event we have been told that the normal parking warden will be stood down between the hours of 9am and 6pm. And the usual reminder that if a booking is cancelled within seven days of the event no refund will be made.

Then on 4 April comes our last event of the winter, an afternoon tea with Paul Farbrace. Price and booking details in the next newsletter.

Sussex news. I was disappointed to read that Ali Orr is joining Hampshire, not least as his best days should well be to come for this talented and popular batter.

Other news in recent months was the recruitment of John Simpson, the 35 year old keeper/batter from Middlesex on a multi-year deal. (It seems that Middlesex were unable to match the long-term security of such an arrangement.) Simpson's first-class career goes back to 2009 and apart from his keeping he has made 10 first class hundreds, and is a more than competent batter as well as 'keeper. He is also set to captain the championship side for at least the first seven 2024 games. This latter appointment did not surprise me though I hope his recruitment will not restrict Oli Carter's development. There should be room for both. In 2023 Carter's keeping came on as did his batting. And there is young Charlie Tear in the wings as well.

Good news is that Cheteshwar Pujara is returning for the first seven championship games and will then be replaced by the 35 year old Australian Daniel Hughes, a left handed top order bat and a current regular for both New South Wales and Sydney Sixers. In an eleven year career Hughes has played 73 first class matches with 8 centuries, a top of 178. On the bowling front the Trinidadian Jayden Seales is due to be with Sussex for the opening couple of months of the season. (He was lined up by Sussex for 2023 but injury forced him to pull out, he was playing for Trinidad in December but not selected for the West Indies tour to Australia on grounds of a shoulder injury.) The Australian seam bowler Nathan McAndrew who played much of the 2023 season for Sussex has been announced as being available for June and July, so for some Championship fixtures and all of the Blast group stages.

New Society Members - welcome to Robin Carr, Peter and Julie Dougill.

Death - It was with sadness that I heard that Joe Hudson recently died. Joe had been a Society member for many years, many of us will remember Joe as a previous Secretary of Friends of Arundel Castle Cricket Club and for his work there. Our thoughts and condolences go to his family and friends.

Review of the January Lunch and David Gower's talk - Ivor Evans. Following the recent snow and cold weather it was a bright clear morning in Eaton Road. The lunch venue had been moved from the Pavilion to Cow Corner in anticipation of a large audience who would want to listen to David Gower and so this proved to be with one hundred and thirty-three people sitting down to lunch.



Before the main event, David Gower presented Fynn Hudson-Prentice with the Cricket Society 2023 Player of the Year Cup. (see picture). In accepting the cup, Fynn, said it was a massive honour for him, especially being a Man of Sussex.

After an excellent lunch of slow cooked beef, Bakewell tart followed by coffee, the Chair stood up to introduce David Gower. There were so many accomplishments: 117 test matches, 32 as captain; 5th highest run scorer for England; 8231 runs; 18 centuries, average of 44.25; over 39,000 runs in first class and one day cricket. Following retirement, David became a hugely respected commentator on the BBC, Sky and more latterly BT/TNT.

David stood up and began by recounting his debut for Leicestershire in 1975, batting at number seven he made 32. Coming back into the dressing room which at the time had a number of former hardened Yorkshire professionals, one of them Jack Birkenshaw told him that although he had a good day there would also be many, many bad days!

David's mantra was fun, style and excellence. One never wanted to lose, but for him a sense of fun was necessary, and it was important to put on a good show. For him it all started at Marlborough House prep school and The King's School, Canterbury, where he was encouraged to flourish as an individual using pure instinct. He was not certain how he would have coped in the computer age. Following on, he went to University College London, briefly to read law, claiming that in his time he had never seen the inside of a lecture theatre. Many years later whilst playing for England he came across Professor Thomas who apart from being a law lecturer at UCL was also an MCC member, who suggested to David that he had made the right choice!

David's first captain in professional cricket was Ray Illingworth who was a tremendous captain and tactician. Leicestershire had never won the Championship before Ray arrived from Yorkshire and won it in his first season. David made his Test debut against Pakistan in 1978, scoring 58 in an innings win for England. Mike Brearley was his first Test captain. After one quick fire innings, he did remind David that Test cricket was actually five days and it always helped if one could stay out in the field.

Moving on a few years to 1981, David thought like many that Michael Holding's infamous over to Geoffrey Boycott at Barbados in 1981, was perhaps the greatest that he had ever seen. When Boycott came back in there was silence; on one hand what could one say to Boycott and on the other, what awaited you when you (and it was not very long when you went out to bat yourself.)

David was invited to become England captain in 1984. He thought that it might have come a year or so early, but the one thing that you do not and cannot do is turn down the opportunity as it may never come again. His first series as captain was against the 1984 touring West Indies. In laconic style, David said that he had the perfect record, 0-5. He did think that they were in with a chance in the 3rd Test at Headingley when Marshall broke his hand fielding and then came out to bat one handed. However, in the second innings he took 7-53! One conversation that both cricketers and supporters often have is what was the greatest Test side of all time: the 1948 Invincibles, Australian sides of the 1990s and 2000s. In David's view it was this West Indies side. With batsmen like Greenidge, Haynes, Richards and Lloyd and Bowlers of the ilk of Holding, Garner and Marshall. But it has no spinner some say, but why do you need one David would reply. Of all the great fast West Indian bowlers, David would place Malcolm Marshall at the top of the pile.

The following year, 1985, England captained by David claimed The Ashes, beating Australia 3-1. He added that you underestimate them at your peril.

David talked about Shane Warne both as a player and a commentator. Warne played seven seasons for Hampshire where he had a massive impact. He was a great enthusiast of the game and was prepared to take time to impart his knowledge with players and youngsters at all levels. He recollected the Sky TV master classes, and although retired, Warne would peel off his jacket and proceed to demonstrate the numerous variations of leg spin as when in his pomp. Sky used to have planning meetings of which Warne was not a fan, his approach on screen was just do, and do it he did very well. If he wanted to tell you something, he did whether you wanted to hear it or not. Similarly, to the Ramprakash tea, if anyone not at the lunch and wants to hear some of David's anecdotes, I will leave to others to pass them on.

There were some reminiscences of both Ian Botham and Australia:

The 1987 America's Cup coincided with the 1986/87 Ashes. Playing Western Australia, David, Botham and Allan Lamb were invited to a reception by the Sponsors. David and Lamb gave up late into the night, but Botham carried on. Botham would never admit to having a hangover, but the next day Botham arrived in the dressing room looking decidedly the worse for wear. When Botham went out to bat, David witnessed an amazing sight with Botham hitting 68. Asked how he did this Botham said that he saw three balls bowled every time, so he just hit the middle one!

David gave his version of the infamous Tiger Moth flight during the 1990/91 Ashes tour. Previously to the flight, David had been in excellent form scoring two centuries in Tests. Events occurred on the third day of the game against Queensland. He had spotted previously the Tiger Moth tours and with England going well decided to have a flight during the game. He could not resist a flyover the ground. Unfortunately, or otherwise, a cameraman with a long lens caught him on camera. The England tour management found out and whilst he was out the same evening increasingly sharp notes were left under his bedroom door. When everyone met the next morning, it was akin to a court room. There were a set of bar stools lined up against a wall and a single one in the centre of the room. The upshot was that David was fined £1,000 which in itself was a story in that if he had paid in anything other than cash, tax would have also been liable. As it was, he just happened to have the money in cash and that is how he paid. The unfortunate upshot for David and England was that it was another eighteen months after that tour before he played another Test for England.

The 'feud' between Botham and Ian Chappell now has legendary status. It goes back to 1977 and an altercation in a bar. There have been many disagreements between players which with time mellow. However, this one will never be resolved with neither giving any quarter. A few years ago, either due to wilful glee or stupidity, Channel Nine TV, scheduled them to commentate together. It was a very small studio with doors either side. Both of them came through separate doors, sat down and although you thought that they were having a conversation for the entire slot, they did not look at each other once, looking directly ahead at the game. At the end of their time, they stood up, turned away from each other and left via the separate doors.

David took questions from the floor:

In his era, he was asked who was the greatest all-rounder of Imran Khan, Botham or Richard Hadlee and Kapil Dev. In reverse he had no trouble in placing Kapil, 4th and Hadlee, 3rd. However, who was the greatest between Imran and Botham was very nearly impossible with their batting, bowling and fielding. At the end, the thing that separated them was their captaincy and for that he would place Imran 1st.

Did David have any memories of Sussex greats; Snow, Greig and Imran. David only played against Snow at the end of his career, but he was still the same graceful bowler as he was in his prime. He also hoped that when he was 82, like Snow he still had same lithe form as the great man. Grieg and his careers did cross over in the mid 1970's, but Greig he knew much better as a commentator for Channel Nine at which he was superb. Nonetheless some of his comments live on air could cause pause for thought. Once again members need to ask lunch attendees for both the questions and answers.

David sat down to loud applause. The Chair stood up to say what a wonderful talk that David had given. He went on to say that not only was it one of the Society's largest gatherings, but it was also one of the longest finishing not far short of 4.00pm. As a last comment the Chair said that a friend of his was so in awe of the Test runs that David had scored (8231) that it was their credit card PIN number – name of friend and credit card not disclosed!