

D J Goddard's Cricketing Memories

This account of my cricketing memories was written primarily for my son, Chris, whilst he was in Australia from 2004 -2006 and has been added to since as further recollections occur. Much of its contents will be familiar to him, but there will be a few reminiscences that are new to him.

The Early Days

I cannot recall what attracted me to cricket as a sport, but one of the early influences may have been the 1950 West Indies tour of England. At that time the West Indies team was very much a mixture of white settlers and black indigenous players and the captain of the West Indies was one John Goddard which may have contributed to my interest. I can recall listening to that Test series on the wireless and trying to score the match ball by ball from the commentary and being intrigued when the commentator referred to their black players as 'coloured' and wondering what colour they were! Another influence was that the family home was in Roseburn Drive, close to Roseburn Park, one of the public parks that had a cricket square and hosted mid-week evening cricket matches between 'works' sides such as Corinthians, Maccabbi, London Road, Newington, St Mary's, Meadowbank and DAFS. As local lads we often helped to fish balls out of the Water of Leith from boundary hits.

My brother, George is four years older and he too was into cricket at an early age. He was a Kent supporter and Colin Cowdrey was his childhood hero. I was less into County cricket but undoubtedly my brother's interest in the game of cricket was an influence on me.

As a small boy, earliest memories are of playing cricket in Roseburn Park with a solid rubber ball, a sprung bat and stumps that were hammered into the ground with the face or back of the bat. Bowling was usually underarm and as there was no umpire, anyone hit on the leg, whether in front of the stumps or not, was given the option of 'three blindies' or 'three peg-legs'. In the case of three blindies the batsman had to close his eyes when facing the next three balls and in the case of three peg-legs, the batsman had to turn the bat upside down and try to hit the ball with the handle. Three blindies was the best option to choose as one could pretend to close ones eyes, leave any balls that were not on the stumps and defend any that were on the wicket!

My mother was responsible for encouraging both my brother and I to play cricket and she often used to join in the matches, bowling left arm.

There was no TV in these days and we learned how to bat and bowl from watching the 'works' teams that played in Roseburn Park on mid-week evenings and as we grew older we would frequently be asked to make up teams who turned up short. After turning out for St Mary's one night I was asked if I would be available to play in their next match. During the course of that match one of the players mentioned that he hadn't seen me at church and as I thought that St Mary's was a catholic church, I panicked and declared myself unavailable for the next match!

Junior School Cricket at Heriot's

At the age of 10 I left Roseburn Primary and went to Heriot's. My cricketing experience in Roseburn Park stood me in good stead and I was one of the best players in the P5 equivalent team, opening the bowling and batting high up the order. My opening bowling partner was 'Tu' Inglis, a plump lad who bowled off a short run up and made the ball 'whirr' on delivery.

The wickets at Heriot's were dreadful; being cut on the rugby pitch outfield and the cricket ball could climb over the stumps or shoot along the ground according to whether it hit a firm or soft spot. From memory scores were low, much lower than today, and although I took a lot of wickets, I don't recall scoring above 38 runs in any match.

Boxes were not provided and I attribute a closed stance, which led to a tendency to play round my front pad, as a direct result of the need to reduce the chance of being hit in the balls!

I recall having only one coaching session, led by Donald Hastie, the Games Master, (a pole vaulter) and assisted by Duncan Heggie who taught in the Junior School and at that time played for the FP 3rd XI, but apart from that players were just left to adopt their own style of play. The Head Groundsman, Arthur Crebor was a former professional cricketer with Glamorgan, but his coaching was confined to the School 1st XI squad.

I also recall one afternoon when it rained and we had a talk from Arthur Crebor in the tea room of the cricket pavilion. Around the room were photographs of the FPs who had been capped for Scotland and above the door was a photograph of W.G Grace, the doyen of English cricket. For years after I thought that W.G. Grace was a Herioter!

Looking back, it is incredible how orthodox we were at cricket considering that we did not have any cricket coaching input and, as television had not been 'invented', we were unable to copy what we had seen on TV.

Senior School Cricket

On passing into the senior school, cricket did not appear to be organised on the basis of teams in each year and I played for a side of older boys, captained by a chap by the name of George(?) Gordon. I was the most successful bowler, but again don't recall doing much batting, perhaps because I was smaller than most of the others and therefore could not punish the inevitable bad balls as well as the older boys.

All matches were played with an old ball and at that time I knew nothing of swing and held the ball with an off-spinners grip so that it would occasionally move from off to leg on pitching. At that time I was prone to experiencing an 'electric shock' down the left side of my neck when putting in too much effort. I was never naturally fast but ran off a longish meandering run which got me to the wicket with enough impetus to bowl medium fast by the standards of the day.

Apart from school cricket, I was a member of the 44th Boys Brigade Company out of Murrayfield church. The 44th had a good record in the Cup thanks to my brother and his contemporaries and in my early years I was one of the four players who bowled 5 overs each in the 20 over matches. The Captain of the Company was Neil McIntyre (Wee Mac), father of Euan and Ronnie MacIntyre, and he insisted that we adopt the unusual tactic of bowling spells of one over at a time, presumably so that the batsman could not get used to the bowling of any individual. Thankfully this tactic has not caught on in cricketing circles, but it was successful in that the 44th succeeded in winning the Cup final, played at Meggatland.

I was one of the few players in the side who played cricket at school and although I was not a 20 over cricketer, I opened the batting and tried to bat through the innings whilst others hit poor balls to the boundary. I recall having to face Ronnie Saunders who played for the School 2nd XI and bowled off a 20 yard run up and was pleased to be able to hold out against him and I recall making a significant contribution in the semi-final by running out Harry Pincott of Scotsman fame with a direct hit from long-stop as Harry tried to keep the bowling by completing a second run!

It was around this time, aged 13, that I played my first match for the FP Cricket Club, turning out for the 3rd XI in a match versus Leith Albion at Leith Links. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience as I was able to survive for some time and allow a well built chap, (Iain Haggart?), batting at the other end, to plunder 70 odd and set up a defensible total. I do not recall many of the players in that side, but it included 'golden oldies' Sid Plowright and Jim Adair, Scott Cameron and Bill Alexander. Bill ran up to bowl with stiff legs and as I had been told he was in the RAF, doing National Service, I thought he had been involved in an air crash! It

transpired that this was not the case and that the stiff-legged run up was just one of his natural idiosyncrasies.

As young teenagers we still played impromptu cricket matches in Roseburn Park during the summer holidays. One day four Edinburgh Academy lads appeared as part of a birthday party activity, complete with bats, pads, hard ball, stumps, bails and gloves. The local lads offered to give them a 'take on' and off a 30 yard run I bowled the first two for ducks and with Ronnie Gray, subsequently of Newington, Royal High, Carlton and sundry other clubs, bowling from the other end, we did not have many runs to chase to win the match. Their team included two players, Ian Stevenson and Mark Tulloch who went on to play club cricket at a high level for many years.

Ronnie Gray and I had been in the same class at Roseburn Primary before he went to Boroughmuir and although some found him a bit abrasive, he and I always got on well and had a mutual respect for one another's cricketing abilities. Ronnie lived round at Westfield but he used to come round to Roseburn Park to play and we would practice catching. Ronnie had a strong arm, as befits a quick bowler, and his high throws were much more difficult to catch than mine and I often went home with bruised hands. Ronnie was a very keen cricketer and he joined the 44th BB later than the rest of us just to play cricket. Ronnie was also a keen cyclist and when he moved on to play senior cricket he often used to cycle to matches as far away as Kirkcaldy, bowl his quota of overs and then cycle back to Edinburgh again....mad or what?

Although I was not in to cricket to the same extent as my brother, I often walked over from Roseburn to the Grange to watch Sunday matches after I had finished my school homework. By this time my brother was a regular in the Murrayfield CC XI whilst still at School and my father often took me to watch George play when they played their home matches on the back pitches at Murrayfield Rugby Ground. On occasions I would get a free tea and/or a shilling for scoring the match!

School 1st XI Cricket

After three years of senior school cricket I was pleasantly surprised to be invited to the 1st XI nets for pre-season practice. The 1st XI was run by Lindsay Mitchell, a Heriote and Primary School teacher. Lindsay was a fearsome character to a young, immature schoolboy and sported an Adolf Hitler type moustache and a gruff exterior. I knew he had a softer side as he had been very kind to my brother but as I had not been in any of Lindsay's classes on the way through school, I did not know him very well.

During one of the final practices Lindsay produced a couple of new balls and for the first time I discovered that I bowled natural in-swingers. I remember going to the library and getting out a book by Trevor Bailey, the England all-rounder and read up all about the grip and how to shine the ball to aid swing.

I was pleased to be picked for the 1st XI in the first match of the season versus Glasgow Academy under the captaincy of the one and only Hamish More. The Heriot opening bowlers were Iain Ferrier who had played in the 2nd XI the previous season and Hamish himself. They were followed by Dave Dawson who, like Iain, also played his cricket at Carricknowe CC and Colin Blaikie who at that time bowled away swingers.

Things were not going too well for Heriot's with Glasgow Academy on around 70 odd for 2 wickets when I was asked to come on to bowl from the bottom end. The ball was still swinging, however, and with the help of a west wind I was able to take 5 for 9, including the wicket of Brian Lockhart, father of Douglas Lockhart, and experience the novelty of being asked to lead the side off as we dismissed the opposition for around 90. At that time most of my wickets were taken by bowling a full length with the ball swinging in late to bowl the batsman or to rap him in the pads in front of the stumps. I was helped by the fact that the LBW law at that time did not require the bowler to strike the pad in line with the stumps

and so I was able to pick up LBW appeals from balls that struck the batsman outside off stump, but were swinging in to hit middle or leg.

The following week I was able to repeat my success against Glasgow High School with 4 for 9, this time opening the bowling. These were my most successful spells in a season in which I might have topped the Schools bowling averages in the Scottish Cricket Guide had I not had to go into hospital to have my appendix removed, but as I ended the season with only 19 wickets at a cost of 3.75 runs per wicket, I did not reach the qualifying 20 wicket mark.

As a prolific swinger of the ball, I had a tendency for the ball to swing down leg side if I set it off too straight. Whenever this happened Lindsay Mitchell, who umpired, would let out a groan and this was enough of a spur to ensure that I concentrated hard on starting the ball off outside off stump.

In this my first year in the school 1st XI, I batted 8 or 9. As I was a very young 16, I found that I could stay at the wicket and play the bowling on its merits provided there was someone at the other end who could push the score along. I recall scoring 6 in a match versus Paisley Grammar whilst H K More completed a hundred at the other end.

Whilst in Hospital getting my appendix out I was visited by Lindsay Mitchell and presented with my cricket 'colours' for 1958. I was fit enough to play in, but not bowl in, the last match of the season versus Edinburgh Academy and was lucky when, fielding in the gully, I was struck right on my appendix wound from a square cut by Pat Burnett the future Scottish rugby international.

Whilst my brother had been an outstanding cricketer and had turned out for Murrayfield Cricket Club since he was 14 and had scored a 50 and taken 5 wickets on a number of occasions by the time he was 16, I was a much lesser player and did not make my debut for Murrayfield until 1958. The match was played at Dreghorn and the opponents were Grange. Also in the side was Ronnie Gray and although we each top scored with 23 out of a modest score of around 90, I made the mistake of running out Murrayfield's best bat (Merrilees ?) attempting a quick single to cover point's left and discovering too late that he was left handed!

At that time the School fixture list extended to around 16 fixtures with most school matches on Saturdays and mid-week evening fixtures against clubs such as Newington, Meadowbank and Grange. On returning from fixtures in Glasgow and beyond it was customary to buy a 'Pink' or 'Green' newspaper at the Mound and read whether the FP 1st XI was batting or bowling first whilst journeying down to Goldenacre on the tram to watch them play.

One FP match that I recall well was a fixture versus Forfarshire whose professional was an Afro-Caribbean West Indian by the name of De Pieasa who had kept wicket for the West Indies but was a fast bowler in Scottish Cricket. He had demolished the Heriot's top order and had the nasty habit of occasionally turning and bowling fast off a short run but he met with some resistance from Alec Nicol who at that time batted without gloves or box. When congratulated on his innings and asked how he had managed to stand up to the professional so well, Alec replied ' These chaps show up well against the sightscreen.'

After a successful first season in the School XI, I was looking forward to the 1959 season under Jimmy Fiddes' captaincy. Having shown that I could 'stick around' with the bat I was promoted to open the innings in the second half of the season following a successful innings versus the FPs in a two innings match arranged as part of the School's tri-centenary celebrations.

The FP's attack was the customary mixture of non-bowlers and regulars who would be brought on to take wickets when required. One of the regulars was Ronnie Souness who was a fast bowler and although probably not bowling at full pace I found I could read his away swing and his off-cutter from his delivery position and so was able to survive. With time running out I was on 43 not out at the start of the last over, bowled by Hamish More. I have always been able to play leg spin well, going down the wicket to take the ball on the full toss when

well pitched up and had reached 49 not out with one ball remaining. Hamish, being Hamish, was not going to allow anyone else to steal his limelight and bowled his last ball as a fast ball outside off-stump. I tried to cut it, but was slow in picking up the change of pace and missed and so finished on 49 not out.

I felt pretty pleased with myself as we walked off up the hill to the pavilion, having rescued a draw with the FPs and having scored my highest score for the 1st XI by some way. I was met at the doorway to the pavilion by Lindsay Mitchell with the 'cheering' words 'you didn't deserve 50 Douglas Goddard !' to which I replied ' I didn't get 50 !' I was not to know it at the time, but I never did score 50 for the school 1st XI. As will be apparent ,Lindsay was very 'old school' and not readily given to praising any of his charges.

Although Colin Blaikie and I were a pretty useful opening attack in 1959 I was not the bowler I had been in 1958. I had begun to have to work hard at getting the ball to swing whereas in 1958 I could not bowl a ball that went straight. There were good moments, however, including bowling Hamish More for a duck in the School v FP match, a feat greeted with great cheers from the pavilion by the other FP members, and getting international all-rounder Dougie Barr caught behind by Derek Hardie for 1, playing inside one that did not swing as much as he had thought.

It was around this time that Dave Binnie, the vice captain, gave me the nickname of 'cherub' as I was a very young and immature 17 year old.

One of our wins that season was against Watson's who were captained by Kenny Green whose father had played for Murrayfield CC with my brother. Kenny was a useful wicket-keeper batsman and whereas capped Herioters were awarded a white cricket cap with crest and dates, capped Watson's players were also given a white blazer with maroon ribbing. Knowing that he could not compete with Kenny in the sartorial elegance stakes, Jimmy decided to go out to the wicket to toss up in his old torn batting trousers. It was an appropriate touch as Heriot's was not as 'posh' a school as Watson's.

Towards the end of the season Colours for 1959 were awarded. Amongst the surprised recipients was Derek Hardie, the wicket-keeper. Derek was no great cricketer, but he had 'pinched' a book on wicket-keeping from Thin's the bookseller and Lindsey was so impressed by his keenness that he rewarded him with 'colours'.

In BB cricket we fancied ourselves to win the Cup as Ronnie Gray and I were serious cricketers. I remember we borrowed the match ball several days before the final in Roseburn Park and worked hard on the shine. Unfortunately, although we were quick, we were not as accurate as we needed to be against non-cricketers and byes and thick edges mounted up to a reasonable total that we were unable to match.

On returning to school in 1960, I was appointed captain of the school cricket XI. It was a disappointing season for me personally as I did not score the runs I should have batting at 3 or 4 and , as mentioned earlier, could no longer swing the ball as easily as in 1958. My best match was against Watson's at Myreside where I at last managed to score a few runs (41) out of a total of 149 and then recovered from a tea-time score of 49 for 1 to take five wickets to win the match by just bowling as fast as I could. An indication of how much my bowling had deteriorated, however, was that John Gibson (known as ' the lung' because he smoked heavily) took 9 for 6 versus Paisley Academy with me bowling at the other end.

John was a good friend and bowled off-cutters from a short run up with an exaggerated side on action but he sometimes had trouble with the umpire as a result of bowling outside the line of the popping crease. John had a Triumph Tiger Cub motorcycle and I recall him giving me a lift down to Goldenacre from school one day. On entering Clarke Road some of the primary school children were leaving the ground and John roared up the drive, scattering them. Donald Hastie went ballistic!

We had a pretty unsuccessful season. The batting was largely in the hands of me, Roy Jardine and Dave Morris with a young George More performing well in his first season in the 1st XI. We created history by losing to Dunfermline High for the first time in the school's history.

Arthur Creber had retired as head groundsman several years earlier and for a few years the School did not have a cricket coach or professional. In my year as captain, however, Ron Reynolds was appointed. Ron had played cricket professionally with Norfolk Minor County and he did his best to mould us into a better side. The FP club could not afford to pay a professional and so Ron played for West Lothian County when his school duties permitted. I recall playing against him at West Lothian for Murrayfield and doing well, scoring 38 opening against George Strachan who went on to play for Scotland and who currently acts as groundsman at Boghall.

I was never a 20 over cricketer and early indications of this came in the form of an invitation to 'guest' for a side by the name of Meadow Green that had been formed by Jim Brims, a Heriot schoolboy, to play evening matches in Public Parks. This was a Cup match against Corstorphine, played at the Meadows and the bowling was so tight and the wicket so poor that my contribution was 2 runs in 18 overs! Needless to say I was not asked to guest again!

It is interesting to look back at the members of the teams that I played in my three years in the School 1st XI and note how many of them went on to have long or illustrious careers at senior level.

Pride of place goes to Hamish More who went on to play for the Club 1st XI into his fifties and gained many Scotland caps. Not far behind was Hamish's brother George who also had a long career in the 1st XI and represented the East District. Of the others, Colin Blaikie and Roy Jardine had several years in the 1st XI before Colin emigrated to South Africa and Roy went on to play at Penicuik. Of the members of the side I captained, Bruce Dixon started his senior career at Leith Franklin before moving to West Lothian where he had a long and successful career as an away swing bowler in the Counties Championship whilst Chris Binnie improved considerably as a bowler to have a long career as an opening bowler for Heriot's.

1961-1962 Spencer CC

On leaving school I joined the civil service with the Forestry Commission whose HQ was in Savile Row in London. After a few weeks in a hostel in Cranley Gardens in South Kensington, I moved in to digs with Jimmy Fiddes at 31 Rodenhurst Road in Clapham, run by Mr & Mrs Foord. Jimmy was in London doing a year's practical estate agency work with Richard Ellis & Co before going up to Cambridge to read in Estate Management and he introduced me to his cricket club, Spencer, who played in Wandsworth in south London.

Spencer organised winter practice sessions at Alf Gover's cricket school at Clapham Junction. Alf was one of the Surrey greats and never having played on an indoor net before, it was quite an experience.

Spencer was an unusual ground in that it had one long square and two matches were played on it at the same time. Players fielding at cover in one match were in serious danger of injury from balls struck by batsmen in the other match!

Jimmy advised me that as the standard of batting was pretty high, I should tell the captain that I bowled more than I batted. I used these exact words and for two seasons batted at No.11. Although I was pretty aggrieved to bat so low, I learned over time that I was the only player in the side who had not scored a 50 at that time.

I became friends with two other new members, Dardi Surti, an Indian in his 30s and Tony Wing-King, a young Chinese South African batsman. Tony and I struck a bet as to whether he would score more 50s in a season than I could take 5 or more wickets and much to his surprise I won comfortably. He told me later that

he thought he was on to a good thing as 50s were pretty run of the mill whereas 5 wicket hauls were fairly rare. I played in the Saturday 2nd XI, captained by John Starnes, a stern moustachioed batsman and in the Sunday 2nd XI captained by Lionel Evans.

I remember taking 1 for 17 off 10 overs in my first match and being pretty disappointed, but being told by Guy Tarrant, one of the golden-oldies in the club, that he had been impressed. My most successful day was on a Bank Holiday Monday when I was selected to play for the 1st XI, in company with Mike Edwards who went on to play for Surrey. Conditions were favourable for swing and I took 4 wickets cheaply in my first spell. Unfortunately, when I was brought back it was at the wrong end for my in-swingers and I took a bit of punishment, finishing with 5 for 65. I was much chuffed when, in the following day's Daily Telegraph, my 5 for 65 featured in the club scores between scores for Sir Len Hutton and Raman Subba Row, two former England cricketers.

It was not easy getting from Clapham to Wandsworth as the bus was infrequent and unreliable. One day Fiddes and I were late for the Sunday morning 11am start. Jimmy changed quickly and went out on to the field and, as befits a former captain of the School, gave his apologies to Lionel, but when I was ready I was asked to field at third man and did not make a point of apologising for being late. Lionel gave me a ballooning at lunchtime for not doing so. To put the cap on the day, when we batted I was round the boundary throwing a few balls to one of the player's sons. One of the balls had just crossed the boundary and Lionel was on 46 not out when he drove to extra cover. The match ball struck our ball which stopped it from crossing the boundary. Lionel was then out next ball for 48 and he came round the boundary to give me another telling off! Later in the evening, to make up with Lionel I offered to buy him a drink. 'And what would Mrs Evans like?' I asked. There was silence and a few chuckles and I learned that the lady concerned was not his wife, but his bit on the side! Not a great day!

Spencer ran four XIs and one member of the 4th XI had a tendency to field the ball with his feet, rather than his hands. He was known as 'boots'. Another who was even better with his feet and had once taken a catch having deflected it off his boot was known as 'super boots'.

Although I normally batted at No. 11 for the Saturday and Sunday 2nd XIs, I did manage to score my first ever 50 whilst batting for the 4th XI at Chessington. I had managed to take 5 or 6 wickets whilst bowling and thought I had done pretty well to score 50 but I remember getting a lot of stick from Arthur Scutter, one of the 'golden oldies' for being a bit slow in scoring my runs.

I had one narrow squeak in my time at Spencer. After a day's cricket and a good few beers I was walking up the road with two fellow players, Peter Faulkner and Len Watkins. I had not realised it at the time but I was pretty drunk. There was another young chap walking up the road on the other side and when he stopped at a junction I thought he was peeing in the street and shouted abuse at him. We exchanged insults and he produced a knife. I had my cricket bat with me and two 'friends' and so was not perturbed. Fortunately, he took his jacket off, leaving the knife in his pocket, and rushed across the road. Before I knew what was happening he landed a punch right on my nose. I looked around for help from my friends, but they had decided that I was getting all that I deserved and simply watched as we scabbled about on Wandsworth Common. I remember the only time I got on top, I was worried that I might get my new trousers dirty and took the weight off them and was thrown off. Fortunately my friends intervened after I had taken a good beating and seeing that I was only a teenager, my assailant helped me up! It took weeks to remove the blood stains from my shirt and trousers but at cricket the next day everyone thought it very funny!

Spencer played matches on Saturday's and Sunday's all over the Greater London area and it was difficult working out which buses or trains I needed to take to get to matches. I was armed with an A to Z but it was often difficult to find the grounds after getting off the bus or train. With hindsight it was strange that arrangements were not made to pick me up by car, but I suppose Clapham was off the beaten track for most of the older players with cars.

Spencer ran a Cricket Week each year and I usually managed to take a day's leave to play in one of the matches. The two most prestigious fixtures were v the MCC and the Club Cricket Conference XIs.

Although not getting much batting practice with Spencer, other than batting out an innings to rescue a draw, I did get some batting practice with the Forestry Commission who had a full mid-week fixture list playing against other civil service Departments in Public Parks such as Regents Park, Holland Park and Clapham Common.

I recall being asked whether I was interested in playing cricket for the office side and being a modest Scots lad from a non-playing cricket country, I thought that everyone in London would be good at cricket and was unsure how to reply. I need not have worried as it transpired that only one other chap was currently playing club cricket, and not at a great level, although there were several guys who probably played when they were younger.

The wickets in London were pretty hard and fast and I was quick by public park standards and generally managed to take lots of wickets. Although not a natural 20 over cricketer, my batting technique was good enough to survive the good balls and punish the poor balls and topped both batting and bowling averages easily. Being good at cricket certainly helped my early Forestry Commission career as it meant playing alongside senior people who would not otherwise have given me the time of day in the office.

Highlight of Forestry Commission cricket was a tour to play our offices in Chester and Shrewsbury where I scored unbeaten fifties in both matches and took a blinder of a caught and bowled to dismiss the Chester office's best bat. Forestry Commission cricket was well organised and in addition to the above tour we also played matches against the SE England Conservancy office at Horsham, a ground I later played on for Weybridge and at Cambridge University's ground at Fenners versus our Cambridge office and a match versus the Lord Salisbury's estate staff at Longford Castle near Winchester.

At that time one of the annual School 1st XI fixtures was a match versus the previous captain's XI and I travelled back up to Edinburgh to play in that fixture, borrowing Tony Wing King's Spencer cricket sweater. Although I had picked a pretty strong XI, we lost in the last over, with me being given out lbw for a 'duck' by Lindsay Mitchell off Roy Jardine's bowling. The following year I fared a bit better, playing for Dave Morris' XI, scoring 50 not out in a tied match.

1963-64 Heriot's FP

On my return to Edinburgh I played for the FP 1st XI as a batsman despite having batted at No. 11 for the previous two seasons. Murray Cooper was captain of the 1st XI and he was very good at giving me opportunities to show what I could do. I was often down to bat at No.4 and would go in if early wickets had fallen, but if things had gone well I would drop down the order so that those who were better suited to push the score along could do so.

Successful batting is largely a matter of self confidence and having not played as a batsman for a couple of years, I had little self confidence to call upon.

The top East League club around this time was Edinburgh University who sported several West Indian students including Rudi Webster, a 6'8" quick bowler who subsequently went on to have a season with Warwickshire where he topped the County bowling averages in his first season. On leaving university, Rudi had a season with Grange and we played them on a damp wicket at Goldenacre and were shot out for 37. I remember sitting on the balcony and being happy that, apart from the odd bouncer, Webster was pitching the ball well up to the bat. However, when I went out to bat the pitch marks were well down the wicket and I had visions of taking one between the eyes if I tried to play the forward defensive stroke. As it happened, I was one of the few batsmen who got out to Tony Lush bowling from the other end. It was in this match that home umpire Derry

Gresham allowed a 10 ball over from Tony Lush. A wicket had fallen on the fifth ball and by the time the new batsman was ready Derry had forgotten in which direction he was moving his counters and allowed another five balls!

At this time the Club was going through something of a transition from the old guard to the new. Stalwarts such as Andrew Durie, Ian Thomson, Alec Nicol, Eric Mentiplay and Dougie Wilson were coming to the end of their careers whilst others such as Jim and Ronnie Souness and George Miller had already departed. Golden Oldies Sid Plowright and Jim Adair were regular supporters and although they were good mates, were contrasting characters. Sid spoke with a modulated accent, wore a waxed moustache and took snuff whilst Jim was a rough diamond and swore like a trooper.

Apart from East League matches, the Club played friendlies against clubs in other parts of Scotland including Glasgow High and Glasgow Accies in the West and Perthshire and Forfarshire from the Counties. Although the vast crowds that used to attend County matches were a thing of the past, it was interesting to note the remains of the seating that surrounded the County grounds. Perthshire were the strongest team in Scotland around that time with a handful of Scottish internationalists as well as a pro.

Although I had the odd bowl, I was not quick enough to trouble good bats and no longer troubled them with late swing. The 1st XI seam bowlers at the time were George Waites, Ronnie Scotland, Colin Blaikie, Roy Jardine and Chris Binnie.

George Waites had taken over from Ron Reynolds as groundsman and before he discovered golf was an outstanding bowler, despite being in his forties. George was an old fashioned Yorkshireman and lived on the upper floor of the cricket pavilion. He had had a hard life playing as a pro in the Yorkshire League and I can recall him saying that he wished he had come up to Scotland 20 years earlier.

At this stage of my career I was very nervous when going out to bat and frankly I was not quite good enough to be more than a support player at 1st XI level. My top score in East League matches was 38 v Cupar and, strangely, although I don't recall hitting any sixes for the 2nd XI, I struck two sixes for the 1st XI, a hook off a Scottish International leg-spinner up the slope towards the railway line versus Aberdeen shire and a horizontal sweep into the bank of Clark Road against Glasgow Accies. With hindsight, too much of my career to date had been spent drawing matches by batting out the innings and, as a young man, I never really developed beyond that mindset.

1974 marked the 75th anniversary of the Club and the occasion was marked with a match against the SCU President's XI. I opened the batting that day and remember being struck a painful blow on the inside of my right knee as a result of padding up to an in swinger from former Scotland bowler Willie Dow. The season finished with an Annual Dinner at the Carlton Hotel at which, as the youngest member, I was asked to say 'grace'. At the Dinner a presentation of a trophy was made to Lindsay Mitchell who was retiring as Cricket Master at the School. In typical fashion Lindsay arranged for the trophy to be re-presented to the School, to be awarded annually to the most promising 1st XI youngster.

Throughout my career I was no better than an unreliable catcher of a cricket ball. I can recall taking some super catches, namely picking Fraser Dall, the School cricket captain up of my toes at cover in the annual School versus FP match, running catches over my shoulder in the outfield of the 2nd square and at Arboretum and in my 50s a catch for the 3rd XI which required me to turn round and run back to take a catch over my shoulder at mid-off, the first time in my career that any such chances actually stuck! Unfortunately I dropped a good number of catches that others would have taken, including two off H K More's leg breaks versus Glasgow High FP, one at long off off my brother's bowling on the 1st square and one at deep fine leg on Gnomes Tour off a beamer from Chris Binnie. I can remember thinking in my early thirties that I would retire from cricket long before I couldn't score runs or take wickets, but because my catching was so unreliable.

At that time the dressing rooms were fitted out with lockers, some of which had lost their front doors and others which were complete and 'owned' by senior members of the club. Murdo (Big Mac) McDougall, father of Dave and Hamish, kindly donated the key to his locker to me on retiring from playing. In the early days of the 'snug' bar at Goldenacre, the roof was only 6 foot high and as most people smoked at the time, the smoke would slowly roll along the roof in fascinating patterns. The 'snug' was redeveloped several times over the years before finally it was decided to move the bar through to the larger lounge

One of the characters in the FP Club at that time was the aforementioned Alec Nicol. He had a reputation as a big hitter and when he came in to bat the opposition captains tended to post long-off and long -on. However, later in his career Alec had lost much of his power and timing and he would often miscue hits and avoid holing out in the deep. Alec was a big chap and weighed over 16 stone. He would field at silly mid-on and would try to distract batsmen with remarks such as 'Do you think you can reach me?'

Over the years Alec had two Staffordshire terriers, first Jerry and then Ben, that went everywhere with him. Alec was a great story teller and had the habit of opening the back door of his car whilst driving along so that Jerry could jump out, do a few tumbles and then follow the car. One day on the way to Forfarshire via the Kincardine Bridge Alec had let the dog out and as we turned right onto the road to the bridge, Jerry went straight on. Alec's response was 'Damn, I forgot to tell Jerry we were playing Forfarshire today!' On another occasion, playing at Grange Loan, Alec had opened the door to allow Gerry out to run along Grange Loan and then opened it again to let him back in. Once he was in we noticed that the roof of his car was spotted with blood and it turned out that Jerry had got his tail stuck in the car door, pulled it clear and was wagging his bleeding tail all over the car.

Jerry, in particular, was hard as nails. I recall whilst still at school sitting on the grass bank below the balcony when Jerry decided he would see what it felt like to jump off the balcony. Half way down he was beginning to have second thoughts with his legs splaying out but he hit the ground, rolled over, shook himself and headed back into the pavilion and had to be restrained from having another go!

Alec was something of a wheeler-dealer, selling encyclopaedia Britannica at one stage and he liked nothing better than a game of cards after midweek practice sessions. One day whilst playing Stewart's FP at Inverleith, a couple of police cars drove in and we were all asked to leave the field to be interviewed. It transpired that there had been a murder and Alec was found in possession of a lamp that had been taken from the home of the deceased!

As no Sunday cricket was permitted at Goldenacre, my brother and his contemporaries had formed The Gnomes, a side comprising Herioters and players from other clubs who got on well with the Heriot players. For some reason, probably because Sunday sides were not quite as strong as Saturday sides, I was more successful on Sundays, scoring my maiden 50 in Scotland versus Greenock and occasionally getting my name in the paper as one of the highest scorers. The Gnomes were a truly comprehensive side with several international cricketers and others who were of 3rd XI standard. One such player was Bob Boak who drove like a lunatic, turned over a car full of Gnomes in Kirkliston and was responsible for the Gnomes taking out life insurance for all its members. I recall making history by being the first passenger to fall asleep in his car and awoke to hear him say 'got it!' as we ran over a cat! Bob's highlight as a cricketer was hitting Scotland spinner Jim Thompson for 6 at Kilmarnock and straining a muscle in his backside in the process.

1965- 67 Spencer & Basingstoke & North Hants

On being promoted to executive officer with the Forestry Commission I was posted back to HQ in London. Pressures had been mounting to disperse Government Departments out of London and it had been decided that the

Forestry Commission HQ would disperse to Basingstoke, a New Town in Hampshire. I therefore had a season back at Spencer CC and two seasons at Basingstoke & North Hants CC who played on Mays Bounty, a ground that occasionally hosted Hampshire one-day matches.

Having not bowled seriously for a couple of seasons, I was unable to secure a regular place as a bowler in the Spencer 2nd XIs but from memory I played as an all-rounder, mainly in the 3rd XI where I was able to take wickets and score runs on a regular basis before heading off to Hampshire.

Settling in to a new environment in Basingstoke was an interesting experience. The town was in the process of being developed and was a mixture of 'old Basingstoke' people with rich Hampshire accents and incomers from London. I shared a cottage in Cliddesden Road, not far from Mays Bounty, with Bob Brooks from the Forestry Commission and when he left to train as an air-traffic controller, with Chris Retchford, an itinerant Aussie.

Chris and I ultimately became life-long friends although we only shared the cottage for a couple of years before I moved back to Edinburgh and he moved to Toronto. I remember him telling me that he was a bit concerned the first night he moved in when I said I had to go out to play in a table tennis match and his reaction was "Jees, I've moved in with a pooker!"

Having expressed an interest in joining the cricket club, I had a visit at our cottage from Derek Brooks, the Secretary, who ran the local greengrocers. Derek was no great cricketer, but keen as mustard and did a power of work for the club. My first match for Basingstoke was for the bottom team, the 3rd XI. I remember opening the bowling from a long run and bowling as fast as I could and taking about 6 for 4, before being rested to give others a chance to bowl.

This was my only match for the 3rd XI and, strangely, the only time I can remember bowling for Basingstoke. I settled in at No.4 in the Basingstoke 2nd XI and had a good couple of seasons, scoring several fifties and finishing second behind Derek Ronayne in the batting averages. I played the odd game for the 1st XI alongside two brothers Clive and Bernie Harrison who turned out for Hampshire 2nd XI and strangely one of these 1st XI appearances was against Weybridge whom I joined a few years later.

Hampshire cricket was good fun as most of the surrounding villages in Hampshire and Berkshire had cricket teams and so I was able to get a feel for English village cricket. It was a good time as I was also a member of the Basingstoke Rugby Club, playing scrum half for the 1st and 2nd XIs and enjoying playing league table tennis with the Forestry Commission. Basingstoke had a local Paper, the Hants and Berks Gazette which gave detailed reports on all sports within the town and so it was nice to get one's name in the paper for all three sports on a regular basis.

1968-71 Heriot's FPCC

On returning to Edinburgh I rejoined the FP Cricket Club and played a further season with the 1st XI before dropping down to become a regular with the 2nd XI. In the early years of this period, although the 1st XI was strong, playing numbers were limited and although the 2nd XI had a useful bowling attack, it had very few players capable of scoring runs consistently. Indeed, on being driven back at high speed along the A8 from a match in Glasgow in Bill Alexander's car, I remember commenting 'this is the first time the 2nd XI have been over a hundred this season!'

In my first match for the 2nd XI on a regular basis I scored what was to be my highest ever score, 94 versus Grange 2nd XI at Portgower Place. I remember getting off the mark with a backfoot thick edge that bisected third slip and gully and enjoying the leg-spin of a former prolific wicket-taker, Sandy Thorburn. I was strolling through the 70s with no thought of a century before we would have to declare when Grange introduced a very poor spinner whom I managed to

despatch to all parts of the ground. I suddenly found myself on 94 but my undoing was a very slow, high full toss on leg stump which I stuck down deep square leg's throat. I was not distraught at missing out on a century but it turned out that this was as close as I ever got to a ton.

From memory, there was no-one else in the 2nd XI at that time that could be regarded as a consistently successful bat and I felt the extra pressure on me to set a total that we could defend. We were a useful bowling side but apart from big Tom McKenzie who was renowned for hitting sixes over extra cover and then getting out next ball and Sandy Bowes who was no bat but had a great eye for a ball, I cannot recall another batsman in the side.

At this stage of my career I still bowled in swingers but did not open the bowling regularly as the 2nd XI, although short of batsmen, had more than useful bowlers in Bill Hamilton, Bill Alexander, Sandy Bowes and Eric Mentiplay. Although I often chipped in with a few wickets, the only time I can recall taking five wickets in an innings was against Glasgow Accies.

Captain of the 2nd XI at that time was Eric Mentiplay who had been a regular member of the 1st XI in earlier years and had taken more than 250 wickets for the 1st XI with his slow/medium seamers, bowled off a short run. Eric was a thinking bowler and often deployed the 23 yard ball, bowled from a yard behind the bowling crease. At that time Eric was fun to play with, being a fund of stories, whereas later in life it became difficult to have a conversation with him as one story led to another, without a pause. Eric did not get the respect he deserved within the Club, largely due to his legendary meanness. One story that comes to mind was when he had been drinking at the Grange Club. Eric had a habit of circulating so that he would benefit from several rounds of beer in one group before moving on to join the next, and so on. Having consumed a fair number of beers, Eric then excused himself by saying 'I've got to go...I haven't got lights on my bike!'

When playing matches versus Glasgow Accies in Glasgow it was customary to stop off for a chippie in the city centre on the way home. Invariably the chippie would be full of Glasgow 'hard cases' but Menti was unperturbed and treated them to his repertoire of chirpie remarks that somehow did not cause offence. On one occasion I had arranged to meet Anne at Binn's corner at 9pm. We were a bit tight for time and Menti assured me that he knew a quick way back from Glasgow. After we had been driving for some time we came across a sign that said 'Loch Lomond 5 miles' and it was necessary to stop to phone Anne and explain that I couldn't make 9pm!

Sadly, Eric was a bachelor and as he had no-one to go home to, in later life he became something of an alcoholic. He worked for Crawford's whisky company and in the winter months he would often arrive unannounced at our house in Cramond Vale with a half bottle of whisky that he had drawn off one of the barrels in the bond. After we had finished his whisky he would get started on my supply and then stagger out to his car before driving home.

Things took a turn for the better into the 1970s when recruits from the school included Euan McIntyre and John Fiddes, before they were elevated to the 1st XI, and Hamish McDougall, Alec Currie and Ronnie McIntyre and with a better balanced side we were able to win the Grade A Championship in 1971 under Eric Mentiplay's captaincy.

The Gnomes CC had gone from strength to strength with a regular Sunday fixture list and annual cricket tours to Yorkshire, set up by George Waites, the groundsman, who had played as a pro in the Yorkshire League. Although only playing in the 2nd XI at Heriot's I was able to hold my own with both bat and ball compared with Gnomes from other clubs, including 50s versus Harrogate and York on one tour. Highlight of these tours were the matches played at the Headingley Test ground, including opening the innings against future Yorkshire and England off-spinner Geoff Cope.

My first Gnomes tour was something of a disaster in that I succeeded in leaving my cricket kit at the hotel we stopped at in Northumberland on our way down to Yorkshire and having borrowed my brother's boots to open the bowling in one of the matches, succeeded in turning my ankle and that was the end of my tour.

The Gnomes stayed in a number of Yorkshire towns including Beverley, Malton and York and in a number of different hotels as it was rare for us to be invited back again ! The President of the Gnomes was Derry Gresham, a Herioter, who was a master brickie with Hepburn Brothers. Derry was no cricketer but he loved the game and the company of young people and became a respected umpire. Derry had been a navigator in the RAF during the war and regaled us with tales of cowardice, such as dropping bombs in the channel rather than risk flying over Germany and his party piece was to sing 'We're off to bomb Ben Gazi, we're off to bomb BG'. One year, whilst staying in Malton, Derry was persuaded to go up on the stage in Malton Town hall to treat the assembled citizens of Malton to a rendition of Ben Gazi. Other noted characters included the aforesaid Lindsay Mitchell and Dougie Brown, a tea planter home on leave from Assam, each of whom were single and alcoholics. Dougie sported a waxed air-force moustache and he and Lindsay would drink themselves to a standstill each night... and then come down for a liquid breakfast the next day to start all over again! Dougie achieved a certain degree of notoriety by spending the night in the grass cuttings at Goldenacre, the heat from which helped to keep him alive on a cold night whilst Lindsay's party piece was to set off down the stairs from the 'snug', bouncing off the walls to turn the corners on the way to the loo. He did not always manage this manoeuvre successfully and it was not unknown for him to turn up at School on the Monday with cuts and bruises from falls.

Apart from having a full Sunday fixture list, the Gnomes was a very social club with a Xmas Party held at the Goldenacre Bowling Club where everyone played children's' games and an annual Dinner at the Carlton Hotel where George Waites would show slides of the season's Yorkshire Tour. George had prepared notes to go with each of the slides but hadn't bargained on the effect of several beers and the absence of lighting, the combination of which meant that he was unable to read his notes, much to everyone's entertainment.

1972 Dumfries CC

Having served in Internal Audit within the Forestry Commission in both Basingstoke and Edinburgh and having married Anne in 1970, it was time for a career change. I opted for a posting to our Dumfries office.

I joined Dumfries CC who played in the Border league. Although having played 2nd XI cricket for the previous couple of seasons, I was one of the better bats in the Dumfries 1st XI, batting at No. 3 or 4. I had a disappointing season in the Border League, however, with my only 50 coming in a Sunday match versus Glasgow Accies at Nunholm.

Our best bat was Alec Ritchie who subsequently went on to be the Office Manager at the Scottish Cricket Union on retiring from Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Nunholm was an attractive little ground but it lay close to the river and at high tide the wicket seemed to soak up moisture from the river. The wicket was maintained by Rad Bartlett, an Englishman who was a forester with the Forestry Commission and over the years his hard work was rewarded with an international match versus India during Tom Farries' term of office as President of the Scottish Cricket Union.

Whilst in Dumfries I was invited by Robbie Main-Ellen, the Head Forester at Gatehouse of Fleet to captain his side in the annual Gatehouse Cricket Week. The patron of Gatehouse on Fleet was Mrs Murray Usher and in earlier years she had paid for a select side from Edinburgh's best players to come down to Gatehouse each year and so it was nice to experience the Gatehouse cricket week, having heard about it from my brother.

Members of Robbie's XI were invited for lunch at his bungalow overlooking the ground and it was a particularly boozy do. In the course of lunch I learned that we had very few regular cricketers in our side which included Kenny Ross the former Boroughmuir and Scotland wing forward and so although I was not bowling regularly for Dumfries, I would have to open the bowling.

Gatehouse sides were a mixture of locals, regular holiday makers and landed gentry. It was a hot day and I bowled as quickly as I could in the heat to sweat out all the wine I had drunk at lunchtime. I picked up 5 or 6 wickets but couldn't dismiss David McMaster (?), the Loretto Deputy Headmaster who had played his cricket with Grange. He was a good player but my brother told me later that he had a weakness against real pace...which I didn't have!

1972- 74 Weybridge CC

Having only been in Dumfries for 6 months I was promoted to Higher Executive Officer. Knowing how expensive living in London would be, I asked to be posted anywhere but London.....but London it was. As HQ was due to be moved to Edinburgh in 3 years time, we thought initially of buying in Basingstoke, where I had friends and where housing was cheaper but it was a little too far out and we eventually bought in Weybridge.

I had been tempted to join a village cricket club in order to experience true village cricket but joined Weybridge who played on the 'village' green, but were a top Surrey club.

My time at Weybridge coincided with their 50th Anniversary and as we had no children at that time I played regularly on Saturdays and Sundays for the 2nd XI, with the occasional 1st XI appearance. The wickets at Weybridge were hard and fast and whereas I have always been regarded as a slow scorer in Scotland I had no difficulty scoring runs at a reasonable pace for Weybridge.

In an area popular with film stars, pop singers and TV personalities, Weybridge had more than its fair share of characters. The 2nd XI was captained by Mike Gadd, a former 1st XI player in his 40s, who bowled off-spin and was a more than useful bat and the Vice-Captain was Wally Mould, brother of Marion Mould the Olympic Showjumper who, along with Tony Ruffells were millionaire builders. It was the tradition at Weybridge (a tradition I introduced to Goldenacre on my return) for anyone who scored 50 or took 5 wickets to buy a jug for the other members of the team. When Wally bought a jug, however, it was filled with gin, not beer!

I was one of the best bats in the Weybridge 2nd XI, topping the 2nd XI batting averages, and at one time I thought that I might score 1,000 runs in the season. I don't recall bowling much at Weybridge, but I note from the averages that I did bowl a bit. I had three very happy seasons at Weybridge and have always been well received when calling in at the Club in subsequent years on visits South.

It was a very social club that also ran a couple of table tennis sides in the local league. I played with Tony Cooper, a 1st XI batsman, and Peter Butress ,a fellow 2nd XI batsman in the 2nd team and we won our Division. Practice nights were open to everyone and were held in the cricket pavilion. Weybridge also entered a team in a five a side football festival open to cricket clubs in the South West of Surrey and we managed to win it in the first year we entered. The 50th Anniversary was celebrated with a Cricket Week and a Dinner Dance held at Ascot Racecourse. Sunday matches were very civilised all-day affairs with port provided by Mike Gadd to finish off lunch!

Whilst in Weybridge I drove up to Lancashire to join the Gnomes Tour. As mentioned previously, the Gnomes usually toured Yorkshire but this year had decided to give Lancashire a try. It proved to be a mistake in that it rained every day and the only time we got on the pitch was in the last match which lasted a few hours before the rains came on again.

1975-1989 Heriot's FP

Having played at a good standard for the previous three seasons, I had reservations over re-joining Heriot's when I returned to Edinburgh as I knew I wouldn't be good enough to command a place in the 1st XI whilst the 2nd XI had been a pretty modest side the last time I had played in 1968-71. However, as the club had gone open in 1974 and featured no fewer than six internationalists in the 1st XI, the 2nd XI were much stronger than in the past with former 1st XI players Eric Mentiplay, Colin Snoddy and Robbie Burnett supported by Bill Hamilton and youngsters Peter Hewitt, Hamish MacDougall, Hector MacQueen, Donald MacQueen and Ronnie McIntyre amongst others who, in earlier days, would have been 1st XI regulars.

The 2nd XI won the Grade A League in 1976, 1979, 1982 & 1988 and would have won it on more occasions had availability been better, particularly early in the season and at times when Hearts or Hibs were having good runs in League or Cup competitions. In the early years Stenhousemuir were the side to beat, having had access to good coaching during former Essex player Bob Paterson's time at the club, but as the years ticked by they declined considerably. I remember noting how much they had declined when, on taking guard, their batsman studied your leg side field only, having no intention of playing any off-side shots. In later years the Grade A Championship changed hands on a regular basis with Edinburgh Accies, Carlton and Grange challenging from time to time.

Our win at Penicuik to secure the 1976 Championship coincided with the 'infamous' 1st XI match versus Stenhousemuir at Goldenacre in which H K More decided to make a point about the League rules by batting on..and on...and on. We had decided to wait outside the ground until all the cars had arrived from Penicuik before making a triumphant entry and were surprised to find Stenhousemuir batting, with the score around 16 for 1. The ill-feeling that this generated in the 1st XI match did not prevent us celebrating in style.

Of the successful captains, none was more popular than Gordon (Albie) Wright who captained the side in 1979. Albie was not the greatest cricketer but he had lots of personality and got the best out of the side. Winning matches with Albie was always good fun.

The 2nd XI was a pretty settled side over this period and with the 1st XI dominating the East league with seven successive Championships, few members of the 2nd XI were interested in taking a turn to play as 'jersey fillers' in the 1st XI. Whilst there was a huge gap in the playing standard between 1st and 2nd XI cricket, I think it would be fair to say that the Club tended to give the benefit of the doubt to non-Herioters, rather than promote successful 'home grown' 2nd XI players. A case in point was Colin Snoddy who was promoted to the 1st XI after four successive 50s for the 2nd XI. Colin top scored in his first match, did reasonably well in his second match but was then dropped back to the 2nd XI after a couple of failures.

The 2nd XI's strength was that we had half a dozen players all capable of scoring 50 and on most weeks 2 or 3 would come good. A higher ratio was unlikely, otherwise we would all have been playing 1st XI cricket and just occasionally we would all fail and be skittled for a low score. We were also a good mixture of batting styles. Hector was the ideal opening bat, being technically sound, whilst run rate was never a problem for Peter Hewitt, Hamish MacDougall and Colin Snoddy. Although I was a successful 2nd XI bat, I never found batting as easy as some but I eventually settled on a successful batting method based on a sound front foot defence and attacking back foot shots.

In Colin's early years in the 2nd XI he was a prolific scorer. I recall one innings in particular, against Stenhousemuir, who had a good bowling attack that included Ronnie Melville and Hugh McNicol. Colin dominated them that day. He was particularly adept at playing on the 2nd square when it was a bit of a trampoline as he could square cut balls off off-stump, safe in the knowledge that the ball would pass over off stump should he fail to make contact. Sadly, Colin's eye went

towards the end of the 1980s and he was unable to end his career on as much of a high as he would have liked.

Hector was a keen student of the game and played accordingly. He was the ideal foil as opening bat for our more gifted attacking players, being able to take the shine off the ball and set up a good platform from which we could post a decent score. He was not normally a quick scorer but I recall one match versus Stewarts Melville at Ferryfield where he outscored George More comfortably. As befits a keen student of the game, Hector even developed himself into a useful medium paced seam bowler later in his career.

Peter Hewitt made batting look easy and it was a pity that he was not interested in taking cricket more seriously than he did, otherwise I am sure he could have been a successful 1st XI cricketer. He was a fluent stroke player off both front and back foot, ran between the wickets like a hare and was a class fielder, despite being diagnosed with diabetes in mid career.

Hamish McDougall had the unnerving habit of getting off the mark by charging down the wicket, but if he was able to survive the first half hour he was very good at converting innings into big scores, with three hundreds to his name during my time in the 2nd XI. As mentioned elsewhere, Hamish also had a safe pair of hands in the deep and if he could get to it, he rarely dropped a catch. Although not a regular bowler, Hamish had one match winning performance with the ball against Stenhousemuir when he was able to extract lift off the trampoline on the 2nd XI square.

Ronnie McIntyre had won a few matches for the side batting at No.7, having a good eye and a good lofted drive over mid-on. When he gave up bowling and had to work on his batting he became a more orthodox bat and produced a number of good scores batting at No.3 or 4.

Apart from those 'regulars' mentioned above, we were fortunate to have batsmen such as Robbie Burnett, Ian Ramage, Kenny Blyth and Rab Mouat for brief periods and also had the services of George More in 1979 during one of several 'disputes' with the Club.

The Mores are a very strange family. Hamish was always an extrovert but George was initially quite a quiet lad until, early in his twenties, he decided that he was tired of being referred to as Hamish More's little brother and 'invented' a personality of his own. However, to his credit, he was prepared to turn out for the 2nd XI that season, rather than take himself off to another club, a move he made later in his career.

Having been used to playing cricket on both Saturdays and Sundays whilst in Weybridge, I was keen to arrange a few Sunday matches for the 2nd XI whilst I was Honorary Secretary of the Club. One of these was the introduction of a Grade A Six-a-Side Tournament for which I presented a silver quaich and which Heriot's won on a few occasions before the tournament ceased on my retirement as Secretary. I did not play in any of the Sixes as my batting and bowling styles were not suited to eight over matches, but I was happy to organise the tournament. Regrettably, following one of Heriot's successes, the celebrations were too exuberant and the trophy was damaged. Once it became apparent that the Club did not intend continuing with the Sixes, I asked if I could have the trophy back and re-presented it as the trophy for the winner of the Under 15 League. Another successful venture was away fixtures versus Crieff with Menti and I taking our trout rods to fish the river before the match started.

I had slipped a disc whilst playing rugby when I was 23 and have suffered from back spasms ever since. Crouching over the bat was particularly bad for my back and when I had had a long innings the previous day, Anne would have to push me out of bed the next morning. Although we did not bat with helmets in my day, I was only struck on the head twice, once by one of the part-time bowlers in the nets at Goldenacre when I top edged a full toss on to my eye and in a match versus Glasgow Accies 2nd XI when on running through to complete a 50, a throw from the boundary landed on my head! My 'colours' cap still has the blood stains!

The nearest I came to serious injury on the cricket field was whilst playing for the 1st XI at Forfarshire. They were playing out for a draw and we were attacking their tail end batsmen. I was placed at silly mid on off my brother's bowling when I saw the batsman take a huge swing at a ball. I covered my head with my hands and dived to my right and the ball struck me on the left hip bone. A few inches to the right and I would have been in serious trouble!

Over the years our bowling was also strong with Eric Mentiplay better than most at skittling the tail in quick time and Hector's brother, Donald MacQueen a penetrative opening bowler in his short career. As mentioned earlier, Eric had a well deserved reputation for being careful with his money, hence nicknames such as Scattercash, or Plentymoney, and it was something of a mistake to introduce the convention of buying a jug when one took 5 wickets or more as Eric would mysteriously lose line and length when he had taken 4 wickets and be happy to be taken off! One of Eric's 'party pieces' was to announce that he had played against the incoming batsman on several occasions and he had failed to get off the mark and, sure enough, Eric only needed one ball to send him back to the pavilion!

Eric did not have a well paid job and whilst he was happy to buy beers on a one to one basis, he hated buying beers for a group and took a lot of stick within the Club as a result. I remember feeling very sorry for him one night at a Club Race Night in the Rugby Club when young Iain Thomson was master of ceremonies and took imaginary bids for a horse from Eric, eventually selling it to Eric for over £100. Whilst it was very funny, it was also very sad as Eric was in a lose/lose situation. If he paid up he would be broke and if he refused to pay, his reputation as the meanest man alive would be confirmed! No prizes for guessing which option Eric took!

Ironically, when he died around the turn of the century Eric left the Club £50k out of his will A very generous gesture given the stick he had taken whilst he was a playing member.

Another outstanding bowler in the early years was Bill Hamilton. Bill bowled medium paced inswingers off a short run and when conditions were suitable, was a prolific wicket-taker. Towards the end of his career Bill had a season in the 1st XI and topped the bowling averages! Sadly he died within a few years of hanging up his boots.

In later years we were fortunate to have the services of Dave McDougall who had been a successful seam bowler with the 1st XI in their heyday. Indeed, as few of the other personnel in the team had changed since our last title in 1982, it would be fair to say that Dave made a big difference to the side that won the Grade A League in 1988. Dave bowled medium fast with good control and variation from his left arm round the wicket deliveries and he and I were a good partnership as I am sure I picked up a lot of wickets from batsmen who knew they were not going to get much change out of Dave's bowling.

Dave was a mild mannered guy but he did cause a bit of controversy in a match versus Watsonians at Craiglockhart. We had posted a decent score but Watsonians were making a good fist of replying and were at the stage where they were looking to take a run off every ball. However, in their efforts to do so the non-striker was backing up too early and Dave warned him on more than one occasion that if he continued to do so he would be run out. This warning went unheeded and a few balls later Dave stopped in delivery and removed the bails. Watsonians were none too happy, but they were more guilty of cheating than we were. The surprising thing was that the next man in , instead of being ultra-careful not to make the same mistake, did just that and he too was run out without even facing a ball. Watsonians were now nine down and a few balls later they made the mistake of taking on Peter Hewitt's speed and arm in attempting a second run and we eased home with the last three wickets being runs out.

Apart from those mentioned above, the 2nd XI were well served in the early years by Sandy Bowes, Bill Alexander and Andrew Moody and in later years by Alex Currie who, whilst not the most prolific wicket-taker, was adept at bowling just short of a good length and keeping the opposition quiet in the early overs of a match. Alex was also good fun to play with, an important aspect in 2nd XI cricket.

For some reason, the Grade A League did not produce many good spin bowlers in any of the sides but in his short career Jeff Dick was a productive wicket-taker for the 2nd XI with his 'genuine' leg spinners, whilst Willie Scott and Jimmy Crichton each had their days as off-spinners.

Over the years the challenge for the 2nd XI was to out-perform the former 1st XI players in other clubs as they dropped down into the Grade A League in the autumn of their careers. Given that the majority of the team had never been 1st XI regulars, and certainly not 1st XI stars, we did pretty well to see off opponents such as Ronnie Melville and Hugh McNicol of Stenhousemuir, Dougie Lawrence and Freddie Thomas of Royal High, David Raistrick of Brunswick and Carlton, John Everett, John Martin, Tim Bunker and Jerry Kidd of Watsonians, Sandy Thorburn and John Little of Grange, Ernie Wilkins of Stewarts Melville and George Bannerman, George Strachan and Bruce Dixon of West Lothian amongst others.

For some reason, one of the Clubs that both 1st and 2nd XIs had good relations with were Edinburgh Accies. I recall one night at Raeburn Place where the concept of 'the continuous jug' was introduced. It was not acceptable for the jug to be emptied before its replacement was available. I do not recall how I managed to drive home that night. My own favourite opponents were Watsonians as I not only scored more 50s against them than any other club but, once I had taken up leg-spin bowling, generally managed to pick up a few wickets.

Throughout my whole career, it was normal practice for cricketers to drink and drive and I doubt if I would have played on as long as I did had after match drinking not been part and parcel of the day's cricket. Strangely, I do not recall anyone being stopped and cautioned following matches.

The recruitment of top players to the 1st XI partially hid the dropping standard of players coming through from the school, both in terms of quality and quantity and whilst Honorary Secretary of the Club I presented a paper to the Committee which recommended that the Club took a more active role in encouraging boys from the School to continue to play the game in the FP Club. In 1985 I took a coaching qualification and started up a Youth Section that played in the local Under 15 League and Cup competitions. This rejuvenated the Club from the situation where the 2nd XI had occasionally had to concede matches because we could not raise an XI to the stage where a 3rd XI was started in 1990 and a 4th XI in 1993. Indeed, in 1988 we were very grateful to be able to call upon two of the Under 15 XI having only been able to raise 5 FPs for the 2nd XI match versus Dunnikier. With only 7 fielders I could not bowl successfully but fortunately Dave McDougall and Sandy McRobbie worked their way through their batting and we were left to chase 139. I was promoted to open the innings with Hamish McDougall as neither of our normal openers were playing and we succeeded in getting within a few runs of the total before I got out, with Hamish going on to get one of his hundred's. This was a very important win in a season in which we went on to win the Championship.

In the early years of this period of my career I either opened the innings or batted in the top four and bowled medium paced inswingers. In 1977, when captain of a pretty unsuccessful 2nd XI side, I was so frustrated at the inability of our bowlers to bowl sides out that I decided to bowl leg-spinners in a match versus Royal High at Jocks Lodge. Although we lost the match, I finished with five wickets and a new career as a leg-spinner started at the age of 35.

Without a doubt, my conversion to spin bowling extended my playing career by several years. By playing as an all rounder, it meant that if I didn't get runs then I still had a chance to enjoy success by taking wickets. Having previously been a bowler, I knew how to take wickets and as a leg spinner I felt that there was a

chance of taking a wicket with every ball if I could put the ball where I was trying to bowl it.

Whilst I was rarely the top run scorer over the season in this 15 year period, I topped the batting averages on a regular basis, including three years in a row from 1984-86 when I was Honorary Secretary of the club. Although I have not kept a tally of the number of 50s scored for the 2nd XI in my career, these must have been close to 50. I was a pretty slow scorer, however, and on reaching 50 I then usually tried to hit out prior to a declaration and usually got myself out long before threatening a century. Colin Snoddy was a prolific scorer in the early years and when his eye declined Peter Hewitt and Hamish MacDougall took over the mantle of big scorers, although not always as consistent performers every season as Hector MacQueen and I.

Unlike Colin, Peter and Hamish, I was never a match winner with my batting in the sense that I was capable of chasing down a big score. My contribution when batting first was in helping the side post a score that the opposition were unlikely to get and, when batting second, to support the attacking batsmen and giving them as much of the bowling as possible so that we could overtake the opposition's score. When a victory was beyond us, I could usually be relied on to ensure that we batted out to achieve a draw.

Of my decent scores, the one I regard as my best innings for the 2nd XI was against Holy Cross 1st XI in a non-league friendly. Holy Cross had two useful opening bowlers, Daudpota, an Asian all-rounder and Alan Cottam, a young Herioter who had a few seasons with the club in later years. Alan was pretty quick by 2nd XI standards and I remember deciding to bat a foot outside the popping crease so that I would reduce the chance of being out lbw.

Another valuable innings was against Edinburgh Accies at Goldenacre. We had bowled them out for a modest score and Iain Ramage had played a super innings opening the batting but once he was out wickets tumbled and when I went in we were struggling at about 80 for 6. Wickets continued to fall at the other end until Sandy McRobbie came in at No.10. Sandy was no bat but during his spell with the 1st XI he had been encouraged to work on his batting and he blocked resolutely at the other end whilst I saw the team home with 30 odd not out.

Earlier in my career I had a tendency to be given out lbw as a result of planting my front foot too early. I was able to correct this to some extent by taking leg stump guard which helped ensure that my front foot was always inside the line of the ball. Like most batsmen, I was vulnerable early on, but if I could get to 15-20 runs, I felt there would be a good chance of going on to get 50. I found it helpful in the first half hour of an innings to ask myself the question 'can this ball get me out?' and thereafter change to asking myself 'Can I score off this ball?'

I enjoyed the challenge of seeing the side home when batting second and although I can't recall an occasion when I misjudged the required run-rate, there were a few occasions when I left it pretty late! One such occasion was against Grange when batting with Alan Cottam we needed one off the last ball bowled by John Little. We had agreed to scamper through for a quick single rather than attempt the big hit and managed to get home with a leg bye. On another occasion at Grange Loan versus Carlton I had been patiently waiting, ball after ball, on a loose delivery to finish off the match, but it wouldn't come and I was grateful to Alex Currie, of all people, who despatched his first delivery for four to the square leg boundary. I did not always get it right, however, and remember being disappointed to lose a low scoring match versus Watsonians on the 2nd square at Myreside. We had dismissed them for a modest score in the 90s but we lost early wickets to their attack of Gerry Kidd and Tim Bunker. Gavin Mair and I had recovered the position with a good stand but wickets continued to fall at the other end and I made the mistake of chasing a wide one from Gerry with four runs needed for victory and getting caught behind. On this occasion Alex performed more to his usual form, shuffling across his stumps to a straight one from Tim to leave us four short.

The 2nd XI square at Myreside was the scene of the only occasion when I suffered heat exhaustion, a rare occurrence in Scotland. I had opened the innings with Colin Edwards and after a good opening partnership I was joined by Peter Hewit. I can recall just being pipped to 50 by Peter who then went on to complete a hundred whilst I struggled into the 60s. When we declared on 200 odd for 1 my lips were dry and cracked from the heat and I spent the tea break trying to re-hydrate. I felt so light-headed that I asked to field at third man and declined a bowl until late in the match where I picked up the wicket of Gavin Hastings who hit a short ball outside off-stump straight to cover.

Apart from matches for the 2nd XI, whilst Honorary Secretary I represented the Club in St Modan's Centenary match where I was joint top scorer along with H G F Johnston, the former Scotland spinner. The St Modan's side included the legendary Irwin Iffla who, by then, must have been well into his 50s and Eddie Pollock who had a few matches for Scotland. I was also invited to play for the Holy Cross President's XI v Holy Cross by Hugh Kilpatrick, the former East President and although only playing 2nd XI cricket, managed to finish with 7 for 28 on a wicket that was taking spin well. I recall Jack Hamilton taking a good catch at deep long on for my first wicket and thereafter picking up several wickets to catches at silly mid off to quicker balls that the batsmen could not keep on the ground. Around that time there was an annual match between the Grade A Select and a Division III and IV Select. After one year when the Grade A Select, picked by the East Committee, was poorly balanced and well beaten in a match at Grange Loan, I took over responsibility for selecting the Grade A Select and we were able to reverse that result comfortably at Arboretum.

Looking back over my career as a batsman, there is no doubt that I improved with experience, reaching my peak in my early thirties but continuing to bat consistently right up to my retirement from the 2nd XI aged 47. I was lucky in that respect considering that my brother had been a good enough bat to score a century for Scotland and a couple more for Heriot's yet gave up batting seriously by the time he was in his mid thirties. Similarly, Euan McIntyre had been an outstanding bat in his twenties but ended his career as a No.11.

In my first year as Secretary of the Club in 1983 I had arrived early at the Annual Dinner to look after our guest speakers. The Dinner went well and my own guest that year was Norrie McLeod. Towards the end of the evening I suddenly recognised the signs that I had had too much to drink and headed off to the toilets in the Rugby Club in the hope that if I made myself sick I would be well enough to rejoin Norrie and the other members. I accomplished the first part of the strategy but then fell asleep and when I awoke it was pitch dark. I switched on the light and saw that it was 3am ! I then decided that I would try to see if I could get out of the clubhouse by pushing the door, but with no success. I decided to settle down for the night and pulled up a couple of the seats and was just nodding off when I was woken by a torch flashing in my face. It turned out that in trying to get out I had set off the alarm and had to explain my position to the two policemen who had come to investigate the possible break-in. Fortunately, they were closely followed by Donnie McMahan, the Bar Convener who was able to vouch for me and Donnie opened the bar and pulled the policeman a couple of pints. When they had finished their beers, one of them turned to me and asked 'Where do you live Mr Goddard?' I recognised that this was an offer of a lift home and without thinking replied ' No, it's all right I have a car' To his credit the Bobbie replied 'It's all right Mr Goddard, I'll drive you home and my colleague will drive your car home.' Needless to say, I had a long lie that morning whilst Anne got up to go to Goldenacre to look after her hockey teams. Whilst there she heard the story that someone had locked themselves in the clubhouse the previous night and arrived home to find that it had been me!

Of all the players I played with in the 2nd XI over 20 years, the person who improved most was Gavin Kemp who arrived from School with not much idea of how to bat but developed within a few years to become a more than useful middle order bat. I did not enjoy batting with Gavin that much as he had a tendency to wait until he received a ball that he could hit for four, rather than

work balls away for 1 or 2, but I certainly admired the way he improved his game before emigrating to South Africa. In my year as captain I declared our innings closed with Gavin on 96 not out and hope he has forgiven me. Another player who worked hard to improve his batting was Ronnie McIntyre. Ronnie had come out of school as a quick bowler but within a few years had begun to find wickets hard to come by. At that time he was a more than useful No.7-9 with a good eye and a strong right hand but when he had to work on his batting when he stopped bowling he became more of an orthodox bat and was able to move up and bat successfully at No.3.

Although I managed to take 5 wickets in a match on many occasions, I managed 7 wickets or more for the 2nd XI on only three occasions, in 1979, 1981 and 1982 and my only club hat-trick versus Edinburgh Accies 2nd XI at Raeburn Place in 1981. I was never a huge turner of the ball, relying primarily on flight to induce a catch at deep mid-off and deep mid-on from miscued drives or from stumpings. I tried to bowl a line of off-stump turning away and when I bowled a batsman, it was by mistake! 2nd XI cricket is not noted for the standard of its fielding but I was well served by Hamish McDougall who had a very safe pair of hands at deep mid-off or deep mid-on. I was also well served by wicket-keepers Albie Wright and Colin Snoddy and by Ken Roscoe, a Forestry Commission colleague, who had a season with Heriot's and took 13 stumpings off my bowling whilst Gordon Wright had a year away working in London

In my early years as a leggie I gave the ball lots of air but occasionally I came across batsmen who would use their feet to come down the wicket to take me on the full toss and punish me heavily and so I had to learn to bowl a flatter ball against such batsmen. This was bowled off a longer run as it was the only way that I could get the ball to the other end at a quicker pace. Unlike most leggies, I was not a wrist spinner but turned the ball from the third finger. This meant that although I could not get as much turn as a genuine leggie, I was able to bowl the ball where I was trying to bowl it more often. The ability to bowl a flatter and quicker ball meant that I could post a silly mid off to pick up wickets from forward defensive shots that the batsman could not keep on the ground. The silly mid-off also had the effect of forcing the batsman to play an attacking shot and I was able to pick up a lot of wickets from mistimed drives to deep mid off and deep mid on. Over the years I found that if I posted my deep mid-off and deep mid-on two-thirds of the way back to the boundary and invited the batsman to clear them, I could get them to hole out if I had deceived them in the flight.

My most successful performance was 8 for 49 versus Watsonians 2nd XI on the 1st Square in 1979, a performance that was bettered by Dave MacDougall against Stewarts Melville in 1988 when he took all 10 wickets in a match in which I was not playing (other wise no way would he have picked up all ten!) Whilst the majority of 2nd XI fixtures were played on the 2nd XI square, the occasional match was played on the 1st XI square. Of the two, the 1st XI square probably suited me better as it was firmer and therefore any turn was quicker. However, although too slow, the 2nd XI square was bouncy and I picked up a lot of wickets as a result of batsmen not quite getting to the pitch of the ball and holing out.

I think it is true to say that spin bowlers improve with experience and, looking back at old records, this was certainly true in my case. The more I bowled, the more I learned how I took wickets and where any bad balls tended to be hit. As a result, I was able to top the bowling averages most years, including my final year in 1989 when I retired from 2nd XI cricket.

Apart from playing matches with the FPs, I also played mid-week matches for the Forestry Commission against other departments of the Scottish Office. I was the only club cricketer in the side but we enjoyed the odd victory against fierce rivals DAFS and I had great admiration for chaps like Ted Parker who although in his fifties could come out and hit boundaries from the outset whilst I tried to bat through the innings at the other end. In Keith Gliddon, Alex Cowan, Geoff Holman and Tom Edwards we were a useful bowling side whilst I varied between seam and leg breaks. We ran an office Six-a-Side tournament which I won most years but recall losing one year to Fred Maclachlan on holing out to Tom Edwards at mid-on and failing to bowl Fred out. Sadly, as the numbers of Southerners who

had moved up to Edinburgh declined, it was necessary to wind up the Commission's cricket XI in the late 80s.

The FP Club celebrated its centenary in 1989 and as this seemed a suitable occasion, it was agreed with Anne that I would call it a day at the end of the season so that we would have more time to devote to our children, Scott (14) and Chris (12) at weekends. 1989 proved to be a good final season in that although we could only finish runners-up in the Grade A league, I finished top wicket-taker and top of both batting and bowling averages. It was nice to finish my 2nd XI career whilst I could still be successful, rather than carry on to the stage where I was not really worth a place in the side. Part of the Centenary celebrations included a Cricket Week with the 2nd XI getting one match, versus a Grade A Select, which I picked from players we had played against on a regular basis over the years and although they had a useful side, we played well and were comfortable winners of the match. At the end of the season we hosted a party for the 2nd XI players at Cramond Vale and the boys kindly presented me with a tankard to mark my retirement.

Undoubtedly, the highlight of the Centenary Season was the publication of the Centenary booklet. Hector did a marvellous job in researching the early history of the Club, let alone the more recent years as it was not unknown for scorebooks to be thrown out after a few years during my time playing for the Club. 100 years is a long time, but it struck me at the time that I had been associated with the Club for nearly a third of that time. In such a substantial piece of work it was inevitable that precedence was given to seasons in which the Club was successful, rather than give a more even coverage season by season, but with that minor criticism there is no doubt that the booklet was and will remain an invaluable record of the trials and tribulations of our Club and a true history of how the game has developed over the years.

I served as Honorary Secretary of the Club from 1983 until mid way through 1987 when I resigned following an altercation with H K More over the date of a Masterton Trophy tie. The rules of the competition required that we offered our opponents two mid-week dates and having done so, the date that the opposition chose did not suit Hamish as it meant that we would not be at full strength. He asked me to go back to our opponents to ask for a change to the agreed date and I refused to do so and told him that if he wanted to do the job of Honorary Secretary, he was welcome to do so and resigned on the spot.

During this period I was invited to serve on the ESCA Committee as Division 1 and Grade A representative. ESCA was a very well run body with initially Stuart Oliver and subsequently Pat Edington, both Watsonians, highly efficient Secretaries. My role was to collect results for both Divisions, apply the rules governing late returns and before email and websites, communicate league placings to the clubs. I retired as league representative at the end of the 1989 season and was pleasantly surprised to be invited to act as Vice President a few years later.

During my time as Vice President I conducted a review of ESCA activities relative to its Constitution and one of the recommendations made was to combine the East and Grade League divisions following the departure of the top clubs to the National League. This was considered necessary as, following the departure of the top clubs, the standard of Division 1 of the East league had declined significantly and it was felt that a number of the 2nd Xis of the top clubs would provide better opposition for the 1st Xis of the smaller clubs.

This proposal had to be handled delicately given that all clubs had one vote and it was apparent that a number of the 1st Xis of the smaller clubs would find themselves moved out of Division 1. This was duly achieved by getting approval in principle to the amalgamation at one AGM and then following it up the following year with firm proposals of the make up of the Divisions in the new combined league.

I duly progressed to President of the East, in succession to David Christie of Freuchie, in 1995. One of the hardest tasks during my time as President was to

chair the sub-committee investigating the allegation by Royal High against Corstorphine that the latter club had fielded more than one paid player in contravention of the East League rules. This involved a great deal of investigation as, right up to the end, the Committee was uncertain which of the two clubs concerned were lying through their teeth. Corstorphine were ultimately found guilty and docked the points achieved with ineligible players and were duly relegated from Division 1. It was also felt that the officials involved in Corstorphine CC should be debarred from holding office again, but this decision was reversed by the Scottish Cricket Union on appeal.

During my time as Vice President, ESCA was approached by the Counties Board representatives to discuss the possibility of combining the Counties and East leagues to form a Scottish Cricket League. David Christie, I and Martin Flynn met with them at Boghall and we recommended that further discussions took place with a view to amalgamating the two Leagues.

The amalgamation was duly achieved with East insisting that the new League would provide for promotion and relegation, a recommendation that the Counties did their best to resist. Following meetings with the Clubs, it was agreed that the placings in the two Divisions of the new League would be based on the placings in the respective leagues the following season.

The first season of the new League went well except that at the end of the season Clackmannan County, who finished bottom, tried to reverse the condition that there would be promotion and relegation and it was necessary to take steps to remind clubs that promotion and relegation had been key points in East's agreement to the formation of the new League.

As President of the East, I was invited to attend some of the Scottish Cricket Union meetings. At one of these I presented a discussion paper advocating that the Scottish Cricket Union should put pressure on the Western Union to join the new League so that we could have a truly National League. Alan Davies, the Union's President was already making overtures to the Western Union and they duly came on board shortly thereafter.

Youth Cricket

After a slow start when few matches were won, the Under 15 XI that I ran had their first successful year in 1988 winning the East League and our own Six a Side Tournament. The irony was that the previous year's XI had finished bottom of the 1st Division of the Under 15 League and would have been relegated to Division 2 but for the fact that the side that won promotion from Division 2 declined the invitation to move up to Division 1.

To this day, the final of the Six-a Side tournament, played on the 2nd square at Goldenacre remains my favourite cricketing moment. We were playing Clydesdale in the final and they were well on top with Heriot's needing 19 runs off the final over of the match. Hope was raised when Fraser Suttie hit the first ball of the over to square leg for 4 and this seemed to inspire Fraser and captain Colin Thomson into believing that they could still win with both Fraser and Colin contributing sixes over long on. With one ball remaining we needed one to tie and two to win. The last ball was a good yorker-length delivery that Colin drove back towards the bowler. As he dived to stop it and win the match for his side, the ball escaped his grasp and with the bowler prone on the ground and the other fielders manning the boundary, the boys scampered through for two runs to win the match.

Apart from coaching and managing the FP Under 15 XI I also coached Cramond Primary School, running sessions in the school playground in preparation for the Primary Schools competition held at Fettes College. Son Chris had proved himself the most promising of the players in practice sessions but unfortunately he broke an arm falling from the rafters of his classroom (!!!) and missed the competition.

1991-1993 Heriot's FP 3rd XI

Having played cricket on Saturdays for more than 30 years, it was nice to have a break and I did not really miss playing. However, after a season's retirement, I was persuaded to come out of retirement to captain the newly formed 3rd XI that was to compete in the bottom Division of the East League.

My initial reaction was one of disappointment when, in the first match on Roseburn Park's 2nd square our team did not contain any of the promising cricketers that I had coached over the previous years, but included an assortment of current and former rugby club players. Nevertheless, I got great enjoyment from captaining the side and seeing players such as Tony Hogarth get such satisfaction from clouting the ball to all parts of the ground. Tony had been a good enough athlete to represent Scotland in the Commonwealth Games but enjoyed his cricket so much that I recall him regretting that he had opted to take athletics at school, rather than cricket. Fortunately, Tony's sons Allan, Adrian and Alistair all opted to play cricket.

As the season progressed and players returned from school and university, the strength of the 3rd XI improved. We won an important match against Clackmannan County 2nd XI, our rivals for the Championship, and we played the last match of the season versus Edinburgh Accies 3rd XI under the impression that if we won the match we would win the Division and earn promotion to the next higher Division. We duly won in a close finish and celebrated with an official photograph only to find a few weeks later that the East Committee had made a mistake in their calculations and that we had finished runners-up!

At the Annual Dinner that year Tony Hogarth presented a cup to the Club to be awarded annually to the person who had contributed most to the Club during the season and I was delighted to be the first winner of that trophy.

By the following season the pool of 3rd XI players was much stronger and we were determined to secure promotion so that promising young players such as Ritchie & Chris Middleton, Fraser Suttie, Colin Thomson, Garnet Howells, Andrew Gearie and Steven Wallace would have the opportunity of playing at a level better suited to their abilities.

With the help of the above youngsters and other more experienced players such as Alan Hogarth, Gavin Mair and Malcolm McMillan, this objective was duly achieved with the side being the first side from the Club in more than a hundred years to win every match it played.

As we had a number of gifted batsmen in the 3rd XI, my role was limited to bowling out the opposition quickly so that we could get to the bar. It was a great way to end my career and great fun mixing with young people that I had coached in earlier years.

One match that I recall well was against Corstorphine 3rd XI. One of their players was Colin Siller who, surprisingly, went on to coach at a high level in Ireland before returning to play 1st XI cricket with Watsonians. I did not know Colin at that time, but he was a contemporary of Fraser Suttie and by his demeanour fancied his chances with bat and ball. After scoring a boundary to square leg he was bowled next ball trying to repeat the shot and when he came on to bowl he started off bowling spinners which Gavin Mair hit to all parts of the ground. After an over or two of punishment he switched to bowling fast and Gavin hit him even further!

Playing for the 3rd XI also allowed me to play with my youngest son, Chris, in a match versus Musselburgh 2nd XI in 1992. Chris would have been around 14 at the time and I batted at No.10 and Chris at No.11 in a low scoring match where we added a valuable 15-20 runs. As he reminds me from time to time, it was I who got out! I also played with my nephew, Richard, and was delighted when in a match versus Edinburgh Accies 3rd XI at the Meadows, Richard took a 'hat trick', with the third wicket falling to a smart catch in the gully area by Chris Jones snr.

All good things must come to an end and my end came in a match versus Trinity Accies 2nd XI on the 2nd square at Goldenacre when I succeeded in tearing my Achilles tendon whilst batting. I had noticed that mid-off was a bit too deep and had resolved to take a quick single to him when the next opportunity presented itself. As I kicked off for a single I felt a blow to my right calf. My first reaction was that the wicket-keeper had thrown the ball and hit me on the back of the leg. I then remembered that I had hit the ball and that that could not have been the cause and realised what I had done. Funnily, although I had no chance of continuing my innings, I hopped back into my ground so that I was not run out !

At the ripe old age of 51, I realised that this was the end for me. After 3 months in plaster the muscle in my right calf had wasted away and my future involvement in cricket was in administration and coaching the next generation of cricketers.

With hindsight, the first half of the 1990s was a very successful period for the Club with a 4th XI formed in 1994 to cater for the lesser players and rugby club members. Regrettably, the 4th XI was wound up around the turn of the century following a few years in which it proved increasingly difficult to raise four XIs.

1994- 2005 Coaching & Management

Although my own playing career was over, I continued to be involved in Youth Cricket in different capacities for the next 12 years and also had the opportunity of following youngest son Chris' progress as a cricketer.

I continued as Youth Convener at Heriot's FP until 1994 by which time the Under 15 XI had won the East Under 15 League on four occasions, the East Cup on one occasion, our own Six-a-Side tournament on several occasions and progressed to the final of the national competition at Freuchie on one occasion, losing narrowly to Aberdeenshire. The successful Under 15 captains during this period were Colin Thomson, Neil McMillan, Chris Goddard and Gavin McIntyre.

As I was still working, there were not many opportunities to coach the boys and my main contribution when acting as umpire was in encouraging them to bowl in areas where the opposition would have difficulty inflicting too much damage. An example of this was when bowling to Fraser Watts of Carlton. Fraser was a lovely little cricketer but as a slight lad he could not do much damage on the drive and he would defend any good length balls. Similarly, when bowling to Ayaz Gul, it was important to restrict the number of bad balls and force him to try to punish good balls. The only problem was that when sides progressed to the National stages of the competition, neutral umpires were provided and it was not possible to encourage and advise the boys to the same extent from the boundary.

During this period of success we rarely had the strongest side in the East, but we were well organised, tactically astute and were fortunate to have a sprinkling of talented cricketers who were well suited to 20 over cricket. These factors combined to overcome opposition sides with outstanding individuals such as Fraser Watts (Carlton), John Blain (Penicuik), Alan Spiers (Corstorphine) and Ayaz Gul (West Lothian)

I had instituted an annual Under 15 Six-a-Side tournament during my time as Honorary Secretary and Youth Convenor at which sides from all four Districts were invited to Goldenacre to compete. Apart from the notable win against Clydesdale, mentioned earlier, we were able to win our tournament on several occasions as well as a Six-a Side tournament organised by Leith Franklin Accies in which Martyn Crichton was able to clear the allotment boundary at the Links more frequently than Alan Duncan could manage for Freuchie. Over the years we developed what proved to be an effective strategy of setting a field that conceded a single but prevented 2s or 4s. Sadly, the Club failed to take over the organisation of our tournament when I retired as Secretary.

Another notable success came in the Under 15 inter-district club tournament at Fettes in Chris' year as captain. The tournament was organised by Chris Carruthers, Ronnie Chisholm and Dougie Lawrence as a showpiece for a State

Schools select which featured Alan Spiers and Ayaz Gul. It looked as though the organisers would get the result they were looking for when the State Schools select beat Heriot's comfortably with the help of a couple of debatable lbw decisions by Dougie Lawrence against two of our top order bats from right arm round the wicket deliveries. As I remarked to Douglas afterwards 'It was easy to see that you were a bowler!'. However, the State Schools select then went on to lose their match against a South select whom Heriot's had beaten comfortably and as the rules stated that, in the event of a tie, the winner would be decided on runs scored per wickets lost, Heriot's were surprise but clear winners..

Having started with an Under 15 XI, we had progressed to adding an Under 18 XI and finally an Under 13 XI with the former managed by Frank Coles, the groundsman and ultimately Allan Hogarth and the latter by Ronnie McIntyre and Hamish McDougall. Both Under 15 and Under 18 XIs won their East League competitions on occasion and went on to represent the Club in the National finals. Apart from the narrow loss to Aberdeenshire in the Under 15 competition, the nearest we came to winning was in the final of the Under 18 competition versus Glasgow Accies at Uddingston where we were unable to dismiss future internationalist Douglas Lockhart early enough to restrict the opposition to a score that we were capable of getting.

Although this was, with hindsight, a very successful period for the Youth Section, I think it would be fair to say that it operated in something of a vacuum within the Club in as much as, with the odd exception, little help or interest was shown by the playing membership of the Club who tended to concentrate on their own playing careers and in some cases viewed the up and coming youngsters as a threat to their own positions. The other disappointing aspect was that the success achieved in Youth competitions did not have the effect of inspiring the School to put in more effort to promote cricket. Indeed, the School 1st XI fixture list fell to no more than a handful of matches and co-operation from the School in nominating boys interested in playing Youth cricket declined to such an extent that we struggled to raise a full Under 15 side in 1994.

Relations with the School took a further downturn when Chris, as captain of the School 1st XI, was involved in an innocuous incident in a match versus Hutcheson's Academy. Hutcheson's were batting and one of their bats had played a shot into the covers and called for a run. Jonny Sim was the fielder and with the batsmen stranded in mid wicket, Jonny decided he had time to lob the ball in to Chris, the wicket-keeper. Unfortunately, the throw was high and by the time Chris jumped to bring it down and remove the bails, what should have been a comfortable run-out became a close call. Andrew Wood gave the batsman the benefit of the doubt and Chris responded by expressing his amazement. Andrew correctly had a word with him and that should have been an end to the incident but David Armstrong, the Heriot's cricket master decided otherwise and reported the incident to Dougie West, the Head of PE who decided to remove Chris from the captaincy, despite a written plea from Andrew Wood that the matter had been dealt with satisfactorily. Chris was a very keen cricketer but had a very short fuse and he reacted strongly to being told that he was being relieved of the captaincy and ended up being suspended from the School for the rest of the season. Although Chris was at fault in the way in which he responded, it was likely that he was influenced by my poor opinion of Dougie West which had been expressed on many occasions over the dinner table. These circumstances made further relationships with the School very difficult and I decided to stand down as Youth Convener at the end of that season and become more involved at District level

Once my youngest son, Chris, had passed through the District Under 16 level, I volunteered to take over as Manager of the District Under 16 XI and in the period 1993-1997 managed the District Under 15, Under 16 and Under 17 XIs, finally winning the District Under 17 Championship in 1997 after sharing one or other of the Championships on more than one occasion. I particularly enjoyed our jousts with the West whose manager was Mike Stanger. Mike is a nice guy but he laboured under the misconception that cricketers from the West were far superior to cricketers from the East and so it was nice to turn them over on a regular basis. Having always been a competitive cricketer, the role of Manager gave me ample scope to continue to compete to the best of my ability, albeit in a non-

playing capacity. Regrettably, the players were not always as committed to turning out on a regular basis and it was for this reason that I decided to retire as manager after finally winning the Under 17 Championship in 1977.

Whilst it was a privilege to be involved, albeit in a small way, in the development of players of the calibre of Fraser Watts, Ayaz Gul, Alan Speirs, Alan Duncan, Gavin McIntyre, Robert More, Graham and Paul Watson, Paul McCraw, Duncan Paterson, Andrew Moffatt, Iain McDonald and Mark Dixon, amongst others, who all went on to stay the course at senior club level, it was every bit as satisfying to unearth players who were less talented, but succeeded in turning in match winning performances at District level. One such player was Neil Mackay who played his cricket at the unfashionable Largo club and bowled a good spell of leggies to help us beat the West District.

Looking back, it is interesting to note the number of District standard cricketers who were lost to the game as a result of following a career in rugby. Apart from our own Gordon Ross, Michael Blair, Tom Phillips, David Blair and Neil Cochrane all gave the game up to play professional rugby, with the first three reaching international standard.

During this period we were fortunate enough to undertake tours to Northumberland, Durham, Leicestershire, Shropshire, Wales and Cumbria as well as host matches against Northants and sundry touring Australian sides. These matches were invaluable in impressing on our players that although they might be the best in the East of Scotland, there was ample scope for them to improve their skills. Looking through an old scorebook, one of the players we came up against was none other than Steve Harmiston who went on to star for England. His analyses were 0 for 21 which shows how people develop at different stages of their careers!

Winning any of the matches against County sides was made more difficult as those East players who were members of the Scotland age group squad were unavailable due to clashing Scotland fixtures, but by the same token it gave opportunities for others to play representative cricket. For the tour of Leicestershire, Wales and Shropshire in the Texaco Under 16 Championships my wife Anne and I drove two minivans hired from Edinburgh University, staying at Harper Adams College in the Midlands. Tom Cartwright of Warwickshire and England was manager of the Welsh XI and he very kindly came into our dressing room after the match to congratulate the boys on their performance. On that same tour we had had breakfast and were counting the squad on to the mini-vans for the long trip down to south Wales when we realised that we were one short. Matt Coyle was identified as the missing person and sure enough he was found still in his bed, fast asleep! Jonny Jackson of Fettes was captain on that tour. At that time he was not much over 5' tall and was given not out by Martin Flynn from a thin edge off the 6' plus opening bowler in the match versus Leicestershire. On finally being dismissed he was greeted with the comment 'He's so small he gets two innings!'

In 1997, whilst serving as a member of the Lothian Junior Cricket Development Group, I founded Lothian Local Authority Schools (LLAS) Cricket, a composite team of pupils attending State schools within the Lothians and acted in various capacities including umpire, scorer, secretary, manager and coach until my retirement in 2005. LLAS played 1st XI cricket against all of the other seven cricket-playing schools in Edinburgh and finished the season with a match against the MCC and after a few years we also fielded an Under 15 XI. At one time I had high hopes that we might succeed in providing State educated cricketers with the same opportunities to play the game of cricket as were enjoyed by cricketers in the independent school sector, but I was unable to fully sell this vision to the players, their clubs, or Cricket Scotland and although both 1st XI and Under 15 XIs had unbeaten seasons, the playing record of LLAS was generally one of under achievement. Over the years LLAS fielded a couple of dozen players who were capped at various International age group levels, but due to poor availability, we were rarely able to field a full strength side.

Although not as successful a side as it should have been, LLAS produced a number of cricketers who have gone on to prosper at senior level, including four strangely enough who gravitated to Goldenacre to play their senior cricket and it has given me an added interest to scan the papers each week-end to see how all the boys who turned out for LLAS fared in their senior careers. Whilst it was fairly common for promising cricketers to be lost to the game as a result of a preference for professional rugby union, a rare exception was Craig Gordon who progressed to playing goalkeeper for Scotland.

.In 2002, in an attempt to raise the profile of schools cricket, I founded what became known as the Ryden Lothian Schools Cup, a knock-out tournament involving the eight cricket-playing school teams in the Edinburgh area. Whilst this has been a success, it has not been possible to extend the competition to the whole of Scotland due to the impracticalities of fitting in more matches in the short and exam-filled summer term.

In 2005 I retired from running LLAS cricket following a season where the weather was so poor that we played only four of the thirteen matches arranged for the two XIs and availability amongst the players was again disappointing. Following the final match of the season versus the MCC at Grange Loan, David Watts kindly presented me with a silver salver in recognition of my efforts in founding and running LLAS cricket over the past nine years.

As mentioned earlier, in the mid-80s I had served as the Division 1 representative on the Committee of the East of Scotland Cricket Association and in the early 90s I was invited to stand as Vice President, becoming President in 1995-96. As President I represented the District at the AGM of the ECB at Lords. The East and West Districts were both members of the ECB at this time and benefited by being able to enter the Youth competitions run by the ECB. Unfortunately, when Scotland was admitted as a full member of the ICC, it was decided that the Scottish Districts could no longer be members of the ECB and the ECB was reconstituted as The England & Wales Cricket Board. This meant that although the full Scotland Youth teams benefited, the Districts lost opportunities to compete against the County sides at youth level.

Around this time I was invited by the Scottish Cricket Union to act as host to the Dutch Under 15 squad in the European Under 15 Championships held in Edinburgh. The players were housed at Merchiston Castle and my role was confined to meeting them at Edinburgh airport, seeing them to their accommodation and generally acting as their Mr Fixit. To help them prepare for the Championships I organised a warm up match against the East Under 15 XI at Largo CC. The Dutch side went on to win the European Championships and I was invited to share in their success by mounting the podium with them in the library at Merchiston Castle School.

Traditionally, the four Scottish Districts took it in turn to nominate one of their numbers to become President of the Scottish Cricket Union and I was nominated by the East Committee to stand as Vice President of the Scottish Cricket Union in 2001. However, it had already been decided to change the system of appointing the President at the 2000 AGM, with the Union Committee making the appointment in future. I decided not to offer myself as President the following year as I had not enjoyed my time on the Committee and the President's duties were confined to representational work which has never been my forte.

It would also be fair to say that I have never been fully in tune with a number of Cricket Scotland's policies such as their obsession with growing the game at senior international level without first having grown the game sufficiently at grass roots level. I appreciate the view that the national side will only improve sufficiently to compete at the top level if the players are full-time professionals but I have always subscribed to the view that to be a professional sportsman in any sport, one has to be outstanding and I do not believe that the majority of Scottish international players are good enough to merit professional status. Having been involved in my own small way in helping to develop the next generation of cricketers in Scotland, I have also been at odds with Cricket

Scotland's policy of bringing in 2nd and 3rd rate players from the major cricket playing nations in an effort to be competitive.

Having retired from playing the game in 1992 I was free to follow son Chris' progress in the game at senior level. Although I had not consciously taught him to bat the same way as I batted, his natural style was very similar to mine and in the early years was based on a sound defence and a very good square cut. I remember being surprised and delighted on arriving at Goldenacre one night to be informed by Hamish McDougall that Chris had scored his maiden century for the 4th XI as I did not think it would be possible for him to score a ton in a forty over match.

Over the next few seasons Chris made steady progress, opening the innings for the 2nd XI where he played the Boycott role whilst others such as Tino Weeraratna, Ian Ramage, David Thomson, Dougie Hamilton and Fraser Suttie played their natural attacking games.

On leaving school and going on to Glasgow University, aged 17, Chris played the odd match in the 1st XI, batting down the order, and finally made the breakthrough in his third year at University when he was allowed to open the innings in the 1st XI.

It was difficult watching Chris bat at the start of an innings as he was very defensive and it was disappointing when he got out early. However, if he could get to 20, he was difficult to shift and finished his first full season with a couple of fifties and only a few runs short of the most runs in the season.

Regrettably, the 'red mist' that had ended his school cricket career reappeared in a match at Goldenacre the following season when, on walking off having been caught behind, he became involved in an exchange of abuse with one of the opposition and had 'signed off' the argument by spitting at the fielder concerned. The incident not only resulted in him being suspended by the club for a month, but made the newspapers and TV!

The following season saw Chris 'relegated' to the lower middle order and out of the blue he announced that he intended playing for Glasgow Accies the following season. Accies had been promoted to Division 2 of the National League and he presumably saw this as an opportunity to open the batting and demonstrate that he could succeed as an opener at National League level. Things did not quite work out as planned as he managed just one fifty, versus Kelburne and ended the season with a pretty modest batting average.

The following year saw Chris back at Goldenacre and content to open the batting for the 2nd XI where he added to his growing tally of centuries.

Having spent a year back-packing around Australia in 2000 when he played for Randwick in the Sydney Grades, Chris applied for a job in Sydney in 2004 and played for Warringah in the Sydney Shires League. Anne and I were lucky enough to be able to go out to visit him during the winters of 2005, 2006 and 2007. It was interesting to compare standards and the impression formed was that whilst there was not much difference in the standard of batting and bowling, the Aussie fielding and catching was outstanding and sides tended to bat right down to No.11. Another notable difference was the very small difference in standards between the four sides that Warringah ran. It was not uncommon, for example, for a player promoted from the 3rd XI to end up man of the match in the 2nd team.

In his first season with Warringah Chris opened the batting successfully for the 3rd XI and was promoted to open for the 2nd XI the following season where he had a reasonably successful season. In his final year in Oz, however, Warringah had lost a number of 1st XI players and Chris was promoted to open for the 1st XI. This proved to be a bridge too far and he had a pretty poor season before finishing the season early to come over to New Zealand with us before returning home.

Contrary to expectations, the outfields in Australia were very slow due to the need to water the ground regularly and to grow grass that was resistant to the sun and the playing rules were very strange with matches played over successive weekends and no points awarded to either side if the side batting second were not bowled out.

During our visits we were lucky enough to see a couple of one-day matches between Australia and New Zealand at the Sydney Oval and also visited Melbourne Cricket Ground when they were preparing the ground for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. On our last visit Down Under in 2007 we visited New Zealand with Chris and stayed a couple of nights in Wellington with Robin Ferrier who had been a 1st XI regular at Heriot's as a young man and had had a season playing with me for the 2nd XI whilst over on a sabbatical in 1977 and also paid a visit to New Plymouth to see Jamie Watkins who had been the overseas amateur at the Club and had played cricket with Chris for the Under 18 XI before returning to New Zealand where he is the Cricket Development Officer for the New Plymouth area.

During Chris' time in Australia, visits to Goldenacre on Saturdays had been limited to days on which I was not fishing with the FP Angling Club or playing in golf competitions at Ravelston Golf Club. Inevitably, as each year passed, there were fewer and fewer former pupils making their way into the 1st XI and with the paid player and overseas amateur changing each year it was difficult to put names to faces each season.

2007- 2008

Following my retirement as Heriot's Youth Convener in 1994, Youth cricket at Heriot's had sadly declined. Indeed, during this period, the Club was called before Cricket Scotland to account for their failure to organise and play sufficient Youth matches. It was very difficult to sit on the LJCDG as the LLAS representative and listen to complaints from other clubs about the poor organisation of the Heriot's youth XIs. However, during Andy McKinlay's time as President of the Club, efforts were made to improve matters once a requirement to run a viable Youth section became a condition of participation in the National League and on the appointment of Steven Knox as Club Coach, youth players had access to first class coaching opportunities.

Andy had done an excellent job in involving the parents in the activities of the Youth Section, but as the improved organisation and commitment to Youth Cricket within the Club had not yet resulted in success in matches I felt that I ought to be able to make a difference. Chris had become involved in coaching and managing a Youth side in Australia and we agreed that we would answer Andy's call for volunteers and share the management of the Club's Under 15 squad.

In the dozen or so years since I was last involved in Youth Cricket, there were a number of changes to the League rules. Falling numbers had seen the termination of the Under 17 League and as clubs were struggling to raise sides it had been agreed that up to three over-aged players could turn out for Under 15 teams provided they had not played cricket at District level. This proved to be a godsend for the 2007 Heriot's squad as the Under 15 members were not greatly talented and at the start of the season the impression formed was that a number of them did not have a good understanding of **what** they should be aiming to do as batsmen, bowlers or fielders, let alone **how** to perform the various skills of the game.

Thanks almost entirely to the efforts of the four over-aged players who were rotated in matches during the season, the Under 15 XI succeeded in winning three of the eleven matches played. Since last being involved in Under 15 cricket much had changed. Whereas in the early years any total above 80 would have been defendable, over-aged players, improved equipment, coaching and arguably poorer bowling meant that scores above 100 were commonplace. Likewise, whereas Gavin McIntyre had been the only batsman to pick up an award for

scoring a fifty in earlier years, I now witnessed Jonny White scoring 107 not out, batting at No. 3 versus Edinburgh Accies!

Although turnout at the weekly coaching sessions had been good, it was asking a lot of the boys to absorb new learning and put it into practice immediately in matches and so I resolved to offer to run winter indoor coaching at the School, in the hope that in the 2008 season the boys would be better placed to put into practice in matches skills that they had learned during the winter months.

A request was made to the School for the use of the gymnasium for six two hour coaching sessions but as the gym was in use for other activities, agreement was reached to use Castle Hall, known formerly as Junior Hall in my day. Following the issue of invitations, twelve applicants applied to take part and the sessions were going well when on the fourth session whilst practising the pull shot, one of the small glass windows was broken and damage was caused to the plasterwork in the hall. On reporting the accident to the School, I was advised that the Headmaster had decided to end the let of the hall to avoid the risk of further damage and so this initiative came to a premature end.

The 2008 Under 15 season was a difficult one in that with the exception of Craig Watson who bowled economically and Tony White who scored well in the few matches in which he played, none of the other over-aged players were able to make much of a contribution and the side won only two of the matches played. Whilst the weather was good in the early part of the season, it took a turn for the worse in the second half of the season and only eight of the sixteen fixtures were completed. There were good performances, however, from Hamish McNeill with bat and ball, Adam Bennett who took a hat-trick versus Peebles County with his off-spinners and Jack Polson who showed a bit of natural ability with the bat.

Having been involved in youth cricket again for a couple of years, the impression I have is that whilst Heriot's once prided itself as a sporting school, this is no longer the case. Some argue that with the School going co-ed, there are no longer as many boys at the School and this explains the drop in standards across all team sports, but I tend to feel that the gradual fall in standards has led to parents with sporting interests sending their children to one of the other independent schools where sporting standards have been maintained and the facilities for sport are superior to those at Heriot's. An indication of this was that whereas Heriot's had always managed to field one or two players in the East District youth sides each year, not only were none of the current generation able to feature, but we even struggled to get players into the Area sides that had been set up so that players who were not up to playing at District level were able to experience some form of representative cricket above club youth level.

Much has also changed at senior level. During the time that my brother and Hamish More were playing for Scotland they were able to persuade other international players to come to Goldenacre and this not only explained the successful run by the 1st XI, but also that of the 2nd XI. Since their retirement from the international scene, Heriot's has more difficulty attracting top players to come to Goldenacre and as funds have been limited, the 1st XI has struggled to match the paid players and overseas amateurs recruited by a number of the other leading clubs.

Another new trend has been the absence of loyalty to the club that players started their career with. With the encouragement of Cricket Scotland, players now move between clubs rather than stay with their original club and try to move up the leagues that way. However, as Heriot's was as guilty of poaching players from other clubs as any other, we cannot complain.

As a result, aspirations within the Club are much lower with survival in the Premier League being the height of the Club's ambition. The 2nd XI too, are beginning to struggle as the stalwarts of that side are either now well into their thirties, or retired from playing, and the shortage of talented Youth players in the last decade means that there are few young players coming through to take their place. Whereas when Chris was in his final years at School, he was able to play his natural game and allow established club players to look after the run rate, the

current generation of schoolboys were having to play in very poor 2nd and 3rd XIs and were finding it hard going.

I fear that the next few years could prove crucial in determining whether Heriot's continues as one of the top clubs in Scotland and the indications are not good. Many of the top clubs when I started the game, such as Perthshire and Stenhousemuir have already dropped out of the top level and although the Academy, Watson's and Stewarts Melville are stronger cricket-playing schools than Heriot's, their senior clubs have all been relegated from the top level at some stage, with Edinburgh Accies even being demoted to the East feeder league. It is unlikely, therefore, that our salvation will come about from recruits from the School alone. Depressing though it may seem, the only hope is that the Club can come up with generous financial support from sponsors that will enable us to compete financially with the other top clubs.

Another significant change in the game of cricket has been the trend towards shorter games at the top end of the game with first 50 over matches and then 20-20 matches proving much more popular than the three-day or five-day format. When I was a lad, I wished that I had been a good enough cricketer to play in longer matches as I relished the idea of being able to bat for as long as possible, rather than have to keep one eye on the run rate. Whilst Test Match cricket is still (just) the epitome of the game, the top players in world cricket have (sadly) embraced the shorter versions of the game which, although exciting to watch, means that some of the skills of the game have been lost and now replaced by quite different skills.

The winter of 2008 also saw the fulfilment of Cricket Scotland's dream with three members of the national squad being given full-time contracts and the remainder part-time contracts. Whilst this will undoubtedly help with availability and avoid the cost of having to compensate the odd 'difficult' employer, I still have difficulty with the concept of paying players who, in my opinion, are not good enough to earn a living from playing cricket.

The creation of 'professional' elite is also, in my opinion, likely to encourage the trend of players moving from club to club according to how much they are offered to play the game. As a product of much earlier times, I have difficulty with the concept of paying relatively modest club cricketers and fear that this will not only cause disharmony amongst members of any team, but will place a heavy burden on clubs and their administrators.

For as long as I can remember, the FP Cricket Club has not been very good at retaining contact with former playing members of the Club and during the time that Chris was in Australia I found out how easy it was for former players to lose contact, and to some extent, interest in the Club. Following a letter to Ronnie McIntyre, the Club President, I was invited to serve on the Committee in an ad-hoc capacity to push through my ideas for renewing contact with the vast number of former players that the Club had lost contact with.

The Cricket Club has always been run on something of a financial shoestring and the tendency was to save on the cost of writing to former playing members when they retired from playing if they themselves did not continue as non-playing members of the Club. However, with web-sites and email providing an easy and inexpensive way of communicating with everyone interested in goings on at Goldenacre, I offered to cover the cost of writing out to all former playing members that we could trace to ask them to provide the Club with their email address so that we could keep in touch with them in future. Liaison with the School's Development Office proved helpful in obtaining a number of addresses and Stephen Wallace agreed to take on the job of producing a new website.

Unfortunately, the web hosting service that was chosen was not great with a restriction of just 9 'pages' which meant e.g. that all articles to do with the Junior section had to be on the Junior page. Wallachy did a good job in setting up the website but thereafter had difficulty finding enough time to update the site and so as I had plenty of time, I volunteered to take over as Webmaster. One of the initiatives was to write pieces on former playing members now living away from

Edinburgh and it was good to establish contact with a number that I had played cricket with many years ago.

2009 and Retirement

As indicated earlier, I had fears that the Club was in difficulties and these proved well founded with all three senior teams run by the Club being relegated at the end of the 2009 season. With hindsight, action should have been taken to recruit up to a dozen players for all three teams prior to the start of the season but the Committee had a tendency to call brief meetings to focus on one subject area and the need to strengthen the playing resources was overlooked.

Cameron Farrell, who had acted as paid player the following season, was re-engaged and although he had performed well in his first season in 2008, taking wickets and scoring runs, I was a bit concerned that he would do as well with the bat in 2009 and he batted at No.11 for his club side in Queensland. These fears proved well founded with Cameron scoring only 262 runs in the League and contributing a modest 26 wickets at around 5 runs per over. Steven Knox was also re-engaged as Club Coach and although he had been the top run scorer in the League in 2008 and had another good season in 2009, scoring over 600 runs, his natural batting style was to occupy the crease for as long as possible, rather than score at a good run rate and this meant that, when batting first, the 1st XI were often unable to set a target that the opposition could not overtake against our modest bowling attack and, when batting second, were unable to chase down big scores set by the opposition.

Chris started the season batting at No.8 and bowling off-spin as the 5th or 6th bowler and after a few weeks volunteered to drop down to the 2nd XI where he could open the batting. This proved to be a good move as he scored 126 for the 2nd XI and this improved his 'negotiating' position to such an extent that he batted at No.3 for the 1st XI for the rest of the season, finishing with over 300 runs and an average of around 25.

The 2nd XI fared just as badly as the players who had challenged towards the top of East League Division 1 a few years earlier had either retired or were past their best whilst the youngsters who were coming through were not of the standard of ten years earlier and had no experienced and successful players from whom they could learn. After a poor start to the season, the Club decided to bring Euan McIntyre, Tino Weeraratna, Asim Butt and Ewan Harrison out of retirement in an effort to avoid relegation and although they all made a significant contribution, their efforts were not enough to avoid relegation. The 3rd XI failed to win a match all season, lacking any senior players who had played at a higher level and relied heavily on schoolboys, not only to raise complete teams, but to contribute most of the runs and wickets. Whilst it was good to see so many of the boys who had played in the Under 15 XI in the past three years turning out for the Club, they badly needed one or two experienced players to guide them.

Whilst hopes of improving on earlier seasons at Under 15 level were high at the start of the season, these were dashed as a result of poor availability amongst the better players and the only match won in the season was a Cup match v Stewarts Melville. Half way through the season Anne made it known that my involvement as manager each week throughout the summer meant that we could not get away with the caravan as much as she would like and I decided that I would retire as Under 15 Manager at the end of the season. Unfortunately both Andy McKinlay and Alex Currie decided that they too would like to step down as Youth Convener and Under 13 Manager respectively and this together with the Club's other problems is likely to present the Club with huge challenges if the Club is not to go into what could prove to be terminal decline.

The Under 15 season finished with the annual Kids v Parents match which went well and Knoxy kindly presented me with a framed photograph of the Under 15 squad members who turned up for the match which will be a nice memento to have.

Whilst I am sure that my retirement as Under 15 Manager will not see the end of my interest in Heriot's cricket, or in the progress of all the boys from Heriot's, the East District and LLAS that I have been involved with over the past 25 years as coach or manager, my involvement in the game has given me great memories over more than 50 years in many parts of Britain.

Douglas J Goddard

September 2009