

Harry Plummer 1906-86



Harry Plummer was one of the foremost Pinkneys Green cricketers on either side of World War Two. Equally adept with bat and ball he recorded the club's first century and took five wickets in the 1950 Julian Cup Final victory.

Harry was born in 1906 to Harry and Agnes in Lambeth, South London. He had two sisters Nancy and Norah. He moved to Alwyn Road in the 1920s, spending his working life as a mechanic at Hewens Garage. Having met at the club, he married Emily in 1935, buying a new house 'Mont Boron' in Allenby Road for £450.

Initially he came to prominence as a bowler, regularly returning five wickets hauls for the second XI in the late 1920s. By 1931 he was club captain, taking many wickets alongside the prolific Brad Dann, and scoring useful runs in the middle order. This was exemplified at the start of that season in a low scoring win over local rivals Cookham Dean. Batting at number six he contributed a useful 13 out of the Green's total of 65 and then took a hat-trick which along with two catches off the

bowling of Dann, who ended up with six wickets, saw Pinkneys home by 27 runs.

Harry made club history in 1938 by hitting the club's first century, scoring 110 not out against Lendrums Ltd. For good measure he also took all five wickets to fall before the match ended in a draw. His prize for this feat was a bat presented by England and Surrey all rounder Freddie Brown,

The advent of war saw him join the Royal Engineers, putting his mechanical skills to good use repairing tanks, and he was present at the Dunkirk evacuation. He reached the rank of Staff Sergeant and drew the attention of the Allied Services Newspaper as the star bowler of his unit.

After the war his daughter Rose recalled days at the cricket as beginning with a trip to the shop next to the New Inn to buy Wrigley's chewing gum for her father to chew throughout the match. Once play had begun, the children would be sent to fetch water in a churn from a cottage over the road to make cups of tea in what was then a somewhat rudimentary pavilion. At the end of the match everyone would retire to the Stag & Hounds (now the Pinkneys Arms) or sometimes The Golden Ball. The former was used as a venue for club whist drives which Harry would help to organise. On returning home, the air would be full of the smell of Ellimans embrocation which Harry would use to soothe his tired legs.

Despite six years at war, Harry's aptitude for the game did not diminish, taking wickets aplenty in the late 40s, a highlight being a return of 8-31 against BR Western Region in 1949.

A very much liked member of the club, he would repair his teammates cars and in return they would do odd jobs around the house. A sought after mechanic, at Hewens he maintained cars belonging to Dora Bryan and Beryl Reid.

The Julian Cup provided Harry with the opportunity to demonstrate his ability in a more competitive format, taking five wickets in a tie against Holyport in 1933. Four years later he was part of the team that reached the club's first final, played over three July evenings against Old Maidonians at the Nicholson's Brewery ground in Alwyn Road. On the second evening, in front of a crowd estimated as "something like" three thousand, he took a "magnificent" catch off the bowling of Dann.

Batsman White had attempted a big hit which found the edge and was deflected skyward by wicket keeper Ernie Weller. Plummer ran round from fine leg and threw himself sideways to take the catch inches off the ground at full length. He went onto return the best figures for the Green with 3-32, keeping a good length throughout. However he could not match these efforts with the bat, and Old Maidonians won comfortably the following evening.

Thirteen years later he went one better, playing a starring role when the Green (named Hon. Gordon

Palmer's XI to avoid the disapproval of the Club Cricket Conference) won the competition for the first time. This outcome appeared unlikely when Pinkneys fell to 18-7 in their first round match at Maidenhead County Boys School but an eighth wicket stand between Plummer and Jack Pearce, both scoring over thirty apiece, raised the final total to 88 and the School XI fell short by five runs. Wins over Maidenhead United FC and Old Maidonians saw the Green through to a home final against St. Marys (now North Maidenhead). With only 77 to defend Plummer (5-15) and Jim Plested (4-12), bowling with accuracy in failing light, routed the opposition for just 31. After being presented with the cup by Australian Test wicket keeper Ben Barnett, a team photo was taken outside the Stag & Hounds. Plummer can be seen sitting on the right hand end of the front row. He went on to finish his playing days in the 1950s alongside son Mike in the same team.

With thanks to Harry's daughter Rose Plummer for help writing this article.

