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HARROW RECORD

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM HARROW SCHOOL



IN THIS ISSUE

SWIMMERS TAKE BATH CUP OLD HARROVIANS HAUNT NORTH POLE
MATHEMATICIAN MAKES OLYMPIAD SCHOOL CLIFFHANGER AT LORD'S
DR LEONARD SAX ON BOYS' SCHOOLS MUSICIAN ON OVERCOMING
RACHMANINOFF FAMOUS VISITORS: CURTIS, METCALFE, FOTHERGILL,
FOSTER, LIVINGSTONE MAKE A HOME IN MARRAKECH

OHAFC 2ND AND 3RD XI'S STAY UP WHILE 1ST XI NARROWLY MISSES OUT ON LEAGUE GLORY

Last season produced mixed emotions for the players who turned out for the Club, with a sense of unfulfilled potential mixed with pride at the return to form of the 1st XI and some robust displays that saw the 2nd and 3rd XI's salvage their respective divisional status as the season came to a close. Off the field, the Club continues to be run superbly well under the chairmanship of Andrew Butler (*The Knoll 1981*³), with a magnificent anniversary dinner at Stamford Bridge and a hugely enjoyable tour to Berlin taking place in early 2009 and the successful transition to the playing fields at The John Lyon School was managed without problems.

After last season's disappointing set of results the senior side returned to form with a series of excellent performances. There was little to suggest this would be the case with a 5-0 thumping suffered at the hands of an average Westminster side on the opening day of the season – unquestionably attributable to a lack of pre-season fixtures and the consequent low fitness levels. Two wins, nine goals and an Ed Martins (*Elmfield 2001*³) hat-trick later however and confidence was restored – albeit rather briefly as a shortage of players for the fourth match against a strong Brentwood side resulted in a second thrashing in front of the Harrow faithful, 4-0.

It was already apparent that if the side could field its first choice team and the attitude was right the results would come; if not, another season of frustration would ensue. A second 4-2 win of the season against KCS Wimbledon (which included a Paul Molloy

(*The Park 1991*³) toe-poke bicycle kick lob) set the team up nicely for the first meeting with league leaders and arch rivals Charterhouse. Harrow played superbly to dominate their rivals in a feisty match, with the goalkeeper and back four determined to keep a clean sheet that led to a 2-0 win. Three wins in the next four games saw the side within touching distance at the top of the table, but with little margin for error. The next three games were to prove pivotal to the season.

An appalling first-half display away to Forest saw the side 3-0 down at the break and facing a long, unpleasant journey back home from the outskirts of northeast London. Harrow rallied to reduce the deficit to 3-2 but with the ninety minutes up and injury time being played it still appeared to be a lost cause – that was until Lederman raced onto a Quentin Baker through-ball to fire in the equaliser and, with the Forest side now in a state of sheer panic, a minute later the goalscorer turned provider as Martins was freed down the right to somehow bundle in a goal from an impossible angle.

All talk that "this is our season" was silenced in the next fortnight, however, with two unexpected defeats against sides in the bottom half of the table, the 2-1 loss to a dreadful Malvern side the final nail in the coffin. After all the hard work that saw the side win eight of the first eleven games, it was a shame to throw it away in such a tame manner, although the side did respond to win their next four games, including another magnificent display against Charterhouse to complete the double over them and in the process inflict Charterhouse's only two defeats of the season in League and Cup football. The season ended with a 2-2 draw

away to Lancing to leave the 1st XI with a record of twelve wins, one draw and five defeats and a total of 37 points, just three short of their best mark and five behind the champions. The early Arthur Dunn Cup exit to Haileybury is best forgotten!

Spirit in the team was excellent, with young players Ed Martins, Fred Richardson (*Elmfield 1999*³) and Will Orr-Ewing (*Elmfield 1998*³) all contributing throughout the campaign. Paul Molloy made a successful transition to centre-half and formed an excellent partnership with Orr-Ewing and Ed Poulter (*Newlands 1995*³), and skipper Quentin Baker was almost back to his best in midfield with some towering displays. The addition of a strong pre-season programme will make the 1st XI a formidable outfit next season.

The 2nd and 3rd XI's were always likely to struggle after promotion last season, but both squads pulled together magnificently to ensure their league status in Divisions Two and Four respectively was retained. Charlie Reid (*The Head Master's 1997*³) took over the helm of the 2nd XI following the successful years under Arjun Chopra (*Newlands 1997*³) and ran the side with the help of Harry Woolley (*Moretons 1998*³). A lack of pre-season preparation saw the side struggle early on, not helped by the fixture computer allotting them their two toughest tests against the Charterhouse second string in quick succession, both of which ended in defeat. By mid-season, the 2nd XI were sitting in the lower half of the table and it was clear that a relegation dogfight was emerging. Wins against Haberdashers' Aske's, and fine performances against Chigwell's 1st and 2nd strings, saw the side's final game of the season become a winner-takes-all clash

Below left and middle, competitive play in the match against the School 1st XI. Right, guests at the OHAFC annual dinner



against Eton's 2nd XI. Charlie and his men produced a magnificent display to defeat a side containing what looked suspiciously like a number of Eton 1st XI players – it was fortunate that their senior side was equally inept and, without wishing to invite schadenfreude, there were few tears shed at their double relegation!

The Harrow 2nds finished with four wins and four draws from fourteen games, a respectable record to be built on next season, with a top three finish the ultimate aim.

Alex Gilbert (*Moretons 2001³*) and Oli Malin-Hyams (*Newlands 2000³*) had possibly the hardest job with the captaincy of the 3rd XI. After a superb promotion to Division Four last year, the constant shuffling of players due to shortages in both the 1st and 2nd teams made life more than difficult and the side struggled in a more competitive division. Three wins and two draws were gained which saw the side finish seventh in the table and maintain their status for next season, with the contributions of Stof Magrath (*Druries 2001³*), Dami Aderemi (*Rendalls 2000³*), Giles Matthey (*The Head Master's 2003³*), Dave Howells (*Newlands 1999³*) and the evergreen Ed Thorn worth highlighting. The continued tireless efforts of Fred and Jackie Woolley in helping with the running of the 3rd XI must also be placed on record.

Both the 2nd and 3rd XIs suffered early Junior League Cup exits, which provides further motivation for next season, whilst the Veterans once again missed out on Cup glory under the stewardship of John Wyn-Evans (*The Head Master's 1975¹*).

The 150th Anniversary Dinner at Stamford Bridge in February was a huge success with over 250 guests and Club President Fred Woolley (*West Acre 1957³*) accepting an honour from the FA in recognition of the Club's longevity. Fred has now stepped down from his role as President to be replaced by Mike Keenan (*West Acre 1962³*), but one cannot imagine his devotion to the cause will be in any way diminished next season. The Charles Clover Brown Award went to David Lederman and Ed Martins won the Young Player of the Year Award, a new trophy to be presented annually in memory of the late and much loved Robert Worthy (*The Grove 1968³*).

Rudy de Oliveira (*Bradlys 2000³*) organised a hugely enjoyable four-day tour to Berlin over Easter with a tour party whose ages ranged from 18 to over 50! Special mention must go to Johnny Williams (*West Acre 1976³*), whose five-minute cameo appearance proved once again that whilst form is temporary, class remains permanent...

Finally, next season Fred Richardson will be taking over the reins as Club Secretary following the surprisingly organised efforts of Paul Molloy, so anyone wishing to train or play with the Club should get in touch with him, all details can be found on the club website: www.ohafc.com

DAVID LEDERMAN (*NEWLANDS 1988³*)

HARROW WANDERERS NEED BOOST FROM RECENT SCHOOL TALENT TO MAKE PROGRESS

A spate of wet weather did nothing to dampen the start of the Harrow Wanderers season. A win against the Harrow 1st XI on Speech Day, with a number of very recent leavers on the Wanderers teamsheet, was a fitting reminder of the strength of the School in recent years, which, it is hoped, will strengthen the Wanderers for the coming seasons in the Cricketer Cup. However, it was a fine knock of 96 by a not so recent leaver, Rupert Harmsworth (*Moretons 1997³*), that put the game beyond the reach of the School. Wins against The Guards, where the Wanderers chased a mammoth total (in excess of 350) and Lord Carnarvon's XI (where we managed to bowl them out chasing 250 for 235 from 215/1) followed.

Unfortunately, results in the Cricketer Cup were not so favourable. From a potential squad including a handful of players with first class contracts in England and South Africa, only Martin

Walters (*Druries 2004⁴*) was able to play. The opposition were the ever ominous Charterhouse Friars and, despite the lack of experience in the team, Charterhouse were held until the last over before they hit the winning run. Special mention should go to Will Spencer (*The Knoll 2002³*) and Hamish Morrison (*Druries 1999³*) who bowled their overs of spin for very few runs, but also to Will Jones (*Bradlys 2003³*) whose keeping was exemplary whilst also contributing well with the bat.

The Northern Tour started in the usual nervous fashion at Newby Hall, with the home team taking advantage of their "local knowledge" of the conditions. It took a few drinks to settle the nerves on the first evening and subsequently the Wanderers won their last two games comfortably. Special mention should be made of the glorious century scored by Tom Tennant (*Rendalls 2004³*) against Aysgarth on the final day. CHARLIE REID

WORLD DOUBLES TITLE FALLS TO FOSTER PARTNERSHIP

Stout resistance by holders Neil Smith and Mark Hubbard proved unavailing as they lost their Lacoste World Rackets Doubles Championship to Harry Foster and Mark Hue Williams by 7 games to 5. Harry Foster started the first game playing as if he had a train to catch, dominating the court. The challengers went to a 6/0 lead before losing serve. The Champions, trailing by 2 games to 4 from the first leg and by 70 aces (points) to 85, then responded well, reaching 7/6 before Smith served a double, allowing Foster back in, and he and Hue Williams took full advantage reaching 12/7 in their next hand, before themselves being pegged back to 10/12. Back in the box they made sure of the 3 points needed to take the game 15/10. The second game followed a similar pattern, the challengers taking it by the same score.

Up to now the rackets had been of a patchy quality with errors being as prevalent as winners. Foster and Hue Williams had served 15 aces, Smith and Hubbard 10. In the next two games the balance was more than reversed, Neil and Mark serving 18 to Harry and Mark's 8. In total Foster had 20 service aces, Mark Hue Williams 8, Neil 22 and Mark Hubbard 11.

In the third game it was as if everybody had woken up, the quality of play improving exponentially, both the professionals in particular playing much better, with some rallies that left the crowd as breathless as the participants. The upshot was that Mark and Neil took the game in a set to five, 18/13. This reverse seemed to really unsettle

the amateurs who began making plenty of unforced errors and the Champions went quickly to a 10/0 lead in the 4th game and then to 12/3 before closing out the game in four hands 15/7.

The fifth game proved to be crucial for the professionals. Leading at 12/5 they had wiped out the points deficit from the first leg and had the initiative, if they had gone on to win the game with the score remaining heavily in their favour, they would surely have remained Champions. Harry and Mark, recovered from their bad patch and having got back in, had a run of six points to level the score and then kept Neil and Mark pointless to win back serve and go to 14/12 and Championship point. The winning post in sight, Mark Hue Williams with what, in most situations, would be a straightforward kill at the front of the court, hit a forehand smartly into the tin. The holders made no such errors, once in the box, they took the 2 points they needed to level the game score at 14 all and then the 3 points to take the set in their next hand, and win the game 17/14.

This left the match nicely poised though the challengers had an obvious advantage. Foster and Hue Williams now needed to win just 7 points to win the Championship, Neil and Mark had to win the game 15/6 or better to retain their title. It was close as far as 4/1 in favour of the holders before Harry took control with a run of five to get to 6/4. Mark made no mistake this time taking the point needed to win the title. DUDLEY MACDONALD