

RUASCC in the Meadows and in the Press

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Abstract

This article has two parts.

The first part contains descriptions of 17 cricket grounds which Reading University Academic Staff Cricket Club has played on. I wrote those pieces in 2002, just before I was advised to retire from sprinting singles.

The second part contains the content of press cuttings about RUASCC performances which have survived in my possession. Unless otherwise stated they appeared in the Reading Chronicle, which is a prominent local newspaper. In some cases one of us wrote them, sometimes me. The dates are sometimes the newspaper dates, not necessarily the match dates. These dates are mainly from the mid-1970s to 1990.

RUASCC in the Meadows : Cricket Grounds Visited by RUASCC

1 Farley Hill

This is a highly favoured ground, enclosed on three sides by pine woods as seen in the photograph, and offering an air of mystery with an uphill approach past a half-hidden water tower before a clearing is glimpsed on the left. The fixture, often in early season, is keenly anticipated as a welcome sign that cricket has really started. With luck, the first cuckoo will be heard. It is a quiet scene, free from the sound of traffic or aeroplanes. The echo of willow on leather bounces off the pine trees, followed not infrequently by the ball itself. An idyllic sunny afternoon can change after tea if the wind rises to wave the tops of the pines, causing a threatening roar against a darkening sky.

The wicket is springy in April, and not easy to bat on. Front foot drives all along the ground are not common, and back foot defence to a leaping ball can leave it in gully's grasp. Fortune often favours the more adventurous pull over midwicket, or the straight drive over the bowler's head. The pitch certainly rewards seam and spin, and batting has to be both watchful and bold. Home players say that the wickets are flatter in June. Perhaps that applies to strips more in the centre of the square, which we do not usually see.



Figure 1: Farley Hill ground

Fielders have to be aware of holes scraped by rabbits, especially nearer the woods. Visibility against dark trees is not always easy: witness the occasion, many years ago, when an off drive towards the paddock sent Bob Pearce, fielding at long off, scurrying in the opposite direction to the line of the ball, prompting a chorus of “The other way, Bob” from several fielders facing that way.

The ground sported an elderly wooden pavilion until about 1985, when it was replaced by the modern brick changing rooms and social area, all very well appointed. Farley Hill have always been an agreeable and capable opposition, with diverse and interesting characters such as Henry Lee and Pinky. They were captained, seemingly in perpetuity, by Leslie Wagstaffe, whose wife always (as it seemed) provided the tea. Eventually the old order changed, but now their son James plays against us, but also for us in other fixtures.

2 Bluecoat School

This is a ground down Sonning Lane with a wide sky, often clear blue. We play an overs match against the School 1st XI, always on a Thursday evening, the last in April or the first in May, and starting at about 4.30. Recently it has been 20 overs per side, sometimes 25, and it has been 30 in the distant past. I have memories of Mike Butler and others chasing 180+, and getting it. There can be so much light there. Rarely does it rain. If there are moving streets of cumulus in the distance, as the Sun declines over Shepherd’s Hill, that just adds to the pageant. It can be a magical evening, especially if we win as well. Huge chestnuts, in flower, stand beyond the boundary, square of the wicket.

The schoolboys are capable, keen and voluble. They encourage each other, and sometimes have players of county standard for their age group in their side. They display an interesting range of talents, and levels of maturity and immaturity (as do RUASCC).

The wicket and outfield are a pleasure to play on, being true and well prepared. Compared with some grounds, the distance behind the wicket to the boundary is short, and

significantly shorter than the boundary distance square of the wicket. This situation invites a straight drive from the batsman, especially over the bowler's head for six, to clear the internal road and go into the bushes. Traffic on the road needs to beware. Such opportunities for batsmen can be enhanced when only four or five overs per bowler are permitted, because then the bowling side perhaps cannot rely solely on its best bowlers. This is another test for the captain.

We did once play on another field in the School grounds, on the artificial pitch by the rugby grounds nearer to the School buildings. This was a match against a team of Dutchmen, who were on a cricket tour in England arranged by Michael Petry, a former pupil at Bluecoat currently teaching in Holland. We did win. This was hailed, in particular by Mike Pursglove, as another first for RUASCC. It was the first time we had beaten a Dutch side before Easter. Notwithstanding their defeat, they were cheerful, and they repaired to the local pub to consume a whole Edam cheese which they had brought with them across the sea, with their own liquor. Apparently this was their normal mode of fortification after every match. The landlord at The Bull was said, by Richard Tranter, to be less than amused.

3 Owls

This is the name of a team of subalterns fielded from those attending a one year course at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. The game was always on their ground, and the fixture is a long-standing one dating back to 1965, but discontinued just recently. Two or three grounds have been used there.

In the later 1960s and early 1970s the game was played at Minley Manor, on a ground of some antiquity constructed in a delectable clearing in pine woods just south of the A30, a mile or two outside Camberley. The pavilion was an old wooden structure with splintered floorboards, perhaps dating from the 1920s. The walls were decorated with photographs of previous Owls sides, explicitly named, so that one was aware of playing in the shadows of such luminaries as Lieutenant Montgomery and Captain Alexander. A confident gentlemanly ethos was somehow conveyed by the opposition, but this was spiced on occasion by the burly and bustling Corporal Coote, who came into bat with broad bare forearms and a manner to match. Alison Ansell was first seen supporting RUASCC, and one member of it in particular, on this ground.

Unfortunately the British Army found that it needed new barracks accommodation, and since the facility at Minley Manor offered flat ground, that was obviously the place to site a substantial new building. So the cricket ground and its setting were lost. The fixture then moved to pitches within the confines of the RMC itself. The usual ground there is a very pleasant one, the playing surface sloping upwards slightly from the pavilion, with trees and houses beyond the boundary fence. The main College buildings are nearby.

Opening the batting on one occasion, on this ground, I became aware that the opposition skipper (perhaps a First Lieutenant) was setting the field with such phrases as "Jim, short leg", "Major, would you do cover point?", "Colonel, would you be kind enough to field at square leg? Is that alright?" and so on. It made me think that when we fielded, perhaps I should be saying "Senior Lecturer, could you take mid-on?" and "Dean, could you be persuaded to open the bowling?". When Mike Biddiss took a wicket, Mike Pursglove was quick to point out that this was the first wicket taken for RUASCC by a Dean.

The opposition was always hospitable, with tea brought to the pavilion, and beer there afterwards. Playing against Owls was an interesting sociological phenomenon. The sides were usually evenly matched. Some security considerations had to be satisfied to get into

the College grounds. I believe team names had to be faxed in advance, so that the names could be checked at the gate. Those who traveled with Peter Fitzgerald could be sure that he would adopt a strong Irish accent when giving his name to the armed squaddie at entry.

On a rather recent occasion, when Isobel Ridge was in our side, I informed the Owls skipper as we walked out to toss that “We have a lady playing for us today”. His firmly restrained reply “Oh, yes” suggested to me that this was a phenomenon with which Owls had not previously been obliged to deal. She opened the bowling with a six over spell, which was treated with noticeable respect. Perhaps it would have been unfortunate to get out to a lady. Eventually the game got away from us, and when we came to the last twenty overs we still needed a hundred runs with only five wickets left. When Isobel went in at number seven, I said to her “Isobel, I do not want to lose”. She batted out the last twenty overs against the might of the British Army, and we did not lose. Delicious.

4 Shiplake College

This was an attractive fixture, always played on a Thursday afternoon in late May, and always at the College ground, against a combined team of the School staff and senior boys called the Shiplake College Wanderers. It was popular with members of RUASCC since its inception in 1968, but it has not taken place for fifteen years or more now. The spacious ground faces the Caversham-Henley road, with tall trees on two sides. We used a wooden pavilion on the side furthest from the road, but this has now been replaced by a substantial block of brick buildings, of which changing rooms are just a part. It is a large outfield, encouraging some big hitting, not least by the opposition for our fielders to chase into the open spaces.

The two teams were evenly matched. The moving spirit at Shiplake was John Eggar, the Head Master. He was a keen player and welcoming host, and a former player with (and, I believe, captain of) Derbyshire. I first saw him in that previous manifestation in the late 1940s when, as a schoolboy, I went to Trent Bridge to see Notts play Derbyshire and others. Shiplake is not the only school where a cricketing Head Master has been a guarantee of an outfield and pitch of good quality. RUASCC had to contend with quick opening bowling by the boys, followed by the guile of spin from several members of the staff.

The latter included Eric Russell, who had played as a batsman for England, against the 1963 West Indies, I think. Plainly he knew how to clip a loose one through mid-wicket. He always wore his England cap during games, so it was a moment to be savoured when one faced a bowler who had just handed an England cap to the umpire for temporary safe keeping. (Even more to be savoured was the scoring of a century against him, in 1978). John Eggar came to Reading to present (RUASCC with) the Sir George Edwards Trophy when we hosted the competition in 1979, which was also John’s retirement year. Sadly he died on a tennis court not many years later.

5 Back Pitch at Elmhurst Road

This was the Reading University cricket ground at Elmhurst Road behind the pavilion. The Sports Hall now stands on it. It was used by the RUCC (student) 2nd and 3rd XIs, and also regularly by RUASCC even during term time when we thought of it as our home ground. It was said to have been instituted in the more distant past as a ground for women students, without a specifically prepared cricket square but merely some mown strips. I have played on it since 1967. In the early 1980s the University conceived the idea of building a Sports Hall on the ground. There were strong objections, not least by the residents of Elmhurst Road, who did not want their fine southerly outlook to be blighted by a huge



Figure 2: Back Pitch at Elmhurst Road 1985

brick wall, and a Public Enquiry was held, but the objections were overruled. The Planning Inspector who chaired the Enquiry made it clear that cricket was an irrelevant consideration, notwithstanding the “village green” atmosphere which was referred to. So one sports facility was replaced by a different one in 1985. [The grounds at Bulmershe, and between Queen’s Drive and Chancellor’s Drive, both suffer from wide exposure, distant changing facilities, and pitches which can be dangerous].

In fact the back pitch was a ground of great charm, clearly shown by the two photographs of a game being played on it in September 1985, at the end of its life. These photographs make clear what was lost. There was room to accommodate several pitches of good standard, running perpendicular to Elmhurst Road. A pleasant line of mature trees, including chestnuts, stood along each boundary behind the wickets. Even though the ground was on the small side (less so square with the wicket), it was entirely viable. It was made more so in its later years when the groundsman erected a high net to protect Elmhurst Road from the big hitters. (This groundsman was John Smith, a sharp Sonning wicket-keeper, who later moved to look after the Saffrons ground at Eastbourne). Before that, it was not unusual for the ball to be rattled up against the front doors shown in the snowy 1981-2 photograph, to be followed by fielders searching the front gardens. Having hit the ball high over the bowler’s head, one watched with some concern to see if it would hit a pedestrian or cyclist (I never saw it do that). Cars were sometimes struck, and on at least one occasion the ball landed in a lorry and was never seen again. There must be many other grounds around the country which are similarly close to roads, such as Wisborough Green on the A272. The fourth picture of the back pitch shows Mike Sewell and Alan Robiette leaving the ground in the gloaming in September 1985 after the last match on that ground, with the Squash Courts in the background, soon to be replaced by the Sports Hall.

Older members of RUASCC will remember, with misty eye, many fine deeds done on the back pitch. “Knowlson’s Nelson” was crafted there in 1978. Jim Knowlson, bred in Derbyshire, was my batting partner for many years. “Who’s opening, Jim and the Professor?” would be the regular question from Paddy, the retired porter from the Agriculture Department, who often came to watch us. Jim was tenacious, and feared not to get his head over the ball (no helmets in those days, either). “What shall we do about all those people waiting to bat, Jim?”. “They must wait, Mike”. David Petherick, a research student in pig husbandry, was strong enough to be switched on as our opening quick bowler, and



Figure 3: Back Pitch at Elmshurst Road 1985

left for twenty overs without tiring. David Ansell's pick-up over mid-wicket would regularly land in the back garden of the house on the corner with Shinfield Road. When I began to set a field on one occasion, I encountered the Senior Lecturer in Agricultural Economics and the Senior Lecturer in History of Art both stationing themselves at mid-on, with the former saying to the latter: "Bugger off". It seems that mid-on is the place favoured by those whose fleetness of foot is not what it was. Our first fixture against Warborough in 1979, which has ever since been a much valued game at home and on their own attractive ground, sticks in the mind. They declared at 184 for 3 on the back pitch, thinking that might be enough. I opened with Mike Butler, and we won by 10 wickets. Mike scored a century, one of many for us, and Warborough wondered what they had encountered. But we have retained the fixture ever since.

6 Coppid Hall

This is the name of a ground, within the estate of a large house of that name, where we have played against Prestcold since 1998. The ground is only a mile from the extremity of Caversham, at Binfield Heath, but magically situated as if it were in the quiet depth of the Chilterns. It is surrounded by woodland and undulating paddocks, with a bright view looking downwards towards the south-west, where unseen Reading feels miles away.

There are two mature trees within the playing area, so twice as many as was at Canterbury. One is a pink chestnut, in bloom when we play there in the middle of May, and only the length of another pitch behind the wicket-keeper at one end. The other is a huge ancient cedar, near the boundary, having three adjacent trunks, each six or eight feet in girth, and with many large branches lopped from one of them in the distant past. The local rule is two runs if one hits a tree, which is frustrating if the ball only clips the leaves before crossing the boundary.

Rabbit scrapes are a hazard for fielders, and a six by the opposition over mid-on went, it was said by scattering spectators, directly down a rabbit hole. It was a new ball, provided by the hosts, and spades were brought out of the pavilion. But an hour's digging by the supporters failed to find it.

Fielders, and umpires, can be pleasantly distracted by the cuckoo calling in the woods, by the red kites sailing overhead, by glimpses of polo being practised in the next field, and by the galloping of fifteen excited (and coated) horses kicking their heels in adjoining paddocks.

The pavilion, marked "Pav" on the 1:25000 map, is new, with water but not electricity. It is a very pleasant ground on which to watch cricket.

7 Peppard

This is the home ground, just beyond Sonning Common towards Peppard Hill, of an opposition team of long standing. Rotherfield Peppard, usually just called Peppard, is an old club, sporting a photograph of their 1880s team, with some smiling young faces and several bats, in their 1952 pavilion. For at least 30 years past Andy Bryant has been prominent in marshalling a team together to play against us there (and sometimes also at Stoke Row).

The ground is glimpsed through trees which surround three sides of it, eucalypts rustling among them. The fourth side is adorned by a couple of large houses, one nineteenth century or earlier, and one twentieth. From these the ground surface slopes steadily away, with a drop ultimately of twelve feet or more, to some woods in the distance. So it is not unlike Lords' in that respect, but different in others.

It has a large square, well supplied therefore with wickets. Usually we play on the upper part opposite the pavilion. This means that the gardens of the houses are well within range of sixes to mid-wicket, which they frequently receive. Nor is the car park next to the pavilion safe from sixes to long on, and it is advisable to park one's car with that danger in mind.

The pitch is often on the soft side of firm, and it can repay bowlers of seam and spin. Contests have been keen and good tempered, even if, on one occasion, tea has been postponed for an over or two after the agreed time so that a batsman could complete a century. But we have been able to respond with energy, and one remembers Rupert Loader, during his eight year captaincy, hitting good scores there.

This is another Chilterns ground where the red kite is to be seen lazily skirting right round the field at tree tops height.

8 Reading School

The ground on Erleigh Road is one of the best cricket fields in Berkshire. The quality of the playing surface, combined with the architectural ambience provided by the Victorian school buildings on one side, a tree-lined internal drive, and prosperous villas in the middle distance, offer a splendid setting. For over 30 years, since 1969, RUASCC has played a Wednesday afternoon match in early June against Reading School All Stars, a team composed mostly of schoolmasters, with three or four senior boys. The scene is enlivened by spectators on the main school terrace, when boys come out at the end of afternoon school, and by boarders waiting for their supper bell later in the day, often punting a rugger ball about.

For about ten years in the 1970's Tony (A.T.) Davis was simultaneously Head Master, and Captain of Berkshire C.C.C. He was a man who was able to give the impression that his eye could see into every corner of his areas of responsibility, even when he was not physically present, and perhaps it was no surprise that the School staff contained so many able cricketers. Every year we looked forward to our annual meeting on the field with the likes of Roy Perkins, John Vaughan, Michael Evans, Dickie Owen and others. Dickie Owen is a wicket-keeper who stands up (like Godfrey Evans to Alec Bedser) to everything but the quickest, and he will take the bails off in a flash if the batsman tries to take liberties. There is often good natured conversation on the field. Roy Perkins was an undergraduate pupil of mine at Nottingham University in the early 1960's, and he has just retired from

Head of Mathematics at Reading School. A capable opening batsman himself, he would not hesitate to offer the comment from slip, when I reached 50, that “All right, that’s enough then”.

Of course, I begged to differ, and on one occasion managed to score a century there. It is a very satisfying feeling to walk home from a Reading School match with a hundred under one’s belt.

The pitch rewards quick bowling, but has even bounce and will also take some spin, so there is something for everyone. It is a high scoring ground. Starting at 2.00 p.m. with tea at 5.00 p.m., the optimum target would be about 225. A few more than that would allow the side having scored it to feel reasonably secure. Many less than that, however, would leave a quite uneasy feeling that the target was attainable. In the years when we had all-rounders of the quality of Graham Dalton or (later) Martin Avis for example, some excellent challenges were set, and taken up.

I can recall a fascinating passage of play more recently, when Ian Carpenter produced a very fine spell of outswing bowling from the School end. I was captain for the day, and it gradually became clear that the batsmen just could not work the ball onto the leg side of the wicket. So I gradually moved fielders across into the slips and gullies until I had only one fielder (Isobel Ridge) on the entire leg side, at square leg. Then from mid-off I was finally able to say “Isobel, it’s all yours”. Only once did I need to run across to pick up something at mid-on. One of my Reading mathematics tutees from the 1990’s, John Bonnywell, currently captains the All Stars side with confidence.

The considerable damage to tiles on its roof show how much the pavilion has been peppered by pulls to mid-wicket. I believe a reward was on offer at one time, from the Head Master, to anyone who could hit the pavilion clock, but I never saw evidence that it was won. Other inviting targets are the Alexandra Road back gardens behind the pavilion, and the main School terrace which can be reached with a straight six. A big one can hit the School, and I seem to recall a story that, long ago, the New Zealander Martin Donnelly hit one over the School.

9 Royal Ascot

The Royal Ascot Cricket Club has its ground inside the famous Racecourse. We played regular pleasant games against them, home and away, in the 1970s and 1980s, although the fixture has not taken place since that time. Familiar characters appeared for them, year after year, some of whom were older, even, than some of us. There were also some younger tyros, again perhaps not unlike some of us. So the contests were well matched, and it was good to greet old friends each year. In 1982, for example, we scored 96 all out, and lost by two wickets. Mike Pursglove, bowling leggies on a damp April wicket, with, as always, a deep square leg (“right on the line”), took 5 for 12, so it must have been exciting.

The ground has a heathland aspect, with more than a suggestion of a sandy character. It had rabbit scrapes in the outfield, and is surrounded by patches of gorse. There is a pavilion with proper facilities. The ground can only be reached, however, by crossing the Racecourse, on the eastern side. On race days this means that access must be gained in good time, and it is better not to finish the match early. Television coverage of the main Royal Ascot race meeting in June sometimes shows fleeting glimpses of the ground, or of the pavilion, although it helps if one knows where to look. From the cricket field the land rises to the south where the main stands and the clocktower are situated.

A good shot, or a wicket brilliantly taken, can sometimes be accompanied by a crescendo of cheering if it is a race day, but the propagator of such a deed needs to be ready to remind



Figure 4: Main Pitch at Elmshurst Road in February 1981

himself of the possible ambiguity of such plaudits.

10 The Main Pitch at Elmshurst Road

This is the principal University cricket field, upon the outfield of which, in the winter, hockey and lacrosse are also played. It is a most attractive situation, between the pavilion (often called the Aths Pav) on the west side, and a large clump of mature trees on the eastern boundary. These often receive sixes when the wicket is pitched towards that side of the wide square. Tennis courts and a former farm lie to the north, from which the land falls quickly away down into the town and the Thames valley itself, with distant views of even higher ground rising up beyond. The photograph was taken looking north-eastwards, during a pause in the cricket in 1981. To the south there is an open view over a gentle incline downwards past tennis courts and “the field with the horse in it” (as it used to be called universally, for an evident reason, in the 1960s and 1970s; but now a car park) bounding Queen’s Drive, before another gentle rise to the former home of the Museum of English Rural Life. So the scale is good, and other University buildings, including halls of residence, academic departments and administrative buildings are visible among trees in the main part of Whiteknights Park, in the middle distance from northeast round to the southeast.

The setting is therefore large enough to give an expansive feel allowing fielders to enjoy the ambience, without being too open, and to offer a taste of all types of weather. Rain clouds can readily be seen when they approach from the west; but having taken shelter in the pavilion, one has to venture round under the trees to the car park to see if a clearance is coming. When it does, a splendid rainbow can often be seen over the trees to the east; then a restart might be promised provided one has previously helped to push the covers over the pitch when the rain came (or, at least, provided others helped to do that when the downpour started). At other times, an April snow shower can be regarded as a drift of

cherry blossom if one is keen to get the season started.

In June and July, in brilliant summer weather, the field is full of runs, and baking hot. This applies either if one is the fortunate batsman, perhaps heating up under a “lid” or helmet, or to the perspiring bowlers and fielders. At lunchtime before the match on such days, when getting the kit together, the player who has passed 50 or 60 years of age may be forgiven for looking forward a little to a time when he may at least “fear no more the heat of the Sun” in that context, and instead pass the afternoon a little more comfortably. A chase for runs after tea may restore a sense of proportion, but can be complicated for the fielding side if a low Sun over the pavilion makes it very hard to see the ball coming from that side of the ground.

Despite these variables, some things stay constant. Statistics show that RUASCC is more likely to win if we bat second. Some captains are smart enough to realise that the side batting second can win without taking all ten wickets. The pitch is unlikely to deteriorate significantly during one afternoon, unless rain-damaged, in which case perhaps we should not be playing on it anyway.

Our current and highly experienced captain, Richard Tranter, is already into his fourth decade playing for RUASCC, having begun in 1974. He has taken over 1000 wickets, a very substantial achievement. Observation of his method, not least on home ground, suggests that coming on to bowl at 3.30 is optimum for a medium pacer. Before that, and the bowler may tire before the end of the innings. Much after that, and the batsmen who have been venturesome may have departed. So perhaps the hour or so before tea is the most likely time to collect wickets. The opportunity is sometimes there to pick up the rabbits, and with luck also the “ferrets, who go in after the rabbits”. But sometimes also a late run chase may have to be contained by the exercise of experience and subtle variation.

RUASCC used to play all three sides of RUCC, the undergraduate student Club. The game against their 1st XI was always stoutly fought, and on the main pitch, but we could never beat what was always a very strong side. I can recall the student skipper, in the early 1970s, fielding at silly mid-off when I was batting; not a juxtaposition which was normal for me. In those years we also played, but on the back pitch, the student 2nd XI, which was often an even and keenly fought game, and also their 3rd XI whom we could usually beat.

A special memory of the main pitch for me is that this is the ground where I scored my very first 50, in 1972 at the advanced age of 38. I reached 88 on that day, against Southampton, and I can recall getting severe cramp in the legs towards the end. Graham Dalton was one of my batting partners. In this period he would not normally play on Sundays because of Methodist preaching duties. One Sunday on which he was persuaded to play, he opened the batting after tea and put us in a good position before rushing off to preach. He returned just before the end, with both duties done, only to be disgusted with the fact that we were losing the plot and the match after all. No doubt this was divine retribution.

As the years went by (after 1967, my first season) the shape of each pitch on the square became more and more bowl-shaped in the centre, rising to two humps at each crease, and then falling away again behind the stumps. This drop was especially pronounced at the south end. There one could play a perfectly respectable late cut, only to find that the shot was caught by a slip fielder standing twelve inches below the level of the batsman’s feet. Eventually the University grasped that nettle and dug up the whole square to a depth of several inches, replacing it by a brand new and level square, which is excellent. This meant that for one whole season, 2000 I think, the cricket field was out of commission while the square was bedding in. No longer do bowlers have a steep run uphill in their last few strides

before delivering the ball.

The University has been well served over the years by three Head Groundsmen in particular, Frank Stokes, John Smith and Mike Arnold, and by a succession of their assistants including the ubiquitous Ron Mullins, all of whom were well disposed and helpful to RUASCC in particular, which we have appreciated. Until very recently RUASCC used the ground as a free University facility available to its academic staff, but now the Club has to pay a charge to the University for each use of the field. Some wish that the state of the kitchen facilities in the pavilion, for preparing teas, could have been improved over the past 36 years, but it has not.

In October 2002 the name of RUASCC was changed from Reading University Academic Staff Cricket Club to Reading University Alumni and Staff Cricket Club. This reflects more accurately the current situation. It has seemed a natural and welcome evolution, over the years, that first of all postgraduates in the 1970s, and then alumni in the 1990s, began to play important roles in the side, as well as academic staff.

11 Leighton Park School

This is one of the most attractive grounds where RUASCC plays, against Leighton Park School and also, more recently, against Michael Beer's XI. It adjoins Shinfield Road, within the angle made by Pepper Lane. So it lies at the proverbial stone's throw from the University, and it is therefore as convenient as playing at home. Approaching through the trees along the internal drive, from the secondary Shinfield Road entrance, one finds the pavilion, and the view suddenly opens out onto the sylvan field. Across it is seen a small copse containing cedars, on the far side, with the main School buildings beyond. This is the view shown in the 1978 photograph by a schoolboy, John Peel, taken on 24th June. Some trees have been lost from this copse over the years, but enough remain to conceal the ball for some minutes, when it is hit to the boundary backwards of square leg.

The internal road itself continues parallel to Shinfield Road, but hidden by a row of tall trees into which the ball is frequently dispatched, after an off-drive through the covers, or a pull to mid-wicket at the other end of the pitch. The pavilion itself has upstairs changing rooms, scorers' room and verandah, with a social room downstairs. It was built in 1934 (the same year as the author, and perhaps in similar need of repair; but it will last longer).

The pitch has always been on the slow side, but true, and the square was looked for many years with what is now called TLC by Brian Reed, the School groundsman, before he departed to Basingstoke. The wise batsman will make very sure that his hands are well over the ball when off-driving, otherwise a catch in the covers from a lofted drive will result. The western boundary by the trees is an inviting target, and it can easily be reached with a well-timed shot. The straight distances are inviting too, as is, for a pull-shot for example, the wide expanse slightly downhill in the Pepper Lane direction.

Leighton Park School have always provided an interesting and able opposition, if a noisy one in recent years. The modern custom is evidently to generate substantial mutual vocal encouragement when fielding, of course within earshot of the batsman. He will be well advised to smile to himself, and exhibit no reaction except to dispatch the bad ball to the boundary. The wicket, being slow, encourages the use of spin bowlers, and it is interesting to face these schoolboy spinners, and see how they are deployed.

First, though, an energetic fast attack has to be faced. One of these fast bowlers was Julian Wood, who played for the School as a 14-year-old. He was a prolific opening batsman too, who subsequently played for Hampshire, and later became captain of Berkshire. I can recall opening the batting with Jim Knowlson at Leighton Park in the mid-1980s, and Jim

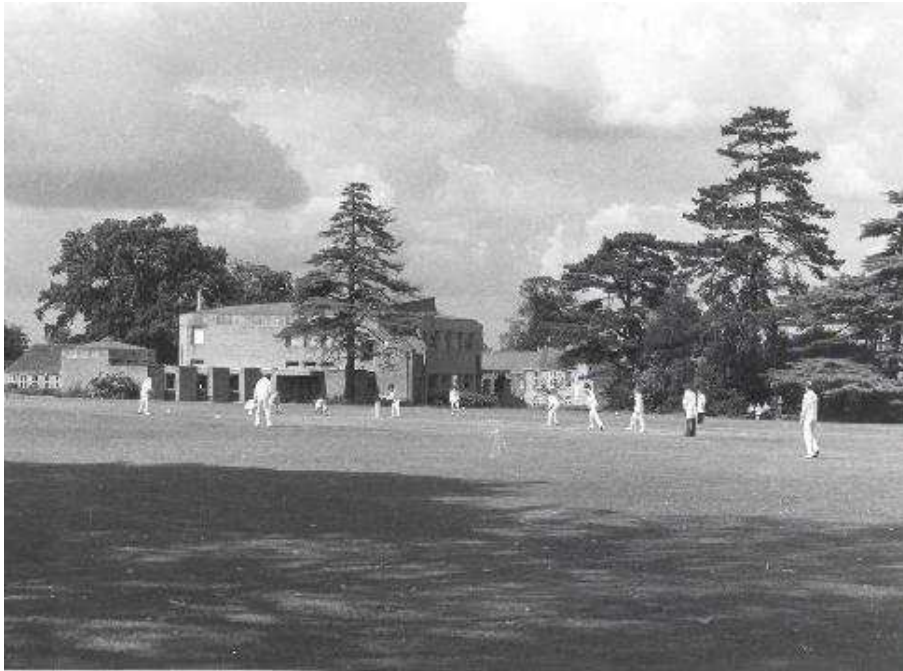


Figure 5: Leighton Park School 1978

was forced to retire after a nasty blow on the thumb from Julian. Jim returned ninety minutes later, saying that he still could not hold the bat, but he fought to make the best of it.

On one occasion in that period I arrived at the ground for the game, to be greeted by the Deputy Head with the remark that “I believe they are bringing a Professor with them”, while his eyes were searching the horizon behind me. I did not turn round to join the search.

Michael Beer’s XI contains a variety of his friends and business contacts, all there on the basis that if one says that one is available, then one plays. I often wondered what would happen if thirteen wicket-keepers turned up, but the arrangement seems to work, and we play friendly games against (presumably) some financial wizards and their friends.

The best place to field at Leighton Park is in the covers, or at mid-wicket, between the pitch and the boundary on the Shinfield Road side. It is like fielding on a smooth lawn, with the Sun behind one’s back and therefore with a pleasant view stretching towards Pepper Lane, and offering an easy sight of the ball, both in the air and when it rolls along the ground.

The 1978 photograph shows RUASCC fielding against Leighton Park School. From left to right we see Peter Fitzgerald (cover point), Roger Loader (gully), Tony Giles (cover), Jim Knowlson (slip), David Ansell (wicket keeper), batsman, David Petherick (short leg), Peter Crane (short mid-on), Richard Tranter (bowling), batsman, Mike Butler (our umpire), School umpire, Mike Sewell (mid-off and captain), with two more fielders out of picture. In this season we had the policy of selecting twelve players, and the twelfth man, taken in turns, would agree to be umpire for the day.

12 Surrey University

The sports fields of the University of Surrey at Guildford lie just off the A3 on the southwestern edge of the town, and within sight of Guildford Cathedral. They include two cricket fields, purpose made perhaps forty years ago by leveling out two flat areas, one adjacent to a new pavilion, and the second over ten minutes walk away and about six feet higher. So the setting is a rather exposed one, often requiring at least one sweater to keep the breeze at bay, and with the steady sound of distant traffic as a backdrop.

We used to play regular fixtures against the Surrey University Staff side, from 1972 until 1995, on a dual basis. One was the normal annual fixture, and the other was as part of the annual Sir George Edwards Trophy competition which began in 1975. The annual fixture, home or away, was an interesting opportunity to pit our skills against fellow academics from another place. The feeling was that we could usually beat them, or ought to do. We had some strong sides in those years.

One of our enthusiastic players was Peter Fitzgerald, Senior Lecturer in History of Art and Head of that Department. He had the build, short and wideish, which seemed to suit the art of the leg-spinner which he was, with the grey-haired guile to go with it. He ran in at an angle, with a roly-poly run, and not always troubling to check whether the batsman had taken his stance: so sometimes there would be urgent calls of "Wait, Peter!" from the fielders. But he could turn the ball a long way. The joyful smile when he took a wicket was infectious, but there were some capable batsmen to whom his offerings were meat and drink.

He was a real addition to the characters in our side. In one match at Guildford in June 1977 Peter took 5 for 51, and we bowled out Surrey for 77, to win by 84 runs. In that season we sent in match reports to the Reading Chronicle sports editor, and it was fun to see what exaggerated phrases one could get past his scrutiny. I wrote that "leg-spinner Peter Fitzgerald spear-headed the attack that bowled Surrey out in ninety minutes". It passed the censor. "Spear-heading" was not a concept that one would immediately associate with the man; rather, mischievous fun, also to be seen on the tennis court and the table tennis table too.

The second context associated with Surrey Staff cricket was the Sir George Edwards Trophy. This was donated by their Club President and University Pro-Chancellor for a two-day competition between four university staff sides, usually ourselves and Surrey, with two more from Southampton, Exeter, Sussex and King's College London, and hosted in turn at the various grounds. It took place between 1975 and 1991. This was serious cricket, played over 40 overs with no prisoners taken, so win or lose only, with at most 8 overs per bowler. Each Club selected their best players, and very good Southern hemisphere postgraduates were sometimes encountered. We held our own, and won the Trophy several times, in particular at Guildford in 1990 under John Short's captaincy.

When Surrey were the hosts, Sir George Edwards would be present on both days to watch the competition, and to present the Trophy to the winners. He was a man of forthright views with a long career at the top of the aircraft industry behind him. I was present when these views were visited in public on the Surrey captain, Joe Pais, on one occasion when they had lost. "You buggered it up, Joe, you buggered it up". Joe did not have an answer. Sir George died, aged 94, in 2003. His obituary by Peter Masefield in the Independent on 7 March is very informative.

13 Leckford

Leckford is one of the relatively few grounds that RUASCC has visited in Hampshire. That county is very near, of course, just on the south side of Reading, but most of our

fixtures have been in Berkshire, or the nearer part of Oxfordshire in the Chilterns. Perhaps this has been an omission.

Certainly Leckford must be one of the most idyllic grounds where we have played. It was a fixture found in 1966, I believe by Alan Harrison, the skipper who first welcomed me to RUASCC in 1967. The village lies a few miles south of Andover, but we approached it via the A30, turning off onto a minor road marked by the Leckford Hut PH. From the village a winding road heads up a hillside past Leckford Abbas, and the ground is found on the domed top of a Hampshire down, adjacent to some orchards.

The square is placed on a slight slope, and one walks out to bat uphill from the pavilion, which is placed at the side of a wood. The view for the fielders is embellished by the sight of the parabolic dish of a radio telescope, which sits on Chilbolton Down a couple of miles away, gleaming white in the summer sunshine. At one period our fixture was timed to coincide with the ripening of cherries on trees which ringed around the ground, and that provided a felicitous bonus to the scene.

We played friendly fixtures, home and away, against the village side, which usually contained some very capable players with one or two teenage colts. It was a keenly anticipated venue, to which families sometimes came, but regrettably not recently as the last fixture arranged was in 1994.

Games were sometimes enlivened by incidents, one being the dissatisfaction experienced by David Robertson after an umpiring decision went against him. His return to the pavilion was preceded, near the boundary, by his bat, which followed an aerial route for the last ten yards.

But the most famous involved Peter Hotton, who was bowling his busy fast-medium offerings running downhill to the wicket. Just before he reached the bowling crease his white flannels fell down, to reveal a pair of bright red underpants. The batsman complained that the sudden advent of this sight-screen made it difficult for him to sight the (appropriate) ball.

Tony Giles would always be keen to gather a posse to pause at the Leckford Hut on the way home.

14 **Hambleden**

This is the Buckinghamshire Hambleden, not the Hampshire Hambledon which is known as the cradle of cricket. The village is reached by taking the Marlow road out of Henley, along the left bank of the Thames, and turning off northwards at Mill End. The ground is found via a walkers' car park behind the pub. It occupies a wide and shallow slope from the Manor House down to the Hamble Brook, which runs southwards down the valley to the Thames. The family of W.H.Smith, the stationers, own the Manor House and much of the village. They recently put it up for sale but then, I believe, withdrew it again.

The cricket ground occupies an expansive space, overseen by the Manor House uphill to the east, one more field away behind a footpath which borders the ground. The ball is frequently dispatched into the thick hedges which hide this path, square with the wicket. In the opposite direction the ball will run away downhill to the boundary. The view opens out to the south, with water meadows beyond the pavilion, and some tennis courts. Further away to the east and west the view is pleasantly closed by wooded hills forming the sides of the valley.

The square slopes, with the field, but the wicket is true within reason, while giving some help to bowlers, so batting always requires care. Many pleasant games have been enjoyed there, and against the village team on our own ground too, since the fixture began in 1986.

15 Checkendon

This has been a long-standing fixture, home and away, since 1975, against an interesting opposition full of character. The village ground is set between a substantial wood to the east, and a road just past the church to the west. Boundary hits often find trees across the road, along which horse riders therefore have to be alert to the possibility of unwelcome projectiles. The pavilion stands by the wood. Tea is usually taken there, but occasionally in the church hall across the road. The pitch is parallel to the road, and straight drives can reach a hedge which borders a farm track to the south. More open ground lies in the opposite direction, with a distant children's playground, and some houses.

The pitch provides a fair balance between batsman and bowler, and a variety of types of bowler can, and have been, tried. The field can be thought of as a typical Chilterns cricket ground.

For many years the three Powell brothers, Doug, Lou and Lindsey, played against us, with their parents always there to keep the scorebook and help with tea. Plainly Powell Senior had been playing cricket even before some of us. Doug Powell was a capable opening batsman, whose wicket would be prized because, unless he could be prised out, he would threaten a century. The contest between bat and ball was always absorbing. Two Wickens brothers, Matthew and John, added strength to the side. Matthew batted tenaciously and well, and teased us with bouncy spin. John used to open the bowling, partnered at the other end by our own David Petherick, after he began work at a pig farm in the village. This was after his postgraduate pig husbandry course in the University Department of Agriculture. The Agriculture Faculty was a source of strength in providing capable cricketers to RUASCC for many years. Other Checkendon stalwarts included Jack Howe, a slow bowler, Andy Marquis, a free hitting middle order batsman and opening bowler, and Cliff Blackburn, a wicket-keeper/batsman.

The perception arose that there was always keen rivalry in Checkendon games, even "needle" sometimes. The two sides were often very evenly matched. It was quite hard for either side to take all ten wickets. RUASCC sometimes felt that Checkendon declarations were rather long delayed; clearly they did not like to lose. But neither did we, and there was underlying mutual respect, notwithstanding the occasional irritation.

A particular contest within the main match was that some of us did not care to get out to David Petherick, who had bowled so well for us in the past. And he was just as keen to get us out.

On one occasion Mike Biddiss and I were invited to play for Checkendon at Mattingley. David Petherick agreed that this was surely the first time that two professors had played for Checkendon.

16 University College London

The UCL Sports Ground is at Shenley, and it lies a mile or so within the M25, by which it can be reached via junction 22. It is purpose built over several fields, with a modern central pavilion. Our fixture there, against the Academic Staff side of UCL, took place on what is evidently the second cricket field. The pitches are good. The field is set in a larger expanse, bounded behind one bowler by a distant farm enclosed by woodland. At the other end the field runs downhill slightly towards the perimeter of the grounds, where nets are pitched. A long hedge at square leg separates this ground from the primary cricket field. In the opposite direction lies the M25 a couple of miles distant, and the steady sound from that always accompanies the cricket.

We have never played on the main cricket field, which is looked out upon immediately from the pavilion. Plainly it is a high quality field, which hosts more prestigious matches than ours, such as women's internationals, and an occasional Middlesex match. The soccer fields are also used by, for example, Arsenal Football Club for training purposes.

Our UCL opponents are people just like ourselves, idiosyncrasies and all. When the fixture first began in 1975 they were captained by Donald Mann, Warden of International Hall. He was a keen cricketer, and evidently a connoisseur of other prestigious London grounds, such as that of the Honourable Artillery Company in the City. In the early days UCL came to us at Elmhurst Road, and we did not go to them for some reason. On one occasion they missed the M4 junction, and were obliged to travel on to Newbury before returning for the game. Eventually we were persuaded by Donald to travel to Shenley, which we did for several years. Donald's son, rather than he, was playing for them most recently. John Bloodworth was their regular opening batsman, and difficult to remove. And like us, UCL sported a variety of bowlers, some of them postgraduates, and some with assorted attire. The fixture has been in abeyance since 1998. Perhaps the character of their side, like ours, has been changing in recent years.

17 Wellington College

On a Thursday evening in the second half of June each year RUASCC would prepare to assemble for a limited overs match against Wellington Schoolmasters, or Occasionals, from 1979 to 2002. This was a team of diverse skills, but usually with some able cricketers, and sometimes a few schoolboys. When it took place it was a game with genuine interest, and normally of 20 overs per side. It was not infrequently cancelled at the last minute, if not because of lack of availability of players, then because of thundery rain which seemed to be a regular threat to an evening fixture in that part of June.

Wellington College is at Crowthorne, and it can be reached, for example, via the road across Finchampstead Ridges which leads down an avenue of giant conifers called Wellingtonias. The main school drive is called The Kilometre, and cricket grounds adjoin it at both ends. The one at the far (south-eastern) end is pleasantly surrounded by trees, and with a small pavilion. We have played there several times. Nearer to the main school buildings is the principal pavilion. This serves the main cricket square (where we have never played) and a side pitch.

We once played on the latter against an extremely strong batsman who demonstrated his ability to drive the ball over the pavilion, a very dramatic shot. This side pitch in fact had an excellent surface, so hard that it was almost polished, and very true. One of our team christened it a "Bangalore special", and deemed it to be constructed specially so that the "young gentlemen" could be instructed in their forward defensive shot without fear of getting the ball on the nose.

The orientation of that pitch, on a June evening with bowling from the north-west, meant that the ball came straight out of the Sun. Nevertheless I vividly recall a limited overs match in 1991 in which we were set a target of about 120, and Steve Pinder and I knocked the runs off in 16 overs, notwithstanding some fast stuff out of the Sun from an over-zealous opposition captain who kept himself on too long.

The most common venue, however, was across the railway tracks, in a large expanse called Derby Field, which had its own pavilion by Crowthorne railway station.

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Author

The author of the present two-part piece, Michael Sewell, retired from playing umpired cricket at the end of the 2002 season, having played for 55 seasons, beginning with the King's School Grantham Under 14 XI in the 1948 season. He played for Reading University Academic Staff for 36 seasons from 1967, and scored nearly 20000 runs for them, including four centuries, and with an average of about 33. His best season was 1982, when he scored 1439 runs in 40 innings with an average of 45. He often opened the batting. He was Captain of RUASCC in the seasons 1978 to 1981. He is Emeritus Professor of Applied Mathematics at The University of Reading.

Mike Sewell was a member of Grantham Cricket Club from 1944 to 1953, and he was Captain of Cricket at King's School Grantham in 1953. He played as an undergraduate and postgraduate at Nottingham University from 1953 to 1963. At Bristol University he played for the Academicals from 1963 to 1966, before moving to a Readership in Reading University Mathematics Department.

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RUASCC in the Press : Some RUASCC Published Performances

The Week's **Top Twenty Cricketers** on 19 June 1974 in the Reading Chronicle Sports Section included, in the Batting section, Sewell 65 and Knowlson 50.

RUASCC v Reading Lawyers (29/6/74). Match drawn. Reading Lawyers paid dearly for several dropped catches early in the University Staff innings. Lawyers made a good attempt to get the runs with Morgan (54) and Carpenter (31 not out) striking fine blows. The last few overs were tense but the match ended in a draw. University Staff 161 for 4 (Knowlson 50, Sewell 65, Ansell 15, Robertson 30, Loader 0 not out, Extras 1). Reading Lawyers 156 for 6 (Seymour 8, Aram 4, Roberts 21, Morgan 54, Walker 16, Carpenter 31 not out, Eatwell 6, Macarthur 6 not out, Extras 7).

RUASCC v Caversham (26/4/75). Caversham won by 7 wickets. Caversham cruised to their first win of the season thanks to a splendid innings of 46 not out by Malcolm Marshall. The University Staff were all out for 62 and it seemed just a formality for Caversham to score the required runs for victory. However, they lost their first two wickets for only two runs. But then Marshall came in and within half an hour he had taken his side to victory. University Staff 62 (Knowlson 0, Sewell 14, Robertson 9, Dalton 0, Loader 1, Giles 10, Heslehurst 1, Pearce 0, Ansell 5, Robiette 1 not out, Robinson 5, Extras 16; Jewell 16 - 7 - 17 - 5, Bowyer 14 - 5 - 27 - 5). Caversham 66 for 2 (Mathews 1, Taylor 0, Fenty 0, Marshall 46 not out, Bowyer 17 not out, Extras 2).

RUASCC v Reading Lawyers (28/6/75). It is not often for a side playing afternoon cricket to score 213 for 1 and then lose, but this is what Reading Lawyers did on Saturday. Messenger (100 not out) and M. Aram (86 not out) hammered the bowling all round the ground. It was Messenger's second hundred in two days. However, the University Staff were not to be outplayed and they batted with great skill to win with a couple of overs to spare. Messenger was the only bowler all afternoon who worried the batsmen.

Reading Lawyers: R. Aram c Knowlson b Dalton 13, M. Aram not out 86, Messenger not out 100, Extras 14, Total (1 wkt) 213 dec.

Reading University Staff: Sewell b Messenger 64, Heslehurst b Messenger 66, Ansell b Messenger 10, Dalton b Messenger 30, Butler not out 21, Knowlson run out 3, Walker not out 9, Extras 11, Total (5 wkts) 214. Messenger 8 - 0 - 37 - 4.

RUASCC v Caversham (24/4/76). Match drawn. Good knocks by Caversham's front line batsmen enabled them to declare at tea for 204 for 7. Although this was a very good total on a very dry wicket, University batsmen soon made it their intention to chase the score. At one stage it looked as if they would score the necessary runs with time to spare, but when they lost Sewell Caversham took another two quick wickets and slowed the run rate. Only G.Dalton seemed capable of scoring the remaining runs, but even he was too late and they were still nine runs short of victory at the end.

Caversham: Matthews 39, Emmons 27, Norris 28, Marshall 1, Rumble 17, Walker 35, Max 18, Harewood not out 6, Extras 33, Total 204 for 7 dec; Dalton 10 - 1 - 30 - 1, Giles 9 - 2 - 35 - 3, Giddings 6 - 0 - 14 - 1, Robeson 3 - 0 - 9 - 1.

RUASCC: Sewell 60, Loader 28, Ansell 26, Crampton 11, Dalton 22 not out, Tranter 18 not out, Extras 31, Total 196 for 4; Harewood 14 - 2 - 32 - 1, Emmons 7 - 0 - 35 - 2, Walker 6 - 1 - 28 - 1.

The Week's **Top Twenty Cricketers** on 13 June 1976 included, in the Batting section, Sewell 73.

RUASCC v Leckford (12/6/76). Leckford won by seven wickets. RUASCC 156 for 8 dec (Sewell 73, Robeson 22 not out). Leckford 159 for 3 (Budd 74, Andrews 31).

RUASCC v Allen and Unwins (13/6/76). Draw. RUASCC 232 for 7 dec (Ansell 102, Sewell 52, Pearce 32; Thornton 5 for 47). Allen and Unwins 197 for 8 (Stretfield 102 not out, Anderson 16; Knowlson 4 for 73).

RUASCC v Club Captain's (RU) XI (22/6/76). Draw. University won the toss and elected to bat. An excellent 101 from Blease, supported by Straker-Nesbitt, Denham and Northcote-Green, enabled a declaration at 227 for seven. This left the opposition 75 minutes plus 20 overs to get the runs. A slow start, due to tight bowling from Northcote-Green, made RUASCC behind time. They were almost bowled out at the end, but hung on for a draw.

Club Captain's XI: Straker-Nesbitt c Tranter b Bird 34, Blease lbw b Giles 101, Northcote-Green b Gaskell 33, Street b Gaskell 2, Denham not out 30, Milner lbw b Giles 30, Tizzard c Rogers b Thomas 8, Taylor c Knowlson b Thomas 0, Edwards not out 2, Extras 11, Total (7 wkts dec) 227.

RUASCC: Sewell st Taylor b Milner 22, Gaskell c Taylor b Cannings 6, Butler c Cannings b Edwards 19, Rogers c Taylor b Edwards 2, Ansell run out 4, Tranter c Tapping b Milner 0, Knowlson not out 8, Bird not out 25, Giles c Street b Milner 3, Extras 4, Total (7 wkts) 104; Milner 9 - 2 - 24 - 2.

Reading University Staff v Reading Lawyers (26/6/76). Match drawn. A draw rather flattered the Lawyers. Fielding in uncomfortable heat, the Lawyers did well to restrict the University Staff to 153 all out, despite a good innings from Ansell. A slow start placed an impossible burden upon the Lawyers' middle order batting and the inability to get on top of Nixon resulted in the Lawyers scrambling a fortunate draw.

Reading University Staff: Sewell lbw b Macarthur 16, Loader b M.Seymour 7, Ansell c Atcam b Morgan 69, Crampton lbw b Macarthur 0, Pearce c P.Seymour b Seddon 31, Giles lbw b Seddon 0, Wright lbw b Seddon 2, Nixon b Morgan 1, Robeson b M.Seymour 12, Pursglove b M.Seymour 3, Petherick not out 1, Extras 11, Total 153. M.Seymour 10.1 - 5 - 20 - 3, Seddon 9 - 2 - 31 - 3, Morgan 5 - 1 - 17 - 2.

Reading Lawyers: Aram st Pearce b Nixon 26, Carpenter c Giles b Nixon 23, Hawkins b Giles 4, Hutt b Nixon 12, Morgan c Ansell b Nixon 3, P.Seymour c Robeson b Nixon 7, Chase c and b Nixon 6, M. Seymour b Pursglove 12, Macarthur b Nixon 7, Davies not out 0, Seddon not out 0, Extras 15, Total (9 wkts) 115. Nixon 10 - 0 - 33 - 7, Giles 8 - 0 - 19 - 1.

Reading University Staff v Woodley (5/6/76). Woodley proved too strong for Reading University Staff and emerged with a six wicket victory. The University Staff batted first and lost their first four men quickly, but Knowlson and Giles made a good stand against the bowling of Wood and O'Donnell. Once these two were out, the remaining batsmen offered only token resistance and the University side were dismissed for 115. Openers Scoones and Brown gave Woodley a good start and then Paige weighed in with a well made 30 before Norris and Wood saw their side home with six wickets in hand.

Reading University Staff: Sewell b Paige 0, Pearce c Brown b Rossiter 11, Smith b Scoones 3, Crampton st Mountjoy b Cornthwaite 8, Knowlson c O'Donnell b Wood 41, Giles c Mountjoy b Medhurst 31, Russell c Brown b O'Donnell 5, Hay c Scones b Wood 1, Robeson not out 1, Wright lbw b Wood 1, Robinson c Medhurst b O'Donnell 2, Extras 12, Total 115. Wood 3 - 2 - 1 - 3, O'Donnell 2.2 - 0 - 6 - 2.

Woodley: Scoones c Hay b Giles 11, Brown c Robinson b Giles 21, Paige c Russell b Robeson 30, Robbins c Wright b Knowlson 13, Norris not out 23, Wood not out 5, Extras 12, Total (4 wkts) 116.

Hurst v RUASCC (24/4/77) Match drawn. This was an evenly balanced match with batsmen fighting to find their touch and bowlers facing a strong breeze from one end. Chasing the target, Reading University Academic Staff lost quick wickets at the end of their innings in trying to keep up with the clock. Hurst 133 for 9 dec (Chater 11, Ford 12, Parr 11, D.Ambrose 23, Weeks 12, Ockwell 14, Jones 2, Smith 9, R.Ambrose 19 not out, Bates 13, Extras 7; Petherick 5 for 41, Tranter 3 for 27). Academic Staff 120 for 9 (Sewell 21, Smith 5, Ansell 6, Rugman 35, Knowlson 14, Loader 3, Tranter 11, Petherick 1, Crampton 4 not out, Norman 2, Pursglove 1 not out, Extras 17; D.Ambrose 4 for 20).

RUASCC beat Reading University 3rd XI by 7 wkts (27/4/77). Reading University 3rd XI 125 (Henderson 65; Petherick 3 for 11, Norman 3 for 21, Pursglove 3 for 28). RUASCC 126 for 3 (Banister 35, Fisher 31, Edwards 27 not out, Pearce 21).

RUASCC v Caversham (30/4/77) Caversham won by 24 runs. A fine innings of 60 from Fenty, coupled with good knocks from Bowyer and Matthews, helped Caversham to a total of 153. University Staff were always in the hunt while Tranter remained at the crease, but they folded when he was bowled for 63. Caversham 153 (Matthews 27, Rumble 0, Fenty 60, Marshall 0, Bowyer 31, Emmons 5, May 0, Barrington 23, Higgs 1, McCormack 1 not out, Harris 0, Extras 5; Norman 5 for 47). RUASCC 129 (Sewell 18, Loader 13, Ansell 9, Redfern 0, Gartner 0, Knowlson 3, Butler 0, Tranter 63, Giles 6, Norman 11, Petherick 0 not out, Extras 6; Barrington 4 for 17, Emmons 3 for 37).

Reading University 2nd XI v RUASCC (7/5/77) Match drawn. Batting through two interruptions for rain the Academic Staff started well with 50 from Sewell but later collapsed. In reply the students were in the hunt while Thomas remained at the crease, but after he went they fell behind the run rate. RUASCC 123 (Sewell 50, Loader 18, Ansell 14, Knowlson 0, Russell 20, Crampton 12, Smith 0, Tranter 0, Pearce 1, Crane 1 not out, Petherick 0, Extras 7; Morrison 4 for 41, Martin 4 for 34). Students 108 for 7 (Almack

1, Smallwood 3, Thomas 30, Fawcus 8, Henderson 23, Cooper 12, Slee 13 not out, Bell 5, Martin 7 not out, Extras 6).

Wokingham v RUASCC (18/5/77). Wokingham won by 67 runs. Wokingham 200 for 7 (Gooding 60, Faulkner 39, Crawford 30, Parr 27 not out). RUASCC 133 (Norman 23, Rugman 23, Gartner 22; Crawford 3 for 17, Charman 3 for 32).

Reading University Staff v Green Park (21/5/77). Staff won by 6 wickets. Green Park were dismissed for just 75 runs by the University Staff spinners. In reply the Staff easily knocked the required runs for victory. Green Park 75 (Hunt 0, Dyer 25, Ware 7, Hall 6, Winder 3, Griffiths 12, Wayne 2, Petty 6, Dutton 0, Eggleton 1, Cane 3 not out, Extras 10; Pursglove 4 for 31). Reading University Staff 76 for 4 (Smith 30 not out, Crampton 0, Redfern 7, Russell 13, Fisher 20, Knowlson 0 not out, Extras 6).

Shiplake Wanderers v Reading University Academic Staff (26/5/77). Shiplake won by 5 wickets. Reading University A.S. 194 for 1 dec (Sewell 76 not out, Loader 37, Rugman 42 not out, Extras 29). Shiplake 195 for 5 (Webb 5, Caston 28, Munday 20, Partridge 26, Tolputt 34 not out, Russell 63, Downes 12 not out, Extras 7).

Reading University Academic Staff v Reading Lawyers (28/5/77). Reading Lawyers won by 6 wickets. A steady innings by opener Sewell (41) and brisk knocks from Rugman (50 not out) and Gartner (29) ensured that the Staff could declare with a reasonable total at tea. Lawyers batted sensibly until victory was in sight and then Messenger (68 not out) and Seddon (20 not out) launched an onslaught on the bowling to clinch the result.

Reading University Staff: Sewell c Davies b Seddon 41, Loader c Davies b Messenger 1, Butler b Seddon 24, Knowlson c and b Frost 1, Rugman not out 50, Tranter c Seymour b Seddon 5, Gartner b Seymour 29, Redfern b Seymour 2, Giles b Morgan 16, Crane not out 9, Extras 20, Total (8 wkts dec) 198. Seddon 8 - 1 - 35 - 3, Seymour 5 - 0 - 35 - 2.

Reading Lawyers: Aram b Rugman 41, Hutt b Giles 12, Southern b Rugman 0, Messenger not out 68, Morgan run out 36, Seddon not out 20, Extras 23, Total (4 wkts) 200. Rugman 11 - 1 - 38 - 2, Giles 2 - 0 - 9 - 1.

Surrey Univ. Staff v RUASCC (5/6/77). RUASCC won by 84 runs. Leg-spinner Peter Fitzgerald spear-headed the Reading University Staff attack that bowled out Surrey for 77 in just 90 minutes. Earlier, in the Reading innings, Rugman made a splendid 60 including four sixes. RUASCC 161 for 5 dec (Sewell 29, Smith 18, Rugman 60, Gartner 0, Knowlson 25 not out, Russell 19, Pearce 0 not out, Extras 10; Thomas 3 for 41). Surrey Univ. Staff 77 (Evans 4, Underhill 22, Reilly 19, Thomas 1, Singleton 5, Butterworth 3, Davies 9, Gunney 7, Miller 7, Hazebrook 1, Allen 0 not out, Extras 10; Fitzgerald 5 for 31).

RUASCC v University College London Staff (8/6/77). RUASCC won by 8 wkts. RUASCC coasted to a comfortable victory last Wednesday after their opening partnership of Sewell and Loader had added 76 runs. UCL 111 for 6 dec (Anderson 1, Bloodworth 23, M.Anderson 7, Mann 34, Cheetham 9, Davies 16 not out, Stillmark 5, Robeson 11 not out, Extras 5). RUASCC 113 for 2 (Sewell 47, Loader 27 not out, Giddings 17, Rugman 8 not out, Extras 14).

Reading University v RUASCC (22/6/77). Match drawn. The students' opening bat Straker-Nesbit hit 71 to lay the foundation for a big total of 214. Wheeler played some fine strokes on his way to scoring 57 not out. Chasing 214 the Academic Staff started badly but a solid 30 by Rugman anchored the innings. RU 214 for 4 (Straker-Nesbit 71, Slade

3, Northcote-Green 28, Ross 29, Wheeler 57 not out, Fox 17 not out, Extras 9). RUASCC 114 for 5 (Sewell 8, Loader 12, Butler 0, Rugman 30, Ansell 23, Knowlson 15 not out, Giles 22 not out).

Checkendon v RUASCC (3/7/77). Checkendon won by 1 wkt. RUASCC batted first on a hard wicket but were unable to deal with variable bounce obtained by Briggs (6 for 30), Wickens and Howes. The home side also struggled to score runs against the pace of Petherick (4 for 23) and the eccentric but effective bowling of Norman (5 for 11). In the end it was missed chances that allowed Checkendon to win. RUASCC 78 (Loader 6, Ansell 8, Crampton 0, Gartner 0, Pearce 0, Butler 14, Norman 0, Sewell 15, Tranter 15, Petherick 0 not out, Pursglove 4, Extras 16; Briggs 6 for 30). Checkendon 79 for 9 (Goodhew 0, Armitage 16, Blackburn 9, Pendleton 12, Powell 13, Wickens 0, Philips 2, Howes 8, D.Powell 3 not out, J.Wickens 0, Briggs 0 not out, Extras 14; Norman 5 for 11, Petherick 4 for 23).

RUASCC v Allen and Unwin (25/6/77). RUASCC won by 9 wkts. Allen and Unwin 149 for 6 dec (Stephenson 59; Tranter 5 for 45, Petherick 3 for 19). RUASCC 150 for 1 (Sewell 66 not out, Knowlson 63).

Reading Chronicle's **Top Twenty Cricketers** on 1/7/77 included Sewell 66 not out.

RUASCC v Reading Police (10/8/77). RUASCC won by 7 wkts. Reading Police 163 for 7 dec (Bell 33, Spiers 37, White 0, Turley 25, Burns 27, Benham 4, Sugg 8, Lay 18 not out, Extras 11). RUASCC 164 for 3 (Rugman 8, Fischer 42, Ansell 50, Sewell 43 not out, Browne 12 not out, Extras 9).

RUASCC v Stoke Row (21/8/77). RUASCC won by 1 wkt. Stoke Row 86 (Searby 17, Clark 20, North 5, Oxlade 1, Scarse 0, Sadler 2, Smart 8, Dix 18, J.Searby 4 not out, Collis 1, Willis 1, Extras 9; Pursglove 4 for 22). RUASCC 88 for 9 (Sewell 8, Crampton 5, Gartner 3, Ansell 20, Robeson 0, Pearce 6, Tranter 31, Petherick 0, Norman 6 not out, Fitzgerald 0, Pursglove 0 not out, Extras 0; Clark 5 for 13).

RUASCC v Mapledurham (27/8/77). Draw. Mapledurham 159 for 7 dec (P.Harradence 56, R.New 37; Smith 5 for 35). RUASCC 81 for 7 (Crampton 19, Tranter 19).

RUASCC v Checkendon (28/8/77). RUASCC won by 8 wkts. Checkendon 162 for 4 dec (Wickens 37, D.Powell 35, Pendleton 52). RUASCC 164 for 2 (Sewell 70 not out, Butler 64).

RUASCC v Hurst (4/9/77). Draw. RUASCC 172 for 7 dec (Giles 64, Ansell 31; Carpenter 3 for 52). Hurst 117 for 6 (Carpenter 59, Haggis 33; Pursglove 4 for 21).

RUASCC v Hurst (23/4/78). RUASCC won by 3 wkts. Father and son Duckett gave Hurst a sound start but good fielding by the University Staff helped their persistent bowlers to check the final score to a reachable target. Academic Staff achieved this in an exciting last over after skipper Sewell contributed 44.

Hurst: Bloxham b Giles 11, Simmonds b Pursglove 5, C.Duckett c Adkins b Petherick 37, D.Duckett c Norman b Tranter 34, Chapman run out 18, Pickles run out 0, Wilcock not out 4, Clarke run out 0, Poulter b Norman 0, Dean b Norman 0, Extras 19, Total (9 wkts) 128. Norman 9 - 3 - 13 - 2.

RUASCC: Sewell lbw b Chapman 44, Knowlson c and b Pickles 11, Butler c Pickles b Chapman 19, Adkins lbw b Chapman 13, Crampton c C.Duckett b D.Duckett 19, Giles b

Chapman 3, Loader not out 4, Tranter b D.Duckett 0, Norman not out 4, Extras 14, Total (7 wkts) 131. Chapman 22 - 8 - 40 - 4, D.Duckett 15 - 1 - 41 - 2.

RUASCC v Caversham (29/4/78). Match drawn. Veterans Knowlson and Ansell re-established the University Academic Staff's innings after two early blows by Harewood. Strong hitting by Gartner (37) helped build up a total of 152 for six declared. Caversham began well in the slow conditions, needing only four runs per over in the last hour. However good bowling and agile catching by Crane and Tranter dismissed key players.

RUASCC: Knowlson run out 25, Sewell c Trumper b Harewood 7, Butler b Harewood 0, Ansell c Fenty b Emmons 47, Giles b Harewood 15, Tranter c Marshall b Emmons 4, Gartner not out 37, Crane not out 1, Extras 16, Total (6 wkts dec) 152. Harewood 11 - 2 - 27 - 3, Emmons 10 - 2 - 27 - 2.

Caversham: Mathews c Crane b Gartner 14, G.Marshall c Sewell b Norman 1, Fenty lbw b Crane 31, Trumper b Crane 25, M. Marshall c Tranter b Crane 17, Emmons b Tranter 0, Bowyer not out 18, Harewood b Tranter 0, Higgs not out 3, Extras 11, Total (7 wkts) 120. Tranter 11 - 3 - 14 - 3, Crane 3 - 1 - 23 - 2.

RUASCC v Green Park (20/5/78) RUASCC won by 200 runs. RUASCC 248 for 3 dec (Knowlson 111 not out, Redfern 40, Loader 39, Butler 33 not out). Green Park 48 (Davis 20; Fitzgerald 7 for 29).

N.I.R.D. v RUASCC (21/5/78). RUASCC won by 5 wkts. N.I.R.D. 113 (Manning 2, Scott 11, Merry 1, Blake 69, Williams 1, Anderson 4, Cockburn 9 not out, Foulkes 0, Pettipher 1, Extras 9; Tranter 3 for 13). RUASCC 116 for 5 (Sewell 52 not out, Curtis 2, Petherick 16, Ansell 9, Edwards 12, Butler 0, Tranter 17 not out, Extras 8; Cockburn 3 for 34).

Shiplake Wanderers v RUASCC (25/5/78). Match drawn. Sewell became the third University batsman to score a century in four matches as he knocked 113 not out in his side's total of 201 for 5 declared. Shiplake fought back with Eric Russell (35) and John Eggar (40) but a draw resulted with the last pair at the wicket.

University Academic Staff: Sewell not out 113, Loader c Hodge b Eggar 28, Crampton c Hodge b Eggar 2, Ansell lbw b Eggar 4, Edwards b Russell 3, Giles b Russell 8, Tranter not out 32, Extras 11, Total (5 wkts dec) 201; Eggar 9 - 0 - 32 - 3, Russell 31 - 2 - 3? - 2, Havergal 6 - 1 - 27 - 0.

Shiplake Wanderers: Caxton c Ansell b Tranter 49, Hodge c Edwards b Robiette 0, Partridge b Petherick 15, Barclay c Crampton b Pursglove 4, Webb st Ansell b Pursglove 4, Furby st Ansell b Giles 18, Havergal lbw b Tranter 1, Russell c Smith b Tranter 35, Eggar lbw b Tranter 40, Charles not out 2, Freeland not out 0, Extras 6, Total (9 wkts) 174; Tranter 11 - 1 - 39 - 4, Pursglove 4 - 0 - 22 - 2, Petherick 10 - 0 - 34 - 1.

RUASCC v Reading Lawyers (27/5/78). RUASCC won by 32 runs. University Staff 181 (Knowlson 0, Sewell 23, Gartner 18, Norman 22, Ansell 66, Redfern 6, Tranter 2, Giles 2, Crane 17 not out, Petherick 15, Fitzgerald 0, Extras 10; Seymour 6 for 37). Lawyers 149 (Aram 40, Frost 26, Morgan 7, Southern 23, Auburn 0, Mearthur 8, P.Seymour 16, Massey-Chase 0, Seddon 0, M.Seymour 3, Davies 0 not out, Extras 26; Tranter 5 for 13, Norman 3 for 38).

Royal Ascot v RUASCC (31/5/78). Royal Ascot won by 1 wkt. RUASCC 117 (Sewell 6, Crampton 29, Gartner 16, Edwards 0, Ansell 1, Curtis 2, Pearce 0, Giles 39, Norman 6, Crane 7, Pursglove 1 not out, Extras 10; Coxhead 3 for 28). Royal Ascot 118

for 9 (Halman 41, Allen 10, Blake 14, Kerswell 16, Parseley 23 not out, Hedges 0, Gunn 0, Coxhead 1, G.Coxell 0, D.Coxell 0, Bearman 1 not out, Extras 12; Norman 7 for 29).

Surrey Univ. Staff v RUASCC (4/6/78). RUASCC won by 81 runs. An opening stand of 113 by Sewell (61) and Loader (82) put Reading in a strong position. Surrey held on until catches near the wicket took four wickets in the final four overs.

RUASCC: Sewell c Pais b Elliot 61, Loader c Pais b Allen 82, Crampton b Sluman 9, Smith not out 20, Pearce not out 0, Extras 23, Total (3 wkts dec) 195; Allen 9 - 0 - 46 - 1, Elliot 9 - 1 - 34 - 1, Sluman 8 - 0 - 43 - 1.

Surrey University Staff: Gunney c Crane b Fitzgerald 2, Elkins b Fitzgerald 1, Pais b Robiette 3, Evans b Petherick 46, Allen b Smith 33, Davies c Crane b Tranter 14, Elliot b Tranter 1, Storey c and b Fitzgerald 5, Sluman c and b Tranter 0, Iqbal c and b Tranter 0, Bayton not out 0, Extras 9, Total 114; Tranter 9 - 3 - 16 - 4, Fitzgerald 8 - 1 - 35 - 3, Petherick 6 - 1 - 35 - 3.

RUASCC v University College London Staff (14/6/78). Draw. University College 161 for 4 dec (Telfer 82, Hood 59 not out). RUASCC 160 for 9 (Knowlson 59, Crampton 36; Williams 4 for 69, Mann 3 for 22).

Leighton Park v RUASCC (24/6/78). RUASCC won by 3 wkts. Leighton Park 130 (McMeeking 9, Mickman 20, Aluvihare 35, Wills 14, Brown 18, Houston 1, Fairhead 3, Dey 12 not out, Hamilton 1, Inamdar 2, Shrimpton 5, Extras 11). RUASCC 132 for 7 (Loader 2, Pierce 11, Petherick 12, Sewell 8, Ansell 17, Crane 33, Knowlson 0, Giles 24 not out, Tranter 16 not out, Extras 13; Hamilton 3 for 47).

Checkendon v RUASCC (2/7/78). Checkendon won by 21 runs. Checkendon batted first and found themselves struggling immediately when captain-for-the-day John Armitage was bowled by the first ball against some awkward bowling, especially from Robiette and Tranter. They managed to reach 121. The main contributions came from M.Wickens and Pendleton. When the University side replied they at first appeared to have the game well under their control, but a fine spell of accurate and hostile bowling from Doug Powell, well supported by Jack Howes and John Wickens led to their eventual dismissal for 100.

Checkendon: Powell b Robiette 2, Armitage b Robiette 0, Blackburn c Crane b Robiette 14, Pendleton c Tranter b Giles 20, M.Wickens c Gartner b Tranter 51, Marquis b Tranter 0, Pontefract b Giles 9, Howes lbw b Pursglove 12, Holmes b Pursglove 0, Wilder c Ansell b Tranter 1, J.Wickens not out 1, Extras 11, Total 121; Robiette 7 - 1 - 22 - 3, Tranter 6.1 - 1 - 10 - 3, Pursglove 3 - 1 - 10 - 3.

RUASCC: Ansell lbw b Marquis 0, Butler c Pendleton b Powell 21, Redfern b J.Wickens 5, Sewell c Pendleton b Powell 27, Gartner c J.Wickens b Howes 23, Crane c J.Wickens b Powell 8, Giles lbw b Powell 3, Tranter c Armitage b Powell 3, Robiette b Powell 0, Fitzgerald b J. Wickens 4, Pursglove not out 0, Extras 5, Total 100; Powell 11.1 - 2 - 26 - 5, Howes 5 - 2 - 6 - 2, J.Wickens 9 - 2 - 6 - 2.

Bramshill Police College v RUASCC (5/7/78). Police College won by 1 wkt. In an exciting game of fluctuating fortunes with good catching and a six in the last over, the Police College triumphed by one wicket. The University Staff were reduced to 35 for six, but then recovered thanks to a partnership between Tranter and Loader, who batted throughout the innings and was last out for 59. Petherick then took four for 11 in his first six overs before Lloyd and Johnson put Bramshill back into the game from 51 for six with some strong hitting.

RUASCC 138 (Loader 59, Crampton 5, Adkins 0, Sewell 4, Edwards 2, Gartner 0, Crane 0, Tranter 45, Pearce 12, Petherick 0, Pursglove 5 not out, Extras 6; Hope-Bell 4 for 37, Eames 3 for 21).

Police College 140 for 9 (Roylance 7, Mason 1, Frost 2, Weselby 24, Sillence 0, Lloyd 37, Eames 1, Johnson 60 not out, Hooker 0, Hoodless 5, Hope-Bell 1 not out, Extras 2; Petherick 5 for 70, Tranter 3 for 53).

RUASCC v Sonning (9/7/78). Sonning won by 98 runs. Sonning were put into bat and amassed the score of 186 for 8 mainly due to a very attractive innings from Brent Eastwood of 63. The rest of the Sonning batting ably supported him and Anderson scored an unbeaten 31. When the University Staff batted they were always in trouble against the left arm spin of R.Anderson, who in the latter part of the innings was well supported by his brother Mark, who capped a fine all-round performance by taking three wickets for five runs.

Sonning 186 for 8 dec (Rapley 17, Ali 0, Eastwood 63, R.Anderson 8, Field 22, M. Anderson 31 not out, Williams 18, Berry 20, Extras 7; Giles 3 for 41).

RUASCC 88 (Knowlson 27, Crampton 1, Butler 15, Loader 7, Gartner 1, Sewell 6, Crane 6, Tranter 10, Giles 7 not out, Robiette 0, Fitzgerald 0, Extras 8; R.Anderson 5 for 33, M.Anderson 3 for 5).

The 1978 RUASCC squad photograph was taken at my request by Simon Johnson of the Reading University Photographic Unit of that time, who took many excellent technical mathematics photographs for me over the years. It shows (standing, left to right) Roger Smith, Dai Edwards, Mike Pursglove, Peter Fitzgerald, George Norman, Bob Pierce, Alan Robiette, Peter Crane, Jim Knowlson, Joe Gartner, Roger Loader, Steve Adkins, David Petherick, (and seated, left to right) Richard Tranter, Tony Giles, Mike Sewell, Graham Crampton, Mike Butler.

Extract from **University of Reading Bulletin 103**, June 1978:

Academic Staff Centuries or Knowlson's Nelson

The University Academic Staff Cricket Club has established a new standard of performance recently. Three of its members scored not out hundreds in the space of four matches, so doubling the number of centuries previously scored for the Club since its foundation nearly 20 years ago. Jim Knowlson (French Studies) hit a "Nelson" (111) against Green Park on our attractive chestnut-lined home ground at Elmhurst Road. Mike Butler (Agriculture and Horticulture) scored 117 to win an evening game at Bluecoat School (after an opposition batsman had already made a century); and Mike Sewell (Mathematics), this year's Captain, felt it necessary to secure his place by making 113 not out against a Shiplake Wanderers side that included a former Derbyshire captain and a former Middlesex and England player. The Club has a strong policy of encouraging new members from Academic Staff and postgraduate students, and of getting them into the cricket. Anyone interested would be welcome to get in touch with one of the above.

University Staff win K.O. Trophy (12 + 13 July 1978)

Reading University Academic Staff won the Sir George Edwards Trophy in a competition at Guildford last weekend. This was a 40-over contest between the staff sides of Reading, Southampton, and Surrey Universities and King's College London. In the semi-finals Reading beat King's and Southampton defeated Surrey. On the second day, Reading



Figure 6: RUASCC 1978

beat Southampton and King's beat Surrey, so leaving Surrey as the wooden spoonists after winning the first three contests in 1975 - 6 - 7. The winner's trophy was presented to Reading captain Mike Sewell by Sir George Edwards O.M., F.R.S., Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Surrey University and former Chairman of British Aircraft Corporation, the Concorde makers.

[To the captain of Surrey, Sir George said "Joe, you buggered it up"].

[Review Lecture (about Concorde) by Edwards. The technical aspects of supersonic civil transport aircraft, Philosophical Transactions of The Royal Society of London, A275, 529 - 565, 21 March 1974].

Reading v King's College. Reading won by one wicket. King's had the advantage of two visiting scholars from the South Australia State trial squad, Risby and Dougin, but keen fielding and persistent Reading bowling took King's wickets regularly leaving Reading to get 200 in 40 overs. Knowlson and Sewell put on 68 for the first wicket at a rate of five an over, and this rate was maintained by strong hitting by Petherick until 165 for 9. Then, Reading's last pair of Tranter and Crane boldly struck the last 35 amid great excitement. The atmosphere in the pavilion was one of almost dangerous tension for some of the older members of the side.

King's College 197 (Spencer 2, Rispoli 0, Risby 110, Dougin 19, Scrutton 12, Hall 3, Clifford 0, Nicolas 1, Sherman 30 not out, Tonge 3, Colvine 3, Extras 14; Crane 3 for 19). RUASCC 200 for 9 (Knowlson 27, Sewell 38, Loader 10, Butler 13, Petherick 31, Crampton 2, Gartner 19, Giles 7, Tranter 28 not out, Edwards 2, Crane 14 not out, Extras 9; Dougin 5 for 38).

Southampton v Reading. Reading won by eight wickets. Southampton were kept under intense pressure throughout by Reading's attacking bowling and fielding and could only score at three an over. Crane and Petherick were especially economical and several difficult catches were held. Knowlson and Sewell fought off a fierce Southampton counter-attack of short-pitched fast bowling to a close field, putting the result beyond doubt with an opening stand of 53.

Southampton 105 (Sivaramakrishnan 6, Austin 33, Fahy 3, Williams 3, Halliwell 11, Kalghatgi 8, Goodson 9, Maltby 5, Smith 7, Ingram 10, Henderson 0 not out, Extras 10; Smith 3 for 25). RUASCC 108 for 2 (Knowlson 25, Sewell 51 not out, Crampton 2, Butler 22 not out, Extras 8).

Caversham v RUASCC (23/7/78). Caversham won by 25 runs. Caversham started strongly after a delayed start, but crumbled quickly under the excellent bowling of Bather and Giles. The University Staff started in reply badly, but a good showing from Robeson and Giles kept them in the running. However the team finally crumbled just 25 runs short of the Caversham total. Caversham 136 for 8 dec (G.Marshall 41, McCormack 14, Fenty 25, Robbins 31, Emmans 0, Norkett 6, Rumble 5, M.Marshall 7 not out, Hill 0, Goddard 2 not out, Extras 5; Bather 4 for 39, Giles 3 for 41). RUASCC 111 for 9 (Loader 2, Smith 0, Redfern 2, Butler 5, Robeson 32, Baum 0, J.Giles 36).

RUASCC v Reading Lawyers (26/7/78). RUASCC won by 7 runs. An outstanding bowling performance by Academic Staff seamer Roger Smith won a low scoring game for his side.

RUASCC: Loader lbw b McArthur 13, Crane c Aram b M.Seymour 0, Adkins c Seddon b M.Seymour 2, Giles c Massey-Chase b Frost 16, Redfern b P.Seymour 3, Tranter c Eatwell b P. Seymour 0, Hay c Aram b Seymour 4, Smith not out 13, Petherick c Seddon b McArthur 14, Robiette c Southern b M.Seymour 0, Extras 5, Total 72. M.Seymour 10.1 - 4 - 11 - 4, P.Seymour 7 - 0 - 16 - 3.

Reading Lawyers: Aram c Robeson b Smith 1, Frost c Crane b Smith 11, Southern b Smith 10, Morgan b Smith 1, P.Seymour c Crane b Smith 10, Massey-Chase c Robeson b Smith 0, McArthur c Crane b Petherick 17, Seddon c and b Smith 0, Eatwell b Smith 10, M.Seymour b Smith 0, Davis not out 0, Extras 5, Total 65.

RUASCC v Checkendon (27/8/78). Match drawn. Checkendon: Blackburn c Baum b Petherick 2, Powell c Tranter b Petherick 9, Wickens b Petherick 37, Pendleton c Petherick b Giles 31, Armitage b Petherick 0, Howes b Giles 10, Wilder c Tranter b Giles 4, Lyke b Giles 20, Pontefract not out 34, Polley c Crane b Giles 11, Briggs not out 37, Extras 6, Total (9 wkts) 201.

RUASCC: Sewell not out 64, Butler b Pontefract 7, Pearce c Blackburn b Briggs 6, Ansell b Powell 25, Hay c and b Howes 9, Gartner st Blackburn b Wickens 13, Giles b Howes 1, Crane not out 4, Extras 10, Total (6 wkts) 139. Howes 6 - 0 - 23 - 2.

RUASCC v Mapledurham (17/9/78). Mapledurham won by 6 wkts. RUASCC: Crane c Orton b B.Clark 41, Butler c B.Clark b M. New 11, Adkins c Parsonson b Orton 0, Gartner c M.New b Orton 20, Pearce c P.Harradence b Orton 2, Edwards b B.Clark 4, Tranter c Orton b R.New 4, Robeson b B.Clark 10, Petherick run out 16, Smith c R.New b B.Clark 9, Pursglove not out 4, Extras 2, Total 123.

Mapledurham: Orton c Crane b Tranter 27, V.Clarke c Butler b Smith 10, P.Harradence not out 46, Smith c and b Tranter 17, Cudjoe c Butler b Tranter 9, M. Harradence not out 8, Extras 7, Total (4 wkts) 125.

RUASCC v Caversham (28/4/79). Caversham won by 51 runs. An enterprising innings of 68 by skipper George Fenty enabled Caversham to declare at tea on 161 for 2. The University Staff started well against the opening bowlers but collapsed dramatically to the bowling of Bowyer (8 for 44) to allow Caversham victory with the penultimate ball of the match.

Caversham: G.Marshall b Crane 4, May b Petherick 2, Fenty c Tranter b Petherick 68, Emmons b Tranter 24, Bowyer b Petherick 13, Lewis b Petherick 11, Rebbeck c and b Gartner 2, Stockton c Gartner b Petherick 19, Wapshott not out 9, Extras 9, Total (8 wkts dec) 161. Petherick 5 for 29.

RUASCC: Knowlson c and b Bowyer 15, Sewell c Fenty b Bowyer 26, Butler c Stockton b Bowyer 37, Loader c Rebbeck b Bowyer 16, Owen st Higgs b Bowyer 2, Gartner b Bowyer 3, Tranter c May b Bowyer 6, Crane c Rebbeck b Bowyer 1, Petherick c Martin b Rebbeck 0, Pursglove not out 0, Fitzgerald b Rebbeck 2, Extras 2, Total 110. Bowyer 8 for 45, Rebbeck 2 for 26.

Nettlebed v RUASCC (6/5/79). Nettlebed won by 14 runs. Both sides struggled for runs on a drying wicket which helped all the bowlers. After a fine innings from Butler, Ackerman and Checkley wrecked the Academics' middle order. Though the tail wagged a little, the home side won with four overs to spare.

Nettlebed: Leverett lbw b Tranter 3, Ackerman lbw b Pursglove 29, G. Macleod lbw b Tranter 0, Meheux b Tranter 11, Checkley c Gartner b Pursglove 3, Pitcher run out 22, Challis run out 10, Dockerill c Gartner b Petherick 14, Vines b Gartner 1, Clarke not out 9, Cleave b Gartner 0, Extras 1, Total 103. Tranter 14 - 2 - 39 - 3, Gartner 3.5 - 0 - 15 - 2, Petherick 8 - 0 - 15 - 1, Pursglove 10 - 0 - 33 - 2.

RUASCC: Knowlson lbw b Vines 0, Sewell c Vines b Ackerman 6, Butler b Checkley 32, Redfern b Checkley 2, Mackness b Checkley 0, Loader b Ackerman 3, Gartner b Ackerman 10, Tranter c Challis b Ackerman 8, Owen not out 4, Petherick c Macleod b Ackerman 2, Pursglove b Vines 11, Extras 11, Total 89. Vines 14.3 - 4 - 23 - 2, Ackerman 17 - 5 - 28 - 4, Checkley 7 - 2 - 17 - 3.

RUASCC v University College London Staff (9/5/79). RUASCC won by 7 wkts. University College London 154 (Abrahamson 38, E.Anderson 32, Mann 31; Petherick 5 for 54, Pursglove 3 for 16). RUASCC 155 for 3 (Avis 57 not out, Knowlson 35, Ansell 28 not out).

NIRD v RUASCC (12/5/79). RUASCC won by 3 wkts. Academic's leg spinners Fitzgerald and Pursglove, aided by alert and agile stumpings by Knowlson, spun NIRD to 31 for eight before Manning found support to improve the score. NIRD struck back to take six wickets for only 38 before the flow of wickets was halted by Sewell and Knowlson.

NIRD 60 (Manning 19 not out, Scott 2, Anderson 15, Cockburn 6, Farrow 0, Sissons 0, Corney 0, Pettipher 0, Banils 0, Marshall 13, Horwood 2, Extras 3; Fitzgerald 4 for 11, Pursglove 2 for 14).

RUASCC 61 for 7 (Crampton 5, Owen 1, Wiezcorek 6, Mackness 13, Avis 5, Sewell 24 not out, Crane 1, Knowlson 4, Pursglove 0 not out, Extras 2; Cockburn 2 for 13).

Checkendon v RUASCC (1/7/79). Match drawn. Checkendon, batting first against some lively bowling, reached 76 for 5 with Powell, M.Wickens and Pendleton contributing to the total. Then there followed a stand of 86 between Armitage and Marquis, which enabled Checkendon to reach 162 for 5 before declaring. For the visitors, Butler batted well for 86, but against tight Checkendon bowling they were never able to get ahead of the run rate.

Checkendon 162 for 5 dec (Powell 10, Blackburn 6, M.Wickens 19, Pendleton 18, Armitage 74 not out, Humphreys 1, Marquis 21 not out, Extras 13).

RUASCC 129 for 7 (Sewell 1, Butler 86, Crampton 3, Redfern 7, Owen 12, Tranter 2, Norman 1 not out, Petherick 2, Extras 15; J.Wickens 3 for 30, Marquis 3 for 26).

University retain Cup (Reading Chronicle 20/7/79).

Reading University Academic Staff Cricket Club won the Sir George Edwards Trophy for the second successive year in a 40-over-per-side competition between the Staff sides from the Universities of Surrey, Southampton and Exeter. The tournament was hosted this year at the Reading University grounds in Whiteknights Park. On the first day Reading's bowlers put the lid on Southampton, and then their batsmen screwed it down. Southampton never exceeded three runs per over and were dismissed for 130 by a good all-round performance in the field. Reading lost only one wicket reaching the target with ease. On the second day Reading faced Surrey, who had beaten Exeter the previous day. Avis laid the foundation of the innings with a well-paced 78, and then Norman rocked Surrey back on their heels with a fast 38, Reading scoring 70 runs in their last 10 overs. Surrey were never allowed to approach the required rate, and were dismissed to give Reading a second convincing win by 107 runs. The Trophy was presented at a reception in Park House to the Reading captain, Mike Sewell, by John Eggar, the retiring Head Master of Shiplake College, and a former Derbyshire captain.

RUASCC v Southampton University Staff. RUASCC won by 9 wickets. Southampton University Staff 130 (Austin 21, Naylor 12, Kalghatgi 33, Haliwell 8, Goodson 0, Smith 26 not out, Fahy 7, Bailey 14, Henderson 1, Maltby 1, Ingham 0, Extras 7; Morrison 2 for 19, Gartner 2 for 26, Avis 4 for 29). RUASCC 131 for 1 (Knowlson 16, Sewell 61 not out, Avis 46 not out, Extras 8).

RUASCC v Surrey University Staff. RUASCC won by 107 runs. RUASCC 229 for 8 (Knowlson 1, Sewell 14, Avis 78, Butler 30, Ansell 28, Gartner 8, Tranter 9, Norman 38, Giles 10 not out, Morrison 10 not out, Extras 3; O'Sullivan 2 for 32, Keer 2 for 24, Boucher 3 for 41). Surrey University Staff 122 (Evans 8, Keer 2, Pais 25, Griffiths 6, Hurchsfield 18, Stubbs 9, O'Sullivan 14, Jones 16, Allen 17, Elliott 1, Boucher 0 not out, Extras 6; Petherick 2 for 12, Tranter 2 for 23, Gartner 2 for 21, Giles 2 for 15).

RUASCC v Checkendon (26/8/79). Match drawn. RUASCC 185 for 8 dec (Knowlson 30, Sewell 65, Pearce 0, Avis 56, Butler 6, Giles 0, Loader 3, Gartner 9, Pursglove 1 not out, Extras 11; Howes 3 for 44, Wickens 3 for 57). Checkendon 134 for 4 (Powell 66 not out, Blackburn 8, Wickens 4, Armitage 27, Campbell 6, Marquis 5 not out, extras 18).

RUASCC v Warborough (8/9/79). RUASCC won by 10 wkts. Warborough 184 for 3 dec (Hill 53, Brow 47, Hoad 27 not out, Canning 35 not out). RUASCC 186 for 0. (Butler 114 not out, Sewell 58 not out).

[This was a new fixture, and therefore our first game against Warborough, who seemed to go home shell-shocked after they had set what must have seemed to be a substantial target. We have had many agreeable games against them subsequently, both at home and at their pleasant village ground.]

RUASCC v Checkendon (23/8/81). RUASCC won by 6 wkts. Checkendon failed badly to take their chance when Reading University Staff put them in to bat on an easy wicket in warm sunshine. They were teased by the slow bowling of Elder who cunningly varied his pace and flight. M.Wickens saved them from a very low score with his half-century.

When the University went in they found John Wickens' pace something of a problem but it did not prevent their winning comfortably.

Checkendon: D.Powell c Rugman b Lee 10, J.Wickens c Ridley b Elder 11, M.Wickens C Giles b Avis 55, A.Marquis b Rugman 8, J. Armitage b Elder 5, A.Grayson lbw b Elder 5, L.Powell lbw b Elder 2, B.Humphreys lbw b Elder 13, L.W.Powell c Avis b Elder 7, D.Petherick c Ison b Elder 3, C.Blackburn not out 0, Extras 12, Total 131. Elder 16.3 - 5 - 37 - 7.

RUASCC: M.Sewell not out 58, R.Ison lbw b J.Wickens 2, M.Butler c Humphreys b Marquis 27, A.Rugman c Blackburn b J.Wickens 25, I.Thomson lbw b Marquis 0, M.Avis not out 1, Extras 19, Total (4 wkts) 132.

Extract from **University of Reading Bulletin 175**, Summer 1984:

Sir George Edwards Trophy Matches at Exeter

This annual tournament involving the Academic Staff Cricket Clubs of Exeter, Reading, Southampton and Surrey Universities took place at Exeter in 1984. The tournament began in 1975 when Sir George Edwards, the Chancellor of Surrey University and a keen cricket enthusiast, presented a Trophy to be played for each July, in a 40 over contest, between four University Academic Staff sides at rotating locations.

After cruising to a comfortable win against Surrey on the first day, RUASCC lost a high scoring game against Exeter on the second day.

In this year's win against Surrey Mike Biddiss, in only four overs, returned figures of 5 for 19 in Surrey's all out total of 122. Reading overtook this score for the loss of two wickets, with Martin Avis scoring 51 not out.

On the following day, having won unimpressively against Southampton in their first match, Exeter batted first and, after a slow start, accelerated to a formidable total of 222 for 5, their opening partnership putting on 122. Reading bowled as well as they were allowed to. Then, enthusiastically led by Richard Tranter, they carefully, but determinedly, set about trying to win. Martin Avis (72) and Mike Sewell (42) were top scorers, but despite spirited support down the order, Reading's final score was 34 too few.

Extract from **University of Reading Bulletin 185**, Long Vacation 1985:

Cricket Trophy Triumph

At Southampton in mid-July the Academic Staff Cricket Club regained the Sir George Edwards Trophy, last won by Reading in 1979. This annual contest for staff teams began in 1975 when Sir George, as Chancellor of Surrey, donated an award for limited-overs competition. In ten out of eleven years the weather has allowed the tournament to be successfully completed, so that Reading, Surrey and Exeter have now enjoyed three victories and Southampton one.

In this year's opening match RUASCC were put into bat by the host team. Good bowling and fielding made early runs hard to come by, but in due course Reading's scoring rate accelerated and the total was brought to 200 for 7 at the end of the allotted 40 overs. Principal contributors were Lance Brooks (61 not out), Martin Avis (58), Renny Ison (30) and Mike Butler (23). After the interval Southampton made little headway against a tight opening spell of bowling from Mike Biddiss and John Jewell, and Reading's grip on the game was consolidated as Avis, John Anderson and Richard Tranter came into the attack. The opponents were dismissed for 137 in the 39th over, with Anderson taking four wickets and Tranter conceding only 11 runs from his 8 overs.

Meanwhile Exeter had defeated Surrey. Thus the 1985 Final was to be contested between the same two sides as last year. Tranter won the toss and elected to bat. On this occasion the early runs came more easily, and the score stood at 64 for 1 after 15 overs. However, the base laid by Mike Sewell (36) and Avis (34) seemed destined to be wasted as Reading slumped to 92 for 6. Happily, David Ansell (20) and Chris Miles (19) steadied the innings. A remarkable final assault on the Exeter bowlers by Jewell (44) pulled Reading further back into the match. The ultimate total was a vulnerable yet defensible 173.

After tea Reading managed, as on the previous day, to contain the opposing batsmen with sharp bowling and fielding. Though losing few wickets, Exeter found themselves struggling to approach the required run-rate. That proved crucial as their batsmen finally hit out amidst darkening skies, the drizzle, then heavier rain. A full cloudburst eventually drove everyone back to the pavilion, with Exeter at 154 for 3 off 36.4 overs and thus needing 20 runs off 20 balls. The umpires soon declared that further play was impossible. So Reading's marginally superior run-rate (0.72 per ball, against 0.70) earned the side a sodden victory, to which every single member of the team had made some positive contribution.

Extract from **University of Reading Bulletin**, November 1986:

Tranter's triumph, Jarratt jargon and multiple Mikes

The Academic Staff Cricket Club (RUASCC) held its AGM on 8 October. Members looked back on a difficult season, during which all the University's cricket teams had to cope with severely reduced facilities as a result of new building on the former Second XI Ground [called, in much earlier years, the "Ladies Pitch"]. Using a shortened fixture list the Club had managed, however, to enjoy its most successful balance of match results since 1980.

Although sadly yielding the inter-university George Edwards trophy to Exeter Erratics, RUASCC had recorded overall 12 wins against 6 losses, together with 10 draws. A total of 37 players had been involved. Review of the averages (now known inevitably in the pavilions of Berkshire as "performance indicators") revealed that the most consistently successful batsmen had been Martin Avis, Renny Ison, Mike Sewell and Mike Butler. The last of these had now moved to the West Country, thereby reducing the Club's "multiple Mike problem" - especially evident when homonymous players converge in pursuit of skied catches! But that departure had also deprived RUASCC of a batsman who had scored 11 centuries in as many seasons, and had accumulated 6267 runs at a rate of nearly 37 per innings.

Top scorer in 1986 was, again, Mike Sewell whose valiant 98 at Newbury in the September dusk had almost secured an extra victory for the Club. On the bowling front the skipper, Richard Tranter, had notched up a new Club record of 68 victims, and other notable wicket-takers had been Martin Avis, Mike Biddiss, Mike Pursglove and Dave Law. The out-fielding of Barry Powell (on leave from American football) had also contributed greatly to the Club's run of success.

Before the AGM adjourned to the SCR bar for verbal replays of the summer's highlights, members applauded the award of the 1986 Club Trophy to Renny Ison. They also re-elected Richard Tranter (Centre for Agricultural Strategy) as Captain, and appointed Martin Avis (Land Management and Development), Mike Biddiss (History) and Renny Ison (Cadbury-Schweppes) as joint Vice-Captains. Any of these will be happy to hear from potential staff or post-graduate recruits for the 1987 season.

Extract from **Henley Standard**, 22 June 199?:

Skipper spells defeat for Checkendon.

Checkendon elected to bat first against RUASCC on Saturday, but were soon wondering if it was a wise decision. The lively RUASCC opening bowlers persuaded the top batsmen into a series of injudicious strokes and after eight overs the scoreboard made dismal reading at 13 for five.

Skipper Matthew Wickens and David Williams set about improving the situation. It was slow going at first, but the runs eventually started to flow to the extent that the partnership put on 118 runs in 95 minutes. Matthew made 103, mostly from powerful driving and pulling, while David's sound defence was the perfect foil. When Matthew was well caught on the long-off boundary by Mike Sewell, the innings soon folded for 159 - many more than had seemed likely earlier.

There was always doubt whether this would be enough against the strong RUASCC batting line-up, especially as Checkendon's bowlers were not quite able, forcing them to open with spin. Faint hopes were raised when three wickets were captured for 57, but skipper John Short with 58 not out led his team to a comfortable five wicket win with overs to spare.

Checkendon: L.W.Powell c Rolley b Stone 0, C.Blackburn c Tranter b Baker 0, D.Seymour c Pinder b Stone 3, L.Powell c Tranter b Baker 1, S.Randall b Baker 7, D.Williams c Pinder b Baker 32, M.Wickens c Sewell b Stone 103, R. Smalley c Sewell b Baker 0, C. Giles c Bryant b Baker 5, I. McDougall b Baker 0, J.Spiers not out 0, Extras 8, Total 159. J.Baker 11 - 5 - 22 - 7, A.Stone 10 - 1 - 30 - 3.

RUASCC: M. Sewell run out 14, Pinder b Wickens 26, A.Rolley c Seymour b L.Powell 18, R.Bryant c Williams b Wickens 8, J.Short not out 58, A.Stone c L.W.Powell b McDoudall 23, J.Baker not out 12, Extras 2, Total (5 wkts) 161. M.Wickens 40 - 1 - 50 - 2.

Extract from **Henley Standard**, 27 July 1990.

Peter gives University a lesson.

Reading University Staff totalled 168 all out by tea with Sewell 40 and Stone 31 and a quick knock from Law, 27 not out, being the top scores. Peter Bryan had four wickets for nine runs. Hayden finished with three for 42.

Peppard were soon in trouble at 12 for three, but good knocks from Stewart (24), Hayden (24 not out) and Nigel Halliday (25 not out) saw Peppard to 137 for seven at the close.

Reading University Staff. Sewell c Boswell b Halliday 40, Ison b Hayden 18, Squire c Nigel Halliday b Hayden 9, Short b Hayden 6, Stone lbw b Woolley 31, Homer b Bryan 13, Biddiss b Bryan 16, Harvey c N.Vines b Bryan 0, Tranter c Bryan b Halliday 1, Law not out 27, Petch b Bryan 0, Extras 7, Total 168. P.Bryan 6.2 - 2 - 9 - 4, Hayden 10 - 0 - 42 - 3, Neile Halliday 10 - 0 - 39 - 2.

Peppard. S.Woolley c and b Tranter 0, R.Hayden b Stone 5, S.Boswell b Tranter 6, J.Stewart run out 24, M. Vines c Law b Short 19, P.Bryan c and b Short 15, Neile Halliday b Stone 9, P.Hayden not out 24, Nigel Halliday not out 25, Extras 10, Total (7 wkts) 137. Short 10 - 2 - 30 - 2.

Extract from **University of Reading Bulletin**, November 1990:

Academic Cricketers

The Sir George Edwards Trophy is competed for in an annual limited-overs competition by the cricket teams of academic staff in the South of England. In the matches each side bowls 40 overs. This year it was held at the University of Surrey, Guildford, on 11 and 12 July. On Wednesday 1 July Reading met Sussex; they bowled them out for only 74 after



Figure 7: RUASCC winners of the Sir George Edwards Trophy at Guildford 1990

some fine bowling by David Law, John Baker and Richard Tranter, and excellent catching behind the stumps by Mike Petch. The Reading openers Mike Sewell and Steve Pinder easily got the runs.

On Thursday 12 July Reading faced Southampton in the final. The previous day Southampton had beaten Surrey in a very convincing manner. It was a very hot day and when John Short, the captain of the Reading side, won the toss he elected to bat first. The openers again got the side off to a good start and then a quick 50 from John Baker, a stylish 50 from Ashley Stone and some quick running by Renny Ison and Rupert Loader gave an impressive score of 213. In reply Southampton started well but a timely wicket from John Short turned the tide and then excellent performances from Richard Tranter, David Law and Gavin Squire bowled Southampton out for 177.

Immediately after the game the Reading skipper was awarded the trophy by Sir George Edwards. It was a great end to a marvelous performance from Reading Academic Staff. The skipper thanked the people at Surrey for running such a well-organised event, the other teams for playing in such a fine spirit and his own team for playing so well.

The Reading team members, shown in the photograph were (standing, left to right) Renny Ison, Mike Sewell, Rupert Loader, Richard Tranter, Steve Pinder, Dave Law, (kneeling, left to right) John Baker, Gavin Squire, John Short, Ashley Stone, Mike Petch.

Extract from **Henley Standard**, 25th May 2001:

Peppard v RUASCC

On a very good batting wicket at Peppard over 450 runs were scored with just six wickets falling against Reading university staff. All the Peppard batsmen scored runs but it was John Green with eight sixes and ten fours scoring his first 100 to see Peppard 225 for 4 by tea. Thorpe took 2 for 43 for the visitors.

After tea Reading University staff found runs just as easy with Eagle and Sewell putting

on 76 for the first wicket. Rupert Loader had some luck but saw his side home with 82 not out with two overs remaining.

Peppard

M.Evans lbw b Ridge 28, R.Brock c Kidd b Thorpe 28, A.Bryant c Kidd b Thorpe 13, G.Soper c and b Fletcher 42, J.Green not out 100, R.Green not out 7, Total (4 wkts) 227.

Reading University Staff

M.Sewell b Peedell 46, A.Eagle c Brock b Roberts 72, R.Loader not out 82, C.Malde not out 1, Extras 17, Total (2 wkts) 228.

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In 1983 RUASCC published a book called About Twenty-Five Years of Cricket, A History of Reading University Academic Staff Cricket Club, written and edited by Tony Giles. This is a history of the Club up to the end of the 1982 season.

More recently we have been pleased to refer to that author as Professor A.K.Giles, O.B.E., Emeritus Professor of Farm Management at Reading University.

RUASCC is also proud to count among its former players two particularly distinguished scientists, with whom I have enjoyed batting partnerships. Professor Sir Peter Crane, F.R.S., is a former Director of The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew; and Professor Sir Brian Hoskins, C.B.E., F.R.S., is a former Head of the Reading University Meteorology Department.

Professor J.R.Knowlson, my partner as RUASCC opening batsman for many years, was awarded an Honorary D. Litt. by the University of Reading on 8th July 2006. The photograph of "Jim and the Professor" was taken on that occasion (by the University Photographer). I was very keen to be at the ceremony (although it does look as if I had just completed a quick single). Jim made major international contributions to studies of the works of the playwright Samuel Beckett, and to the establishment of a Beckett Foundation within the University of Reading, which holds many original documents by Beckett.

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For the field is full of shades as I near the shadowy coast,
And a ghostly batsman plays to the bowling of a ghost,
And I look through my tears on a soundless-clapping host,
As the run-stealers flicker to and fro,
To and fro:-
O my Hornby and my Barlow long ago!

(Francis Thompson)

See "The Field is Full of Shades" by G.D.Martineau, Sporting Handbooks Limited, London 1946.

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Figure 8: Jim and the Professor 2006