

WINCHMORE HILL FOOTBALL CHAT

14

CLUB COPY

JAN. 1939



With Compliments

WINCHMORE HILL FOOTBALL CLUB

MEMBERS : SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE

President : Miss I. PAULIN

Ground :
FORDS GROVE
WINCHMORE HILL, N.21
Telephone : LABurnum 1271



Hon Secretary :
L. E. BROWN,
86 QUEEN ELIZABETH DRIVE
SOUTHGATE, N.14.

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Compiled, Arranged and Edited by GEORGE DEACOCK.

[January, 1939.

A Happy New Year!



IT is our first, and most pleasant, task to wish all our Members, playing and other, a Very Happy and Prosperous New Year. On such an occasion we may magnanimously thank fans and constructive critics, smile charitably upon destructive critics, condone players' mistakes, excuse those who don't train, praise the Committee—and hope for the best during 1939. We can do all these things easily because January 1st fell on a Sunday, on which day players, anyhow, can do no wrong.

At the season's half-way stage the teams have, on balance, fulfilled reasonably well our cautious optimism expressed in these columns during last October. We have not been too fortunate in the matter of injuries, one or two serious handicaps having been forced upon us in this respect, but the excellent coaching the players are receiving is having most beneficial effects, as is borne out by the improvement shown plainly by those who take regular advantage of it; not the least noticeable feature is their superior stamina.

In connection with the weekly Middlesex Junior Cup-tie now in progress with the Old

Lyonians the Team Secretary hopes that this may be settled soon, though he is bearing up pretty well considering. The fixtures have had to be carved up unmercifully to allow of the Reserves playing these games, and apologies are due particularly to the 3rd and 4th XI's, whose plans have been upset the most on account of venues having to be altered often too late to permit of rearranging league games. We hope the consequent friendly tussles have at least served their purpose in maintaining playing continuity.

Even the enormous ability of the Committee was incapable of making the pitches playable over Christmas-tide. They thought of everything for your enjoyment and had arranged five home games, but hope there is no need to apologise for circumstances quite beyond their control. It was very unfortunate that the A.F.A. Public Schools match on December 27th was snowed out, but perhaps we will have better luck next season.

Meantime, the toast is—"Our Members in 1939."

1st XI REPORT.

During December the 1st XI maintained their good start to the season, winning two league games and drawing one, but losing their replayed A.F.A. Cup-tie. At the time of writing they are top of the league, having obtained nine points from seven games.

On December 3rd we visited Pinner for the replayed Cup-tie against Old Lyonians, losing an even game 1—3. The features of the match were the excellent display of Sullivan at centre-forward for the Old Boys and the failure of our own forwards to adapt themselves to the heavy conditions. There was far too much dribbling and close passing attempted, with the result that movements were continually breaking down and that our defence was thoroughly overworked.

We had an away league fixture against West Wickham on December 10th, and giving a much improved display ran out worthy winners 2—0. The Hill opened strongly but owing to the home side's good defence could only score once in the first half, Woollends netting a well-judged header. Jacques made the result sure just before the end of the game, adding the finishing touch to a combined left-wing movement. The defence was truly rock-like, and Gus Gowers, having a run-out as linesman after his injury, congratulated the forwards after the game on their scintillating display.

On the next Saturday West Wickham came to Fords Grove for the return match and although we hoped to repeat the previous week's dose we had to be satisfied with a draw 3—3. In the first half our defence seemed to forget much of what their worthy coach had told them, and allowed the visitors to score three goals. Woollends and Bain netted for us, however, so that we turned round 2—3. To show what they could do the defence closed up like an oyster in the second half, and a

late goal by Guettier earned us a point. In this match, as a fortnight previously, the attack lapsed into adopting close tactics in heavy conditions, and they suffered accordingly.

We were snow-bound over the Christmas holidays, but, returning to the fray on December 31st with the return match against Old Parkonians at Ilford, we won an enjoyable game 6—4. Right from the start the Old Boys played a fast, open game, and thoroughly deserved their lead of 3—1 at the interval. The Hill forwards had saved their fireworks until the second half apparently, when they netted five goals, and, as in the previous week, the defenders gave a far better display in this half. Jacques (3), Woollends (2), and Haycraft got the Hill goals.

Chapman is playing very well in goal, his chief asset being his good judgment in knowing when to come out and clear. The backs are also playing well, Varley in particular kicking a very long ball. The halves are tackling magnificently, particularly 90-minute Wiseman on the left, but their marking is not always all that might be desired. The forwards have maintained their average of three goals a match and if, especially on the heavier grounds, they will remember to swing the ball more, will get even more goals.

2nd XI REPORT.

Up to the time of going to press no reports whatever had been received by the Editor, although he is under the impression that some games have been played since our last issue.

3rd XI REPORT.

Only two reports have been received in time for this issue, and a third arrived too late for inclusion so it must be held over until our next. (See Stop Press).

On December 3rd we entertained Merton at home and enjoyed a very exciting game which ended in a draw of 3—all. From the point of view of the spectators, roaring their dismay from a packed grand-stand, the home team should have run up a substantial lead in the first half; the tricky state of the ground, however, made shooting uncertain, and the forwards' luck was out. We had to content ourselves with a half-time lead of 1—0, which we soon discovered was not enough. The defence held out valiantly until well into the second half when the Merton centre, a persistent menace to our goal, broke through and upset our keeper's joie de vivre with three 'rolling-king' goals in a row. With some ten minutes to go we had already said good-bye to even one point when our 'Wilfred' on the left wing, spotting a talent scout from a BIG CLUB in the stand, rallied the forwards and scored two excellent goals from long cross passes. He scraped the bar with a third and almost 'Pipped' our visitors on the post; a narrow 'Squeak' but a fair result.

December 10th was a day about which the writer has long since tried to forget. We journeyed to Acton, 'midst a sea of mud and factory chimneys, to be completely out-weighted and out-witted by Ealing Association. The score was—roughly—11—0, six of which came in the last ten minutes when the light was so bad that the Hill defence became aware of an attack only after the ball had hit the back of the net. The Ealing boys had the first-time first-team touch about them, and after the first twenty minutes, in which we held our own and should have scored on several occasions, they blotted us out of the game. The referee remarked to the writer on the sporting way in which our fellows stuck it out, and that alone is worth recording.

4th XI REPORT.

Details of only two matches have reached the Editor for this issue, but on the 10th, 17th and 24th December no games were played, the first two being scratched and the last was abandoned owing to the ground being under snow.

On the 3rd December we entertained Crouch End Vampires and rather disappointingly lost 0—2. The sides were evenly matched but the Vampires had just that extra bit of spirit among the forwards which turns chance into a goal. Actually we had more of the play territorially but our forwards were sadly lacking in enterprise and many chances were squandered.

With a bleak Christmas behind us, and hampered by the obvious effects of too much plum pudding and too little training, we lost again at home to Carshalton on December 31st. The score of 3—0 does credit to our opponents, who were one short, and came about principally because their forwards were able to overcome the soggy conditions and still obtain some punch behind their shots. We had equal opportunities but lacked any power in finishing; some of our boys could do well in putting their own weight behind their kicking. They would improve by watching our veteran, Leslie Brown, in action on a wet pitch. Hobbs, who is gradually improving and growing more confident, saved a penalty kick in this match.

A TRIBUTE TO OUR LANDLORDS.

In an issue of the "Chat" during last season the question was asked whether our Members quite realised the tremendous advantages they had by virtue of the security of tenure under which our ground is held. In comparison with some Clubs we are wonderfully well placed, as

the long view and sure steps taken for many years past by the parent club have ensured that our football has a long and steady future. This was emphasised within the last few weeks when it became known that Folly Farm had been sold and, as a consequence, it is probable that our old friends, Crouch End Vampires, will be compelled to vacate their ground at the end of this season. In these days when, in spite of Fitness Councils, organisations of various sorts for providing Playing Fields, and the cry for more and yet more open spaces, the building of houses is going on all round us and those open spaces disappearing, we take our football for granted with perhaps too easy a complacency ; but we hope that our efforts to improve the ground and its amenities, with the co-operation of the parent club, will prove that we fully appreciate our good fortune. Bearing this in mind let us hark back a little, and afterwards see where we have got to now. The matter of finance is beside the point, as no Club can exist without taking special measures in this regard ; had we not been lucky about it we could not have done even as little as has been possible.

When the Club started in 1920 the parent club, which had at that time been in existence for well over 40 years, gave us the use of one pitch, and very generous they were too about the rent. After a bit we ran a 2nd XI, and as time went on more playing members coming along necessitated another pitch, and the prestige of the Club demanded it when the Middlesex Cup had been won a time or two and eventually admission gained to the Southern Amateur League. Then came the opportunity to enter first a 3rd XI and later a 4th XI in the Nemean League. Suggestions are being made now that a 5th XI should be formed and—well, we shall see. The point is that we have never had any anxiety as to making plans for the future because our

tenancy, and, far more important, our ground, are secure.

Hand in hand with this progress in playing strength went our continual pressure on the parent club for ground improvements, well received if firmly controlled since they had to keep an eye on the common purse, and although they helped us when they could, not much was able to be done until some three years ago. Then our finances improved, by our own efforts, to an extent which permitted us to shoulder some of the burden and long-overdue schemes were seriously considered.

The most necessitous was concerned with the pitches themselves. Owing to local regulations we have only been able to provide ourselves with a wooden structure in the one place suitable for a stand, and this site dictated the position of the 1st XI pitch, known as the top pitch, considered by some to be inferior to the bottom pitch. This top pitch had two faults ; it was not drained and it had an awkward slope down towards one corner. To level it is out of the question on account of expense, and we must become far richer than we are now if we are ever to contemplate it. The draining, however, was within our means, and we have carried this out, with the help of the parent club, at a cost of well over £100. The great improvement in the playing surface as a consequence is self-evident on the top pitch, and by the end of this season the lower pitch will be drained as well and the whole scheme completed.

The dressing and bath accommodation has not been overlooked, and although we have already improved the hot water supply we cannot go ahead yet with the new plunge bath, for which funds are in hand, or new changing rooms, as the whole question of accommodation is at present the subject of

consideration by the parent club, and money spent on it by us now might be ill-advised until their decision is known.

Our latest step has been the engagement of a coach. Up to now good results have been obtained, but given a season or two of an advantage such as this and it is obvious that we may travel a long way on the road of better performances. Those members who do not train, particularly on Tuesday evenings when Mr. Thompson attends at the pavilion, are missing more than they realise. And nowadays it costs nothing to train, since the Club bears all the expense of lighting, heating of water, etc., and does not expect members to contribute to it as was formerly the case. Flood-lighting, for field practice, is at present under consideration, and if it is decided to go in for it this should prove a further attraction on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the training nights.

Lastly, who has not derived benefit and pleasure from his association with Sergt. Ambridge, that genial and Figaro-like gentleman from St. John's Ambulance? He will deal with anything from a cut to a corpse and never turn a hair. Long may he grace our ground on Saturdays!

Is there anything more we can do for you? Surely you will agree that we have done and are doing what we can? But your enthusiasm and Club spirit is all we wish to encourage. Give us these and our task will be easy. And our landlords will feel that they are not dealing with ungrateful tenants for whom they have accomplished so much in the past and whose interests continue to have their earnest consideration.

PEN PORTRAITS

Norman Welsford.

Norman joined the Football Club in 1933 from Latymer School, and now, at the age of

21, he is a veteran of six years' service. In his first season he became an established member of a brilliant 2nd XI and was called upon for the 1st XI in the last match of the season. He played a sparkling game but was so badly injured that he was out of the game for the early part of the following season and then failed to reveal his previous form. From 1935/6 to 1937/8 he was a stalwart of the 2nd XI and had short, but disappointing, spells with the senior team. Absence from the game, due to knee injury and a broken arm and consequent increasing avoirdupois, seemed to slow Norman down, and he appeared destined to remain as a clever 2nd XI player not quite able to make the grade. He will probably disagree, but opinion inclines to date his renaissance from the occasion when he was dropped to the 3rd XI. This acted like a tonic, and Norman was playing more like his younger self at the end of last season. This season he deputised at inside-left for Bacon, due to the latter's injury, and made that place his own. Serious training and, more than all, self-confidence in feeling himself established in the 1st XI at last, wedded to his own natural ability, have made him a worthy member of a rapidly improving side.

Norman has played practically his whole Club football at inside-left to Guettier and Arnold Wrigglesworth. He is completely double-footed—not merely in kicking but in dribbling, which is a very rare phenomenon even in professional football, and though handicapped by lack of inches he gets up to the ball in the air. He distributes the ball intelligently, always trying to find a colleague in an open space and to place the ball on the ground, and whatever side he has played in there has speedily sprung up a close left-wing partnership. Sometimes this has been too close, and Norman would improve his game by devoting more attention to the right wing.

He has recently improved both in stamina and speed, and packs a really good shot that is, however, rarely seen owing to his playing somewhat behind the other forwards according to tactical plan.

Norman is a first-rate wicket-keeper-batsman, and last season played for the Hill 1st XI. Short, rotund and smiling, he has a legion of friends and acquaintances in clubs and pubs, and is fortunate to possess the encouragement of two parental vice-presidents.

Norman Eldred.

Norman Eldred is one of the stalwarts who have played for all four elevens; but whereas most of these heroes can trace a fairly steady course upwards and/or downwards, Norman plays for all elevens indiscriminately. Meteoric rise and decline have followed each other with such baffling frequency that one may well regard him as the Club's 'Will o' the Wisp.' This impression is also firmly imbued in many of our opponents who have tried to mark our elusive winger, for no matter what the state of the ground, Norman can always find an extra turn of speed to round an opponent. Perhaps the secret lies in his mysterious way of spending most of his time off the ground, his feet, looking like a pair of snow shoes twinkling in the midnight sun, completely disconcerting the opposition who have been heard to advise each other to go for the ball and 'Never mind the — aeroplane.' Most of Eldred's games have been played with the 4th's and no matter how heavily the side have been beaten, you usually hear that they have scored once through Eldred.

Both on and off the field he is always cheery and his peculiarly pitched voice is rarely ever heard in disparagement of a fellow member. Nevertheless he is a keen observer and when called upon to report a game he has few equals

in the Club for combined humour and perspicacity.

In the summer he plays Tennis also at the Club and is at present Secretary of the Tennis Section.

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CLUB JOTTINGS

We apologise to Members for the error in our last issue concerning the date of the Club Dance. This is to be held at Royalty Hall, as usual, and the date should have read Wednesday, 22nd FEBRUARY, 1939.

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The flood-lighting was merely being tested out on the evening of December 20th. This had nothing whatever to do with the 2nd XI Cup-ties with Old Lyonians; so far these are being confined to Saturday afternoons. If they are still going on when these lines appear in print we shall either play them by flood-light or wait for the extra hour of daylight to come in. Seven further 2nd XI league games have been meantime provisionally cancelled.

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Several burglaries having been lately attempted at the Pavilion the groundsman wishes it to be known that the massage table is what it is, and not a bed for a resident night-watchman.

* * *

Two of our younger members have evolved a new method of dealing with the common cold—they have only one between them. This is very useful to the Team Secretary as he knows that if one cries off with "a heavy cold" the other one is sure to be fit to play.

Congratulations to Gordon Summerfield on his mileage-cum-playing record set up on December 17th. Having been advised of his game against the Old Lyonians 3rd XI at Pinner he drove there from Greenwich only to find that, due to a non-delivered card to another player, he was the twelfth. His uptake being quickened he immediately drove back to Winchmore Hill in time to play through a large portion of the 2nd XI match, also against Old Lyonians. He is now known as Winter-Shell.

* * *

During the week ending December 17th the Team Secretary played a low game with Ken Bain. The latter was advised, on the 14th, that he was on the rota ; on the 15th he was asked to play for the 3rd XI against Old Lyonians at Pinner ; on the 16th this was altered to the 2nd XI for Old Lyonians at home ; and finally he played for the 1st at home against West Wickham. The Team Secretary is still alive, but only because Bain couldn't find him at home on the 18th. What a 3-card trick !

* * *

FOR THE GREY MATTER

Double Acrostic.

1. The ball when over the line it doth go
Or the player who's kicked with upturned toe.
2. Sometimes felt not without reason
In mid-week games at the end of the season.
3. The Ref's decision may be amiss
But even so it's no use this.

4. Of old this was the winger's art
But now he plays a different part.
5. Purple, white, and black perhaps
But never worn by Nippon's chaps.
6. Heads or tails to win or lose
Or make an extra word to use.
7. Play up ! and you'll win all these
Credit, Fame, Renown, Prestige.
Downwards you'll find first and last
Two of our players one present one past.

* * *

STOP PRESS.

On Saturday 31st December, 1938, the 3rd XI were matched against Carshalton's 3rd XI. The pitch was very slippery and in parts wet ; both sides found great difficulty in keeping their balance and their feet under control. Notwithstanding this, all played well and for sometime play ran evenly ; then our opponents opened the scoring and before half-time they again scored without our being able to reply, although their goal had many narrow escapes.

After the interval we struggled to reduce Carshalton's lead ; Brooks playing at left back was a tower of strength to us, and helped to repulse the onslaughts, whilst Howson (at inside left) strived to make openings ; from a shot by Mold, which rebounded off the cross-bar, Knapp scored. Thereafter play ran slightly in Carshalton's favour but thanks to good defending only one more goal was scored against us.



Please Reserve—

the evening of

Wednesday, February 22nd,

for the

Football Club Dance

at

ROYALTY HALL,

Winchmore Hill Road.

TICKETS 3/6

Including Refreshments.



TEAM RECORDS (UP to and including 31st Dec.)

									Goals.
			Played.	Won.	Drawn.	Lost.	For.	Against.	Points
1st XI.	League	...	7	4	1	2	19	18	9
	Cup-ties	...	5	2	2	1	15	10	—
	Friendlies	...	1	1	—	—	5	4	—
			13	7	3	3	39	32	—
2nd XI.	League	...	6	3	—	3	18	21	6
	Cup-ties	...	5	1	3	1	6	5	—
	Friendlies	...	1	—	—	1	2	5	—
			12	4	3	5	26	31	—
3rd XI.	League	...	10	4	2	4	15	25	10
	Cup-ties	...	1	—	—	1	1	8	—
	Friendlies	...	1	—	—	1	2	4	—
			12	4	2	6	18	37	—
4th XI.	League	...	8	3	—	5	16	29	6
	Friendlies	...	2	—	—	2	2	10	—
			10	3	—	7	18	39	—