

WINCHMORE HILL FOOTBALL CHAT

CLUB COPY

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APL 1944



with Compliments

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Compiled, Arranged and Edited by GEORGE DEACOCK.

[APRIL, 1944.

Editorial

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BEING at a loss for a theme for an Editorial for this issue, I glanced through some of the old copies of 'The Chat' and was struck by two things. Firstly how often the early promise of pre-war war seasons turned to disappointment in the last few weeks, and secondly how greatly the success achieved by the Club during the War Period has exceeded our expectations of 1939.

This year as we near the end of the season the 1st XI show every sign of maintaining their standard of play without any falling away, and at the time of going to press have now won 16 of their last 17 games. Whilst we would not claim that the opposition has always been the equal of pre-war standard, the fact that this run includes away victories over Barclays Bank, Norsemen and Wood Green Town proves that this success has not been cheaply won.

Those of us who can still lay hands on the December 1939 issue might well re-read our Chairman's letter setting out the objects which we set ourselves to achieve during the War Period. These were our goal, but few if any of us then believed that we should not only hold our own but actually be relatively stronger after five years of War.

Elsewhere in this issue appears a report of the Annual General Meeting of the Parent Club. To those Members who were present, and who had been present at similar Meetings for some years, it appeared to be the least controversial of any. As a rule this might imply lack of interest, but in this case the conduct of the affairs of the Club gave such satisfaction that general congratulation was manifest. Various suggestions were, of course, forthcoming which will doubtless receive due consideration, but the Club as a whole is in good health and preparing with Confidence for the return of Peace Time Sport and Good Fellowship.

1st XI. REPORT.

Since last reporting and up to and including 26th February, the 1st XI has had a most successful spell, although on three occasions games were not possible owing to weather conditions or other reasons. Results of the ten games during the period are as follows :—

Played 10, Won 9, Lost 1. For 48. Against 17

and the combined results for the season 1943/44 to date are :—

Played 19, Won 15, Lost 3, Drawn 1. For 87, Against 41.

Both on December 4th and 11th we found ourselves with no game but Norsemen were met away on the following week when the Hill ran out decisive victors by the convincing score of 8—3. The match was not nearly as one-sided as the result indicates, however, and our eight goals were due to the forwards deadliness in front of goal with Barber and Haskell being particularly menacing.

Our next match was on Boxing Day and the usual Charity game versus Broomfield was played at Hazelwood Lane. The long series of ties between the two clubs was at last broken this day and we deservedly emerged winners by 4 goals to 1, after leading 1—0 at half-time. With a steady defence and a quick moving forward line, the Hill always looked the better side and Keenan at centre-forward gave a scintillating display, including netting 3 of the goals.

The game originally fixed for January 1st was cancelled by our opponents and so we had yet another encounter with our good neighbours Norsemen and won yet again, this time by 2—1. The match was as enjoyable and robust as ever with these foes but the football was rather below par at times.

We were away the following week to Wood Green Town, the Herts and Middlesex League side in the Wood Green and Southgate Hospital Cup and gained a most praiseworthy victory 5—3. This win can be attributed largely to some excellent passing movements and sureness in front of goal and to a hard-tackling and hard working defence which never cracked even under extreme pressure. Birch, in particular, worked like a Trojan at inside left and Peters in goal made some grand saves at certain critical stages of the game. We are drawn against Norsemen in the semi-final of the Cup but despite (or by reason of !) our previous 4 victories against them this season, we are not taking the forthcoming meeting at all lightly.

There was no game on January 15th and the next Saturday we visited Norbury to play Barclays Bank. A fast open game ended in another win for the Hill, 2—1, and this was exceptionally gratifying having regard to the very heavy defeat we suffered on that ground the previous season.

On January 29th we lost (after 9 successive wins, which is surely an all-time record for a Hill 1st XI !) to N.F.S. (London Region), a side holding a high place in the South-Eastern Combination, the Firemen finishing deserved victors by the narrow margin 5—4. The sides were very evenly matched although the visitors were rather more polished. A feature of the game was the scoring of 3 excellent goals by Haskell at outside right.

The following week we were away to Broomfield in our third encounter with that Club this season and won narrowly 1—0, Barber netting in the first half from a pass from Wiseman. The game was scrappy and the standard of play was nowhere near that of our previous match with the Brooms.

We had the return fixture with Alexandra Park at home on February 12th and completed a very decisive double over the Park by winning by 11—1 although the visitors had a greater share of the play than the score suggests. From time to time, however, there were large gaps in the Park's defence which the Hill's forwards lost little time in exploiting. Haskell got 5 and Barber 3.

The next Saturday we met Old Aloysians away and as a result of the vagaries of the post fielded 9 men only. These 9, though, put up a sterling fight and we emerged victors by 6—2 after drawing 2—2 at the interval. We had the welcome assistance of Frank Hunter, home on leave, and he performed very stoutly at right back, having the energy and audacity even, towards the end of the game, to score No. 6 for us from the outside right position.

Our home game versus Edware Town for February 26th was unfortunately scratched owing to their London Senior Cup Tie and we had an L.F.F. XI as visitors to Fords Grove. The soccer in the first half was good class although both sides tended to resort too frequently to short passing movements but the standard deteriorated noticeably after change of ends and we eventually won rather easily 5—0.

The Hill 1st XI has developed into a really sound combination during the past few months with Wiseman, as always, forming the effective king pin of the defence. Theoretically by far our greatest handicap is age (someone recently computed the average age to be 33) but in practice we do not appear to suffer at all in that respect; although perhaps it's a trifle shaking to realise that the combined ages of the 4 old men forming our right flank are nearly 150 years!

It is no doubt interesting to set down on record what perhaps has been our strongest combination this season and one which we have fortunately been able to field quite frequently:—Peters (Goal), Cooper (R.B.), Manners (L.B.), Wootton (R.H.), Wiseman (C.H.), Ings (L.H.), Haskell (O.R.), Barber (I.R.), Keenan (C.F.), G. Birch (I.L.), Guettier (O.L.).

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2nd XI. REPORT.

December 4th, Norsemen Res. with a strong side gave us a very good and enjoyable game. We did however have the services of several 1st XI men which enabled us to win 4—2.

December 11th, saw us again in the shadow of the Spurs ground playing "Old Ignatians." Wiseman, who came along to keep his toes in form played against us, much to our discomfort and our opponents playing well throughout deserved their win of 6—3. Cullens and Henry Brown gave a good display for us.

December 18th, our return match with Royal Dental Hospital was a very fast and thrilling game with Bill East making sure to avenge our previous defeat by winning 5—1.

December 27th, we paid one of our many visits to Edmonton to play Norsemen again, and with everyone feeling that Xmas spirit, there was a good ding-dong game, Henry Brown and Bill did well and Cambell home on leave helped us with his sound judgment in goal. After being 2—0 up at half-time Norsemen came back at us and made the final score 3—2 in their favour.

January 8th, Old Minchendenians giving us another visit found that we were much quicker on the ball and our forwards had found their shooting boots also Simmons in goal stopping nearly everything that came his way we won 7—4.

Owing to fog we were unable to play Crown Manor on the 15th but had a very good game with Old Stationers on the 22nd at home losing 4—2. Bell, Chapman and Haynes played well in the attack but couldn't just get that ball inside the posts enough times.

January 29th, saw us at Alexandra Park on a very dull day, no one really got going on our side so Alexandra Park taking the initiative scored 6 to our 1.

February 1st, Wood Green Town Res. came to Fords Grove and after a somewhat boisterous game won by 4—0. Thanks to our stone-wall defence that the score was kept to what it was.

February 12th, once more we met our old friends at Edmonton, Norsemen, and in what seemed an endless goal match won by 9 to 7. Hasemore on leave helped the attack to keep moving while skipper Bill Earle kept the ball well up to the forwards. Barratt who came along to watch said he had to keep score with match sticks.

FORCES NEWS.

The two members reported in the last bulletin as being in Cyprus are now no longer there. H. A. Locking has visited Fords Grove while on disembarkation leave and Bill Brookes is known to be in Italy.

Ken White writes from India that the war is responsible for his delaying the hanging up of his football boots, this sport at present providing his sole form of exercise.

Keith Midgley is back in the home country from M.E.F.

A letter from L. Smith acknowledging his Xmas parcel forwarded from Egypt to him at his present C.M.F. address in the heart of Italy. He tells of billeting in a country house miles from civilisation and the advent of mail and newspapers, the one bright spot in life.

R. Bruce writes from an equally lonely spot—Iceland.

Jock White, last heard of in Cairo, is now B.N.A.F.

Jack Pearl is seeing much activity in the vicinity of Italy these days.

Congratulations also to Doug. Deacock, in West Africa, on his promotion to captain.

Frank Oyler writes from Italy, saying he is fit once more and back on his job.

Don Ashley in Texas, acknowledges his Xmas parcel and tells of having completed and passed his primary flying course and being now in the throes of the advanced one.

Duncan Currie is in Iceland.

Bill Brooke has been wounded in the leg during the recent fighting in Italy. Preliminary reports however state that the damage is not likely to prove serious.

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PEN PORTRAITS.

ERNIE WISEMAN.

No longer do we see that sleek head popping up in impossible places to nod a muddy football accurately and far. The Austerity Era and the resulting scarcity of brilliantine has converted sleek haired Ernie to wavy-haired Ernie and all that remains of his former natty splendour are the strips of sticking plaster securing his specs. His skill at heading however is unimpaired. Preferably a left-half, he has moved to the centre-half position for the two seasons where his long, accurate kicking is invaluable. Any ball that goes down the middle of the field in the air goes to him as if magnetically drawn and one gets the impression that he is much taller than he really is. Which is about the best anyone can say of any centre-half.

Apart from his devastating tackles which are more anticipatory than forceful, Ernie's long passes to the wing (too often with his left foot, we think) are a delightful feature of his play. Occasionally when the game is going well for the Hill, he delights the purists by forsaking the third-back position and making his way upfield, seldom with any effect, but like all natural defenders he imagines he is an inside forward. The older members in the stand are delighted however by this touch of Corinthian play.

Ernie is one of the loyalist members of the side and being a non-drinker and non-smoker amazes all in the bar with his capacity for grape-fruit. In the summer he is an opening left-handed bat for North Middlesex C.C. for whom he usually makes his 1,000 runs per season.

HENRY BROWN.

Henry Brown, who attained his majority but a year or so ago is a young newcomer to the Club, by reason of his general popularity however, he might well be one of the longest standing members.

Henry plays in any of the inside forward positions—with preference for centre-forward—and has notched a relatively high proportion of the goals registered by the Reserves during the past few seasons. His main attributes are a really strong accurate shot and well timed distribution of the ball to his colleagues. He is a heavy-weight, however, and quite understandably tends to be slow in movement but this disadvantage on the field is offset largely by good positional play. We are told that he is an excellent goalkeeper as well, when asked to play there in an emergency but insofar as that is his version perhaps it should be accepted with some reserve.

Henry is truly versatile in the full sense of the word being also a very useful cricketer, a comely player of the piano and mandoline, a good conversationalist and in fact an excellent fellow.

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THE WOOD GREEN & SOUTHGATE HOSPITAL FOOTBALL COMPETITION.

Having departed from our Peace-time policy of limiting our Cup activities to the County and Open A.F.A. Cups, readers may be interested to know something of the Competition for which we have entered this season.

This Competition was inaugurated in 1908 and in the first year raised £51 which at that time was equivalent to a much larger sum to-day. This sum was however not equalled for another four years, and then just as an improvement was achieved the Great War intervened.

Immediately after the war, great progress was made and season 1919/20 surpassed all expectations by realising £200. The peak was reached in 1922/23 when £400 was handed to the Hospital Authorities.

In considering the allocation of the Competition's donations, the Hospital Authorities decided to " earmark " these towards their Re-Building Fund which to date has received £4,865 in this way.

For many years the Competition comprised only Junior Clubs or reserve teams of Senior Clubs in the district, but in 1935/36 the committee was successful in forming a Senior Section of eight Clubs.

The present President, Chas. Turner, was the prime mover in the formation of the Competition and in the earlier years was a pillar of strength, as was also W. G. Doyle.

The outbreak of war in 1939 again put a stop to the activities of the Competition and it was not until the current season that it was felt possible to make an attempt to restart. The response was very encouraging and it appeared possible to re-commence with a major Competition. The Committee, however, decided that in order to secure a firm basis for future years this seasons activities should be limited to a Senior Section with a maximum of eight Clubs to form a nucleus. Invitations were accepted by Alexandra Park, Broomfield, Mayfield, Norsemen, Old Stationers, Winchmore Hill, Wood Green Town and Wood Green Civil Defence, and so far the returns auger well for a handsome start.

PARENT CLUB — ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Pavilion on Sunday, February 27th, and was attended by some 70 Members. It was a very good meeting in every respect, and the Report and Accounts were well received. The total membership was shown as being 327, compared with 341 at the Annual General Meeting held in 1938. Obviously this very satisfactory figure was not due to playing members, who have now far more important duties to attend to elsewhere, but it reflects a big increase in Honorary Members—from 92 in 1938 to 151 in 1944 (actually figures were made up to the end of last cricket season, and a further improvement is shown since then). The Honorary Members are a sure reflection of the good sport being shown by the Club, which is attracting ever-growing numbers of interested spectators.

Some 150 members are now in the Services, about half of whom are, or have been, overseas, but these are not included in the membership figures given. We mourn the loss of six of our members since the War began—Dennis Huntley, Jack Wisher, and K. A. S. Keston all of the R.A.F., W. G. C. Bartley, R.A. and L. F. Ireland, R.A.S.C., as well as Dr. Giles, a civilian, whilst proceeding overseas on Government duty. There are five prisoners of war—Gordon Hayward, Norman Welsford and John Kilbey, all R.A., V. S. Tyrell, Rifle Brigade and Pat Rollings, Royal Fusiliers. Two are missing—George Newsham and D. Pearson, both R.A.F. Three have been invalided out—Eric Christie, John Haines and E. Bryant.

Tribute was paid to Sam Spratley, in a very moving appreciation by the Chairman, Mr. J. North, who spoke of his sterling work for the Club over long years, and of his kindness and ready help to everyone with whom he came into contact. At a later stage during the Meeting, the Hon. Secretary announced that a communication had been received to the effect that Sam had bequeathed a sum of £25 to be used for the benefit of the Club he loved so well. To mark the esteem in which Sam was held by all, Mr. North suggested that Mrs. Spratley be elected to a Life Membership and this met with unanimous approval. A member further suggested that once during each cricket season a match should be arranged to be known as the Spratley Memorial Match, and it was also made known that a standing memorial should be provided in the shape of a plaque to be placed in a suitable position on the Club premises. Thus may be perpetuated one of the finest characters and best cricketers ever to play for the Club.

Though there was a deficiency of £71 on the year's working, this, for various reasons, is not as serious as it might appear, since the income has been computed for the 12 months ended September 30th, 1943, whereas the expenditure carries the figures up to October 31st. This was thought the most satisfactory method of effecting outstanding payments so as to show a true picture of the accounts, and as there are certain unascertained credits due from the War Damage Commission, it is probable that the Balance Sheet at the 30th September next may prove more satisfactory from the point of view of cash resources.

As members will have been kept up to date, by means of Bulletins and Chats, with the progress of events during the cricket season of 1943, no masses of figures are likely to be of interest at this stage. It was a most successful season, and the 1944 games arranged show that this is not likely to be any less successful. It is particularly gratifying to see both Hornsey and Southgate on our fixture list again, and we look forward to these games with especial pleasure. The usual matches with the British Empire and West Indies XI's will be played, as well as others of a special nature, details of which will be circulated in due course.

Both the Tennis and Football Sections continue to flourish, though these suffer from periodical departures of members to the Services, the latter possibly more than the former. A useful influx of new members to the Tennis Section was recorded during last summer, some of whom produced a high standard of play. The usual competitions were held and provided some extremely good tennis. The Annual General Meeting of the Football Club will be held during May next and a full report of this will appear in due course.

Congratulations were offered to Mrs. Stuart Hancock on her efficient conduct of the Comforts Fund, this having raised a total of £200 odd in about 3½ years—all by means of small

amounts with very occasional windfalls and all being spent for the exclusive benefit of those of our members on service. That it is highly appreciated is shown by the best test—the enthusiastic response to Mrs. Hancock's request that all serving members should keep in touch with her, so that she may, in turn, keep them in touch with one another. And the letters of thanks coming from all over the world will surely form a unique collection for preservation in the Club records. To a stay-at-home they are intensely interesting, those from members serving in the British Isles no less than those from abroad.

The running of the Canteen is another aspect of Club activities which is of extreme importance. All rations are, of course, rigidly controlled, and members have played their part in ensuring that these go as far as possible. Mr. Jupp has this department under his control, and this is another case where everything is so efficiently done that members can have not the least idea of the work and organisation involved.

Miss Paulin was again elected President of the Club, and it is hard to say what we should do without her kindness and enthusiastic support year after year. Mr. J. North was again nominated for Chairman, and agreed to serve although it may not be possible for him to continue in office throughout the year. There is, however, a lot to be said for the suspension of the rule that a different Chairman should be elected each year, as Mr. North has shown that continuity is a very good thing. Mr. O. C. Dupont was re-elected as Hon. Secretary, with Mr. Harold Brown to assist him. Mr. Claude Dyer, who had so ably taken over Mr. Spratley's treasurership at short notice, was elected Treasurer, and appealed to members to support him in the best way possible—by paying their subscriptions promptly. Mr. Rex Taylor had agreed to continue as the Club's Hon. Auditor.

This Meeting shows that the Club is flourishing, and with the willing co-operation of everyone that it will most certainly go on doing so.

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CHRISTMAS IN TEXAS.

(Being extracts from a letter received from one of our members training with the R.A.F. in America).

F/Lt. Palmer put us in touch with a Dallas family by the name of Alderson. They are a young married couple of about 28 with a 4 year old son and a lovely Bungalow in the better suburbs of Dallas. We went out there on Friday afternoon having collected a Xmas present for Junior and we were immediately made thoroughly at home by Mrs. Alderson and within 5 minutes were sitting in front of a huge log fire (it has been round freezing point for 3-4 days) with a glass of Port at one hand and a box of chocolates at the other. During the evening the Party grew to about 8 or 9 when Mr. Alderson's and Mrs. Alderson's mother and father and other friends all turned up. All of them were wonderful people and did everything possible to give us the best time possible. After an excellent dinner of Ham with every trimming imaginable followed by beautiful Mince Tart and Cream, we had a quiet evening. At 11.00 we went with Mrs. Alderson's parents to the midnight Eucharist at their Church, St. Matthews Cathedral. It was a beautiful service, fully choral and including the Communion Service and rendered by an excellent Choir and Organist. It lasted over 2 hours. On Xmas morning we lay in a most comfortable bed till about 11 o'clock when we came downstairs to find Coffee and Buns awaiting us, together with 2 bulging Xmas Stockings. They were packed with useful little gifts all nicely and attractively wrapped up individually. We each had a bottle of Shavelotion, a book of stories by famous authors, a box of Razor Blades, a tin of Elastoplast, a pocket Dictionary, some food and other little novelties. We had a glorious Xmas dinner at about 2 o'clock. You should have seen that Turkey!! After which the menfolk drove us out to the final of the State Football Competition. We thoroughly enjoyed the game which is very similar to what we see on the films. Mr. Alderson explained the game to us and I now thoroughly understand it and find it really interesting. You would love to see the Cheer Ladies and Bands, etc. They have Chorus girls all round the

pitch and you can have plenty of fun without seeing the game. By the time we arrived back from the game, there was a bowl of Egg Nog waiting for us. It is a wonderful rich concoction of Whipped Cream, beaten Egg, Whisky, Nutmeg and all sorts of other things. Boy, was it good!! By now Mrs. Alderson had arranged a couple of dates for us, by which I mean she had got two girls whom she knew to collect us and see to our entertainment for the evening. The next job was to dispose of the rest of the Turkey, however that didn't take long. Bill and I then had a bath and cleaned up generally and at half past 8 the two girls, Edwina and Louise, called for us with Edwina's Car. They had a reserved table for us at one of the best dances in Dallas, at the Plantation and we had a magnificent evening. Altogether there were about 8 of the chaps from our course there with their girls, so we got together and made a big party of it. During the evening we had a photo taken of the group by the Official Photographer there and we had the prints within an hour in very nice blue folders. I have got mine signed by everyone and it is a most treasured possession. They also announced from the stage that there were 8 or 9 R.A.F. Officers (that's us) there, a long way from home and that they were going to play two English Waltzes in our honour. There were probably 800 people there and the terrific reception we got was most embarrassing. We were eventually driven back home by the girls at something like 3 a.m. and we slept solidly until 12 midday when we were rudely awakened by Jimmy (the little boy) beating us out of bed with his new gun which broke in the process, soon followed by the Table Tennis Bat which he substituted for it. He is a grand little chap and we were firm friends by the time we left. As soon as we were ready we were driven round to Mrs. Alderson's parents place to eat. They also have a lovely Bungalow, if anything, more luxurious than the other one and the 2 families share a negress servant who has been with them for 18 years and is a marvellous cook and generally a great acquisition. After dinner we settled down before the fire with Port and Cigars in soft armchairs, listening to some fine gramophone records (Tchaikovsky and Schubert) on the Radiogram. I thought of you all back at home while we were sitting there and wondered if you were having such a marvellous time. Later we listened to the World Football Championship game from Chicago on the wireless and then Bill and I as promised, rang up Edwina and Louise who at 5.30 came over in Louisa's car this time to stay for a while and then drive us back. About 6 o'clock the whole family had to go out to meet Mrs. Alderson's brother who was coming home on his first leave from the navy, so we all left together and they gave us the key of the other house for the girls to drive us back there and collect our stuff, etc., and also fixed us up with some food in case we grew hungry back at the camp. After such a unique time you can well imagine that it was pretty hard going back to work next morning. However, it poured with rain so we were spared flying and only had ground school.

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CLUB JOTTINGS.

We regret that we have to report the death of yet another Vice President, George Burgoyne who will be remembered by older Members as an energetic committeeman during the Club's early years.

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The Boxing Day Charity Match with Broomfield, whilst not so successful as the corresponding game last season, realised over £34, the proceeds going to the Southgate Prisoners of War Relatives Association.

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Absent members will be sorry to hear that a protracted illness has kept our Chairman, Mr. P. F. Hockley, away from the Club for some time. His condition has been aggravated by an attack of Phlebitis and we extend him our deepest sympathy in his trouble.

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The response to our Editors request for contributions, has to put it mildly been disappointing. We know that those at home now have little spare time, but feel sure that there is plenty of latent talent if only thoughts and ideas could just be set down in black and white and then despatched quickly before too critical an afterthought causes a loss of heart.