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WINCHMORE HILL **FOOTBALL CHAT**

November
1948



With Compliments

WINCHMORE HILL FOOTBALL CLUB

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Editorial

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Once again the Football Season is here and by the time you read these words will be in full swing. Once more upon a Saturday is heard the heart-warming sound of leather upon leather and the "phweep" of the referee's whistle (what a time they'll have with the new rules if we aren't careful!).

Last season's triumphs are behind us and yet ever before us. More than ever will it be difficult for our 1st XI to maintain their past record with every club out to take the "Champs." down a peg.

Time marches on and Gus Gowers hands over the Captaincy to Alec Lambert. Thanks, Gus, you did a grand job. To Alec we say : " Good Luck," and "here's to a good season."

To the 2nd XI go our best wishes and, if it's not unlucky to say so, our hopes of the Championship this time.

The 3rd XI will be all out to show us that they, too, can bring home the bacon, so nearly captured last season. The 4th XI, now backed by a 5th XI and relieved greatly of the "bogey of the Rota," will be starting off with high hopes of a successful debut in the new S.A.L. 4th Division. Our newly formed 5th XI has a full and interesting programme of friendlies on their new pitch, and we wish them all the best and look to them to produce our future stars.

The acquisition of a new pitch brings its attendant headaches and difficulties as well as its obvious advantages. Let's hope that things may go reasonably smoothly, and if we are a little crowded at times in the dressing room and if that "confounded — team is in the baths first again," remember that it is only temporary and well worth while.

We take this opportunity of welcoming all new members. We trust they will soon settle down and we wish them a happy future with our Club.

1ST XI REPORT.

The period under review covers from mid-November last until the end of the season, during which time the 1st XI reached the head of Division I, S.A.L., stayed there and, as we all now know, was successful in winning the Championship. We also reached the 4th Round Proper A.F.A. Senior Cup, where we were beaten 0—5 by Cambridge Town, who eventually, as anticipated, won the Cup.

In the League, 13 out of 20 matches were won, 3 drawn and 4 lost. It is noteworthy that in these 20 games only 23 goals were conceded. The fans were well rewarded for their support, vocal and financial, and their encouragement was much appreciated by the Hill team. The away record was not quite so convincing, half-hearted displays being given against Merton and Norsemen, to whom we lost 1—2 and 0—2 respectively.

In the A.F.A. Cup we overcame expectedly strong opposition from Sherwood Amateurs (Midland Amateur Alliance), R.N. Depot (London League) and Letchworth Town (Spartan League), unexpectedly virile resistance from Bayston (N. Suburban League) and, as mentioned above, met our match in Cambridge Town. In the latter game, to which the team was accompanied by three charabanc loads of supporters, the Hill, although holding the home team gallantly to one goal until 20 minutes in the second half, did not play up to their usual standard. This was particularly true in attack, and some good approach work was wasted by over-anxiousness and what was probably nervousness engendered by the large crowd watching and the importance of the occasion. Had we played as well as we could have done and scored a goal earlier on in the game—who knows? But then this is idle speculation and we do not want to make excuses. We were beaten by a better team and a very sportsmanlike team and are proud to have gone as far as we did and to have had the pleasure of playing in a match which will provide many pleasant memories of a grand day's sport.

The away victory over Letchworth was as complete as it was surprising, and January 10th marked the peak of our play during last season.

In our only friendly game we crashed badly 0—5 to London University. In spite of dressing-room exhortations, the side seemed resolved to treat the match in a very leisurely way. This may have been understandable after the previous competitive strain, but it was a back-handed compliment to a very fine side.

The defensive covering had been markedly improved by George Male, but there was always a suspicion that the system might break down. It never really did, at least not seriously enough to prevent our achieving our objective—the League Championship.

Ernie Wiseman played brilliantly at centre-half and Bill Brooks, at left back, was at one time the most improved member of the team. On the other hand, since Christmas, Alan Murray's play tended not to maintain its past soundness which contributed to some loss of mid-field supremacy.

The forwards were not as brilliant as in the previous season. This was partly due to the greater strength of our opponents, but also was due to a loss of punch and of balance within the attack itself. The earlier displays against Sherwood Amateurs (3—0) and Ealing (5—0) were scintillating, but later, whereas 18 goals were scored in 5 matches up to and including January 24th, only 7 goals were scored in the next 5 games against opposition which was certainly no stronger. Our main goal scorers were Reg. Saw and Les Lambert, but the playing of two "centre forwards" cannot be considered a success; there have been frequent gaps in the middle and too little fetching and carrying. The two centre-forward policy was a success in the special circumstances of the Letchworth match, but in general a more orthodox W formation might have produced better results. Ron Carter played consistently well without being as good as

we believe him to be ; Vic. Haskell learned how to get stuck in and to forage for himself without getting goals, but after Christmas Alec Lambert for some unaccountable reason ceased to be quite the striking force which he was throughout the 1946-7 season and for the first half of the last one.

Of the league games, one of the best performances was probably the defeat of Catford Wanderers away by 3 goals to 1 on January 3rd. Catford are a very good side and we were very fortunate to be on the top of our form on both occasions that we met them. We beat them at home 3—1 the week before under very similar conditions, there being a strong wind, against which the Hill played in the first half ; the score on that occasion was also 3—1. Perhaps our most disappointing display in a league match was against Merton, who at the time were lowly placed in the league, when we lost 1—2 away. Merton's vigorous spoiling tactics and concentration on defence, added to the fact that their two goals were presented to them by misunderstandings between Wiseman and Peters, negatived our mid-field supremacy. The Hill were unable to find a way through, and Les Lambert's goal five minutes from the end came too late. Space, unfortunately, does not permit of an account of the other games played.

For nearly two seasons the side has been on top—originally of Division II and then of Division I, S.A.L., and the strain clearly affected our play. Every opposing team was out to lower our colours, and in an effort to win we perhaps lost some measure both of enjoyment of the game itself and of the natural quality of our football. Nevertheless, that will not deter us this season from making every effort to carry on the good work of last, and we look forward under the new captaincy of Alec. Lambert to another season's enjoyable endeavour.

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2ND XI REPORT.

The 2nd XI had another successful season, and in our first season in Division I of the Reserves Section obtained 30 points out of a possible 40, finishing runners-up to Alexandra Park reserves. A pity we could not emulate the 1st XI in becoming champions at the first attempt, but A.P. reserves were a little more consistent and finished up with two points more than we had. After an indifferent start, 7 points out of 6 games, 5 points only were dropped in the remaining 14 league games.

The defence was very steady throughout the season, 20 goals only being conceded in the 20 league games and in no league game were more than two goals conceded.

The defence played very well together and were usually able to subdue the opposing forwards, and found that the pass back to goalkeeper Bill Kebble could be a very simple and effective way of getting out of trouble.

Bill Kebble played very confidently and safely throughout the season and very few wingers were able to get round Steve Plant and Don Ashby at back. Percy Attwood played his usual game as a stopper centre-half, and we were especially fortunate in having such excellent wing halves in Bernard Avent, John Mayer and Hatch.

The attack, due to various reasons, was subject to some changing about, with a consequence that out of the 51 goals obtained, 24 came from Bill Bailey.

At outside-right Frank Ward played very well, although we missed some of his goal-scoring efforts of the previous season, and Syd. Cuttler at inside-right was very consistent. From Bill Bailey we demanded the goals and he duly obliged. At inside-left Bernard Thompson never let up, and after Xmas we had Arthur Bailey at outside-left, who also showed the Bailey touch in cracking goals.

Our run in the A.F.A. Junior Cup was short in the number of rounds played, but lengthy in actual playing time. In the second round we visited **Saffron Walden** and won 2—1. In the third round at home we drew with **Letchworth Town** reserves 2—2, the game being abandoned in the second half of extra time. At Letchworth we again drew 1—1 after extra time, but at home in the second replay we crashed badly to the tune of 0—5.

It should be recorded that in one game we were very sorry to see Bill Bailey score. It happened thus: At half-time, Bill not having scored, vowed that should he not score in the second half, every member of the team would receive after the game, at Bill's expense, a pint of liquid nourishment. We did very well in keeping the ball away from Bill for 35 minutes, but, alas, a penalty was awarded against our opponents and almost before the sound of the referee's whistle had died away, Bill had taken the penalty and scored. It should be further noted that switching positions can be advantageous.

At **Westminster Bank** we were two goals down at half-time, but by one or two cunning switches, finished up by winning 3—2. At half-time we moved Bill Kebble from goal to centre-forward and Don Ashby from left back to goal. Bill's play at forward certainly split up the opposing defence, they did not know what was going on—neither did we. Don had a wonderful time in goal, as there was a puddle in front of our goalmouth and at the slightest provocation Don proceeded to hurl himself into the puddle.

Some of our best football was perhaps played against **Catford Wanderers** and **Norsemen** (second game). The latter game being played on a frozen ground and with a small portion of a blizzard going on.

The two needle games against **Alexandra Park** resulted in one win each, the game at A.P. being a triumph for Steve Plant and McAdam.

And so to season 1948/9, in which we hope to at least equal our play of last season.

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3RD XI REPORT.

The 3rd XI, under the regular captaincy of Sid. Hasemore, settled down into a really workmanlike team and although sometimes depleted by injuries or the call of higher elevens, was well served by the reserves, who filled the gaps and who did their utmost to live up to the team's reputation.

The 1947-8 season can be assessed as having been extremely successful. The 3rd XI has probably not produced such strong results for many years, it being the only side to score more than 100 goals and, furthermore, it went right through to the final of the Minor Cup, an achievement of which all who played in the side can be justly proud.

It took a little time early in the season to settle on the best side and also to obtain the services of a regular skipper. This job was taken on by Sid., whose keenness and enthusiasm certainly seemed to infuse new life into the side, despite the fact that, on one or two occasions, his goals past his own keeper would have shattered many a less united team!

To attempt to summarise everybody's personal efforts throughout the season would take up too much space, but we must not pass on without some small individual references. Alf. Meakin in goal in the early matches was particularly safe, but unfortunately, after a kick in the mouth during the second round of the Cup at Boro' Poly. in November, he was afflicted with a serious ailment which kept him in hospital dangerously ill for a long spell. He took no further part in football for the remainder of the season, but we

hope to see him next year performing as brilliantly as ever. Brother George Meakin, replacing Alf., was an extremely good acquisition, opinions differing as to who was the better. He served us well until taken ill with whooping cough just before the Cup semi-final.

Potter, who deputised in goal, was a useful stand-in, playing well in both Cup semi-final and final, although perhaps not being quite of the same class as the Meakin brothers. J. Williams, at right back most of the season, was a sound defender, very hard to pass and swift to turn defence into attack. His turn of speed amazed many. Various left backs were tried, as this was the one weak spot in the team, but none excelled so much as Phil Manners in this position, he being an ideal partner for Williams. The half-back line varied little. Gaunt at right-half was a tower of strength and Pain's experience on the left was invaluable—these two proved most reliable. Hasemore at centre-half, the only position in which he is really happy, was normally sound and, apart from aforementioned lapses when putting through his own goal, held his defence together well. Freddie McAdam, who came into the side near the end of the season, played well both at centre-half and inside forward. He is a young man of great potentialities. The forward line, apart from one or two occasions when goals were sorely needed, was normally in great form and was ably led by that prolific goal-scorer Keith Coles, top goal-scorer in the Club last season. At inside-left sterling support was given by Jimmy Bryce, a slight lad who does not look tough, but is well worth watching, and at inside-right by Stan. English, an older horse, but a stayer if there ever was one. These two scored some seemingly impossible goals. The wingers, too, were on the whole good. Ken. Bain, the "daddy" of the side, rendered stout service, as did young Fricker and old friend Frankie Thompson. The side finished third in the league and lost the Cup final 3—1. May they do as well this season. If they do, they can be justly proud.

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4TH XI REPORT.

Commencing with the game against Trinity County Old Boys at home on the 15th November, 1947, and concluding with the game against Polytechnic, also at home, on the 3rd April, 1948, this eleven can fairly say that they did indeed have their full measure of difficulty and misfortune. The unavoidable frequent team changes undoubtedly contributed in a large measure to many of our reverses on the field, which however on so many occasions were by the narrow margin of the odd goal.

The game against Trinity County Old Boys was lost by the only goal of the match, which was scored a few minutes before the final whistle.

In this game, as in so many others, mention should be made of the excellent work done by Tudor Williams at centre-half, who throughout the season worked so hard and tirelessly, often in the most difficult circumstances.

The next game, on the 22nd November, saw the Hill victorious over the Old Lyonians at Harrow, and more care in shooting would have resulted in more goals for the visitors. As it was, the result was a 2—1 win only. Both goals were scored by Williams, who at centre-forward put much life into the attack.

On the 29th November, Winchmore lost at home to North-West Polytechnic, and on this occasion the visitors were undoubtedly the better side and the best side in the League at that time. Bartley, at centre-forward, and Peter Graves, at left-half, were the best of the Hill side.

In the return with Trinity County Old Boys, away, on the 6th December, the home team won by the odd goal of five, after being on equal terms at half-time. In this game Coles made his debut for the Club and marked the fact with a fine goal in the first half. Pickard scored the Hill's second goal, and the visitors were somewhat unfortunate not to have been at least rewarded with a draw.

In the game against **Old Isleworthians**, at home, on December 12th, the Old Boys won by the odd goal of seven, and all three of the home team's goals were scored by Coles, who in this game was ably supported by Thompson at left-half. This was one of the games in which Meakin gave a characteristically fine display in goal before being put out of the game for so long by injury.

The match against **Mayfield**, on the Saturday after Christmas, could not by any means be called an enjoyable game, owing to the adverse weather conditions of a very high wind which blew straight down the field. The home team won by three clear goals, but had the visitors taken advantage of the wind when it was at their backs during the first half, they could well have scored as many.

By way of contrast, the Hill's next game, against **Maori** at Wallington, on the 3rd January, was one of the most enjoyable of the season. Played in ideal conditions and on an excellent pitch, the home side gained a deservedly good victory by 3 goals to 1. Meakin played a superb game in goal, and honours for fine work in defence must also go to Jackson and Barker, who had what was probably the best forward line to hold that they met during the season.

Visiting **Carshalton** the following Saturday, the Hill won 3—2 after a well-contested game, in which two fine goals were scored by Bartley. This game was marked by sound tackling and good marking by the visitors' defence, in which connection mention should be made of the good work of Jackson at left back and Pemberton at right-half.

On the 24th January, at home to **Kew Association**, the home side suffered a 4—1 reverse after being in the lead after some twenty minutes' play. For the Hill, Pemberton and Brierley did good work in the defence, and of the forwards, Thompson was always the most dangerous.

Away to **Crouch End Vampires** on the 31st January, the Hill lost 3—0, and credit for the win must go to the home team's good forward line. Potter gave a good display in the visitors' goal, saving two penalties, whilst Tudor Williams at centre-half was prominent, particularly in the second half.

On the 14th February, at Old Deer Park, the Hill lost by the odd goal of three in the return game with **Kew Association**. Both teams gave a good display of fast football and accurate tackling, and during the first half only a good defence saved Kew from being several goals down. Barratt and Bell were unlucky on many occasions not to score, and the former kept his other forwards well supplied throughout.

Playing two games in one afternoon against **Ealing** at home, on the 20th March, both of which games were marred by unnecessarily rough play, the Hill lost the first 3—6 and the latter 0—2. In the second game, which was more even, it appeared until shortly before the end that a draw would result. In the first game Bell and Spence scored for the home side, while a third was put in by the visitors' defence.

On Easter Saturday, March 27th, the Hill visited Syon Lane for the return game with **Old Isleworthians**, and in bright sun and high wind both teams enjoyed a fast game of good football. The Old Boys gained a 2—0 win, which was in no small measure due to an excellent display by their goalkeeper, who did well to save some fine shots from Barratt and Bartley.

In their last League game on the 3rd April, the Hill drew with **Polytechnic** at home, the visitors equalising just before time. The home team's first good goal came from Spence in the first half, and the other from Sid. Cooper in the second, both goals being the result of some fine work by Barratt.

In conclusion, it must be said that if the results did not achieve the hopes expected, at no time did the spirit of the team leave anything to be desired.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1948.

Held in the Club Pavilion on Friday evening, 28th May, the meeting was well attended and truly representative, "Rob." McLeod and Frank Smith mixing with last season's recruits.

The Chair was taken by Leslie (Tiger) Smith. Arising out of the Minutes, the suggestion that coloured shirts be worn for all matches was discussed and there being every prospect of sufficient being available the suggestion was adopted.

The Committee's report was adopted without discussion after the Chairman had congratulated the players on a successful season and expressed appreciation of the services of George Male, Messrs. Ambridge, Perry and Fred Hill.

The Treasurer's report was adopted, and Mr. Guettier's explanation of the Accounts made clear the reasons for the alterations to Rule 5, which having been fully discussed at a previous players' meeting, were carried unanimously.

The Election of Officers produced several changes. The Chairman, after 4 years in office, announced his retirement, and his nomination of Leslie Brown as his successor was enthusiastically supported. "Bill" Williams' suggestion that the office of Team and Match Secretary be divided was agreed to, Bill being elected Team Secretary and Tiger Smith Match Secretary (a happy choice in view of his past experience). The meeting reluctantly accepted Gus Gowers' decision not to seek re-election as Captain of the Club, but made a worthy choice in Alec Lambert, to whom we wish every success. New members on the Committee are Don. Ashby and Sid. Hasemore.

Many years of valuable service to the Club were recognised when, on a proposal by the Chairman, supported by Alec Cooper and Gus Gowers, Messrs. L. J. W. Smith and E. O. Welsford were elected Life Members. Rob. McLeod and Leslie Lambert also spoke in support of the motion. The present strength and recent successes of the Club are in no small measure due to the services of these two gentlemen, together with other members of the 1939 Committee which, at the outbreak of war, decided to carry on despite the loss of the majority of their playing members to the Forces and the loss of income due to this and the suspension of the Pontoon. "In electing them Life Members," said Gus Gowers, "we honour the Club."

In order that the significance of election as Life Member shall not be dimmed the meeting unanimously adopted a new rule which provides that the proposal shall be made in writing to the Honorary Secretary and signed by not less than three members who shall each have been an active member for at least ten years, that it shall be approved by the Committee and election take place at a General Meeting of Members.

The item which produced most discussion under "Arrangements for Season 1948/9" was the proposal for an Easter Tour. Suggested locations were Nottingham, the Continent and the West Country, and the final decision was left to the Committee.

Publicity was the main item discussed under "any other business," and several suggestions were noted for consideration by the Committee.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman, proposed by Mr. R. H. McLeod, brought to a close a most interesting meeting.

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE—SEASON 1948/9.

The constitution of the Southern Amateur League for next season was decided upon at the Annual General Meeting of the League held on May 25th, 1948. Prior to this, however, other Special General Meetings were held and some important discussions took place which ought to be recorded if the present position is to be understood, and which serve to show that the Clubs' representatives at these Meetings are given every opportunity to debate and themselves to decide future policy.

The first important decision was taken at a Meeting held in January, 1948, whereby the League reverted to the pre-war arrangement of three Divisions. Some discussion took place as to promotion and relegation, but the final decision to revert to "two up and two down and no fiddling," as the Hon. Secretary of the League phrased it, was eventually accepted unanimously at a second Special General Meeting held on February 25th, and finally adopted at the Annual General Meeting. The "fiddling" has particular reference to a suggestion by which Division I Clubs might have preferential voting powers in electing new Clubs direct into Division I. This was the proposal so vigorously combatted by Winchmore Hill in 1938, when our position in Division III caused us to view it with alarm. Our much improved position in Division I in 1947/8 made no difference to our attitude, and this Club, for one, is glad it has been dropped—we hope for good. There are, of course, pros and cons, but Clubs thought of more cons than pros.

At the end of the 1947/8 season Alexandra Park and Barclays Bank won their respective Divisions II and will play in Division I next season. Lensbury and Aquarius will play in Division II, which, in addition, will consist of those Clubs finishing in the top halves of Divisions II last season. The Clubs which finished in the bottom halves of Divisions II will constitute Division III, with Guy's Hospital, the only Club whose application to join the League was successful.

For the season 1948/9 the League will consist of, as well as Senior and Reserve Sections, a Minor Section. This innovation is the outcome of a wish expressed by Clubs in membership of the Neamean League, at that League's Annual General Meeting in mid-1947, that the S.A.L. Clubs, who were continuing to form the Neamean League Minor Section in season 1947/8, should withdraw, and that the Minor Section in 1948/9 should consist only of Clubs in membership of the Neamean League. This proposal was made many years ago by those S.A.L. Clubs who wished league football for their sides lower than 2nd XI's, but at that time the S.A.L. decided against it for what appeared to be administrative reasons. The Neamean League stepped in and offered the required facilities, and its Minor Section was formed accordingly, with S.A.L. 3rd and 4th XI's as a basis. We believe that this new Minor Section will improve the Southern Amateur League by keeping its Clubs in closer contact with the League, and the League Committee is to be congratulated on acceding to a wish expressed by all Clubs in membership to provide league facilities for their lower XI's who had resigned from the Neamean League. In future, Clubs seeking re-election will retire together with, not only their Reserve XI's, but their Minor Section XI's also.

In conclusion, it may not be out of place to express our personal thanks to the Committee of the Neamean League for having provided league football for our lower sides over the years, and we feel sure this sentiment will be echoed by all other S.A.L. Clubs who took advantage of it.

PEN PORTRAITS.

JACK PEARL.

The earnest discussion of Monday evening was in full swing among the group of players round the stove when the soft buzz of conversation was shattered by an explosive voice from the telephone box—"It's a boy!!" Eyes sparkled and cheers rent the air to applaud the arrival of Jack Pearl's son and heir. To the cries of "Sign him on" and "Give him a trial in the 2nds next Saturday," we all secretly congratulated the proud couple on their happy event.

Jack has become quite an institution in the Football Club. Many of us think he would be more appropriately named the "Voice" both for his vocal leadership in the bath on a Saturday afternoon and for his persistent, but friendly, criticism of the 1st XI during Monday night's inquisition!! However, since by no stretch of imagination does he resemble Sinatra, his friends still call him Jack.

Our first introduction to his rugged smile was in September, 1939, when he joined the Club from Edmonton County School as a right-half. Not content with this part of the field and having persuaded the selection committee of his qualities as a "smashing" centre-half, he was moved to that position, where he reigned supreme until he joined the Forces.

The Red and Blue of the Royal Marines were his proud colours during the dark days of war. Few know the story of his hopes and tribulations during that period, but occasionally a chance remark on the uncertainties of life on the mess deck indicates that he had sailed more than one of the seven seas and experienced his full share of naval discomforts.

Apart from his football activities, Jack is also a cricketer of some note. His useful right arm has secured him a regular place as a fast bowler in the 2nd XI. Unfortunately, reports of his prowess have not reached the writer, who can only presume that he is a practised slip or square leg fielder since no sensible captain would allow those shining black curls and "Hulbert" jaw too much freedom on the boundary line. Think of the devastation they might cause among the watching ladies!!

On his return to football after the war, Jack found that Ernie Wiseman had become a permanency at centre-half, so he re-started his 1st XI career at right back. He has never professed to be content in this position, always yearning for the centre of the field, but despite this, he has played some excellent games these last two seasons and is a highly-valued member of the defence. Good with his head and strong in a tackle, he can be relied upon to smother most movements that come down his wing.

Off the field, too, Jack's keenness on the game makes itself felt during the tactical talks. He is a major contributor to these discussions, often pointing out weaknesses which have subsequently been corrected to the betterment of the play. If at times he appears hypercritical it is only because he enjoys good football and wishes the team always to be aware of its faults and to avoid complacency through good fortune. As a companion in the bar, Jack cannot be bettered, since rarely does he sting a well-wisher for more than a lemon squash. It is feared by some, however, that his undoing is nigh!! Since the introduction of Black and Tan, several have noticed a faint flush of anticipation spreading over his face at five-thirty as he edges to the front of the queue. More and more frequently that smooth black liquid is seen to supercede the yellow. Surely the leopard has not changed his spots—who knows!!

PEN PORTRAITS

HASEMORE in Excelsis.

Our Sid. was elected to the Club in December, 1942, and he played frequently from season 1944/5, when as a naval sub-lieutenant he was shore-based. Like many other members he is an Old Latymerian, but on leaving school he played for Barnet F.C., where he met Reg. Saw—an encounter of considerable later importance to Winchmore Hill.

Until last season, Sid. was an inside-forward or wing-half. Part of that time was spent in the Reserves, though in 1945/6 he commanded a regular place in the 1st XI. His football had a certain touch of class; he was double-footed, a close dribbler, a hard shot, and his passing was neat and accurate. Nevertheless, he was somewhat disappointing in that he tended to over-elaborate and to lack punch. Then, at the beginning of 1946/7, when he was playing quite well for the 1st team he received a serious leg injury, and after a long rest he returned to give a number of uncertain displays for the Reserves.

Last season he could have commanded a place in the 2nd XI and he still had even 1st XI potentiality. Instead, he volunteered to captain the 3rd team and sacrificed his own football by playing in the unaccustomed positions of back and centre-half. He has done a magnificent job. No side has a finer team spirit than the 3rd's, no team has a greater respect or affection for its skipper, and equally no skipper has greater command of his team.

Under the Hasemore regime, the 3rd XI climbed to 3rd place in the Nemean League, reached the Final of the A.F.A. Minor Cup, and piled up a hundred goals. The side is further distinguished by its Saturday night celebrations and by the impression which it conveys that the whole standard of the Club depends on its own success and well-being. This sense of conviviality and assurance it derives in no small measure from Sid. himself, who has been a splendid advocate for his all-important XI on Management and Selection Committees, despite having to leave early on occasion (rumour has it, to feed the baby; Sid. is the proud father of a bonny, bouncing baby boy). This afore-mentioned verbal facility and mental slickness have indeed prompted the Chairman to classify him among the select band of "Company Promoters."

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A WINCHMOREHILLIAN ABROAD.

My first and deepest feeling as I drove through the wide streets of Bulgaria's capital was that here was definitely an Eastern European city and, as such, distinct from cities like Budapest and Zagreb, which are of the orbit known as Middle European.

The five centuries of domination by the Osmanli Turk have clearly left their impression on the country, and, indeed, it would be nothing less than a miracle if this were not so. This impression is very noticeable in architecture, in place names and in the pronounced admixture of Turkish blood, which is strongest in an area running roughly from north to south in the Eastern and Black Sea littoral side of the country.

Sofia, although built on the site of the Serdica of the Romans, is a new city as we understand that term, its imposing Government buildings, in whose design strong German influence can be seen, its tall blocks of offices and flats and its wide tree-lined boulevards have all been built during the comparatively short period of almost exactly seventy years, since Bulgaria first achieved its national independence and territorial outline at the famous Congress of Berlin in 1878. The City is magnificently situated, being on a plateau some 1,700 ft. above sea level and flanked on north and south by parts of the great Balkan range. The climate is for the summer rather warmer than in England and the sunshine more consistent, while the winter is longer and very definitely colder. The autumn is the most pleasant season for the lover of sunny skies and cool evening breezes.

Here in the Capital the old and the traditional go side by side with the new and the occidental.

The peasants from the outlying villages with their highly-coloured and often richly-embroidered traditional costumes, varying in colour and design according to the district from which they come, make a sharp contrast to their highly modern westernised brothers and sisters of the Capital, who would very definitely do credit to our own West End.

Lingering for a moment on the distaff side, I would say that a walk on a Sunday evening along the main boulevard, Tzar Liberator, would please the artistic sense of any mere male who has an eye for feminine beauty.

Dominating the city and built on its highest point is the Alexander Nevsky cathedral, a really beautiful example of the ecclesiastical architecture of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The high dome, upon which is surmounted the gold cross, is covered with gold leaf and lower, and as it were nestling around it, are several smaller domes of light emerald green. This cathedral seen in the morning sun against the background of the high, snow-covered Balkans makes one of the loveliest as well as one of the most unforgettable memories of Sofia.

The Byzantine influence is chiefly noticeable in church architecture, where, of course, the dome and the cupola have replaced the spire and the rectangular tower of our Western Christian Church. And always is there the Mosque with its minaret, almost in the centre of the town to remind the stranger of the years of Moslem influence.

The revival and assertion of the nationality principle by Bulgaria and the other Balkan States during the last century has well been described by several historians as one of the miracles of that century and indeed of our European history. For nearly four centuries these countries lay almost lost beneath the Ottoman tide, only to awaken and to assert themselves so fiercely towards the close of the nineteenth century.

Bulgaria is a country of contrasts, the contrast of the old and traditional peasant way of life and the new way of life as developed by Western Europe. It is within the memory of many still living when members of the early parliaments used to make the difficult journey by road to the Capital from the distant villages to attend their early Balkan Sobranie. Much has changed in a comparatively short period of time, but the descendants of those early pioneers in the self-government of their country, the sturdy peasant stock can still be seen in the city's busy thoroughfares journeying slowly on their ox-drawn farm carts and wearing the sheepskin cap or Kalpak, contrasting oddly with modern, high-powered American cars, and reminding one clearly that here is a young agricultural country that has received many of the products of Western science and industry perhaps too suddenly, and is at times finding these inventions rather difficult to assimilate.

THE ANNUAL SUPPER, 1948.

"It is most important not only that the Winchmore Hill Football Club is on top of the Southern Amateur League, but that it should maintain its reputation for courtesy, good sportsmanship and first-class hospitality."

The speaker was Gus Gowers and the occasion the Club's Annual Supper, held in the Pavilion on Friday, 16th April last, with "Tiger" Smith in the chair and Sid. Kynaston organising the official drinking (i.e., toastmaster).

In proposing the toast of the Club, P. S. V. Reed, Hon. Secretary, Southern Amateur League, congratulated the Club on its championship performance and also on the performances of the players selected for representative matches. Mr. Reed paid tribute to the Winchmore Hill officials. The first eleven would not have been able to achieve its successes of the past two seasons without a willing, hard-working team of officials.

The example of the first team was one which should be followed by the youngsters. The war had caused a sad gap in their education in team games, and educating the youngsters in the team spirit was an important service to the country.

Responding, Gus recalled that while last year there had been two extremely successful sides, the first and second, this season the third had been successful as well. In a competitive sense the only failure was the fourth team. The reason was probably that several of their opponents were club's third teams, and team changes had destroyed team work though not team spirit. It was hoped that next season, in competition with fourth teams of the S.A.L., a different story would be told.

The third was the most improved and, in its own opinion, the most important side in the Club (laughter).

At the moment, the second were at the top of the table, with possibilities of finishing champions or runners-up. They had a better record on paper than the first team, with 30 points out of 20 games, and a slightly better goal average.

The success of the first had depended on their ability to call on players from the other teams. No fewer than eight members of the second team had helped the first on occasions. The defence had conceded only 23 goals in 28 games. Of these goals seven were put in by the centre-half and backs. Of the forwards, Reg. Saw and Les. Lambert scored 40 goals between them.

The playing successes were largely due to George Male's teaching ability and to the admirable officers of the Club.

The Chairman next proposed the toast of "Absent Friends."

In toasting the guests, Les. Brown recalled functions of former days. They may have lost some of the careless rapture of those days, but they had gained many friends. Les. mentioned many of the guests individually, including the representatives of Norsemen, Old Stationers and Crouch End Vampires, George Male (Arsenal) and Len. Thompson, an old colleague of Male's, and of theirs. Some of the sides the Club had played must have felt Male's influence as if he were a twelfth man playing against them.

W. E. Greenland, Assistant Secretary of the Amateur Football Alliance, who replied, recalled that 38 years ago he had refereed a match on the Club's ground, then occupied by another club. The pavilion was an old horse tram and the visitors and the referee had to change on the top deck (laughter).

Once again the ladies earned our thanks for their first-class catering, and between the speeches George Gray and Billy Cunard kept the company entertained with songs and jokes.

Altogether a grand evening, and when we serenaded Gus by singing "For he's a Jolly Good Fellow," our cups were metaphorically, if not literally, full to the brim.

THE HILL'S BACKROOM BOYS.

To the East of the local Capitol (not the North of Katmandu),
Lies a large and looming hut owned by the "Hill,"
Where on a winter's evening on a Saturday you'll find
Jim Ferraby, "Guv" Welsford and our Bill.

They aren't the only notables who haunt this quiet (?) retreat.
There's "T.A.J.," Gus Gowers and Alec on the till,
But Winchmore's main supports are Winchmore's Stalwart "Backroom Boys,"
Jim Ferraby, "Guv" Welsford and our Bill.

Two games upon a Saturday at Ford's Grove ground are played,
Supported by the watchers of the "Hill,"
But all the "other game" sees of these watchers are the backs
Of Ferraby, "Guv" Welsford and our Bill.

And when the games are over, and the sausages and mash
Are waiting there, the aching void to fill,
Who should be there to serve it out?—the charming spouses of
Jim Ferraby, "Guv" Welsford and our Bill.

The evening soon gets going with the skipper "in the chair,"
The lads take their refreshment with a will,
But you can hardly raise your glass without you catch it on
Jim Ferraby, "Guv" Welsford or our Bill.

These Winchmore Musketeers are not unlike those famous three,
Portos, you can guess whose suits he'd fill,
While Aramis and Athos bred on Yorkshire "Pud." and London Pride,
Would be just like Jim, "Guv" Welsford and our Bill.

But if you want five games and five full teams out every week
(For playing short costs matches and goodwill),
The Club's financial ends must meet and Club's **don't** run themselves,
You **must** have Jim, "Guv" Welsford and our Bill.

So when the evening's over and the stories are all told,
And Alec's started totting up the till,
Top your glasses up my lads and drink a hearty toast
To Jim Ferraby, "Guv" Welsford and our Bill.