

WINCHMORE HILL FOOTBALL CHAT

Oct 50



with Compliments

WINCHMORE HILL FOOTBALL CLUB

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Editorial

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“GREETINGS” fellow members. This season the Club enters upon a new phase of its long life. Important changes have taken place while you have been chasing the little red leather ball or pounding a soft one back and forth across a net. Changes which are not obvious on the surface but which are nevertheless of great moment to the Club.

As you survey the ground on your first visit since last spring (if you are one of our “migratory” birds) you will see the First XI pitch still in its old position, the “new” pitch still occupying the same boundaries and absolutely no sign of any building or bowling greens. True, the pavilion has been given a much-needed and highly welcome coat of paint. It now looks very impressive and wears an almost gay look. Rumour has it that this is all part of Archie Cheek’s Brightening-Up campaign. Whether this is true or not we don’t know but the inimitable Archie has been seen, along with other staunch workers, wielding the brush arduously and with no little skill on several occasions.

Despite the general lack of change, however, much has been going on behind the scenes. At the A.G.M. the Football Club finally passed the Amalgamation with the Cricket Club as you will find more fully reported elsewhere in this issue. Financial responsibility has now shifted officially to the parent club but your subscriptions are still as due as ever!

At the S.A.L. A.G.M., on June 6th 1950, one or two changes in the constitution of the Sections were made. In addition to the formation of a Fifth team Section, consisting of nine S.A.L. Clubs (since become ten), Division 1 of the Third Team Section has two more teams. So has the Fourth Team Section. Next year it is also proposed to increase the size of Division 1, Senior Section to 12 teams. The increase in the size of Divisions means more and more league games to be played off and it will be increasingly difficult to arrange those traditional friendly matches that many of us like to indulge in as a “breather” in a long programme of more sterner stuff. Match Secretaries will also, no doubt, be tearing their hair on occasions (if they have any, that is) and with the Cricket-Football type of Club, such as ours, it will be a tight squeeze to get the fixture list through on schedule. However, the S.A.L. felt, with the co-operation of all concerned, that it could be done, and so if you find you are playing a league game on Boxing Day or at Easter you will appreciate the reason.

We take this opportunity, as we always do at the commencement of a new season, of welcoming all new members to the Club. We hope that you will like us and that you will, together with the other members, enjoy your football. Somehow, looking back on past seasons, we think you will.

1st XI REPORT

"I don't feel much like this, you know, Johnny," said Alec slumping back against the pavilion veranda and gazing out across the cricket field. "It won't be so bad once we get started" I said, "and it shouldn't take long if we get down to it." Getting down to it had been the difficulty; summertime is not conducive to the writing of football reports but nevertheless they had to be done. I had met Alec one summer evening on the ground in order to write up the report of the latter half of last season's matches and as time was getting short (we just had to go to Press soon) the matter was urgent. Two mugs of beer stood on the table. I picked one up, "Cheers, Alec" I said. Alec brightened. Perhaps it would not be so bad after all.

Out on the field some of the lads were having an impromptu game of cricket. England had just lost the last Test Match, and while the Pundits were in the bar holding an inquest, the young blood was out presumably having thought that something must be done about it. To ensure England's future, I mean.

Alec picked up his scrap book and flicked through the pages. Have you ever seen Alec's scrap-book? You must get him to show it to you sometime. It has press reports, programmes ("home" and "away") and photographs—all the "Gubbins."

Crouch End Vampires, at home, 31st Dec, friendly, lost 2-1, was the first game with which we had to deal. We dealt. "One of the oldest clubs in the Country and unbeaten at that time" read Alec. "A fast, clean, open game with the verdict in favour of the Vamps. by the odd goal. The Hill were possibly unlucky not to have forced a draw as a glorious pass from Bailey ended in Les Lambert's shot being well saved. Yes, I remember that game myself having been "rested" that week. Some old friends of ours had been out there doing battle against the Hill. Jack Wells, still as sound as ever, the Dollman twins at back, and, of course, "Wee Georgie Woods." They won promotion and we shall be seeing more of them this season. They should do alright. Well, they beat the Hill, did they not?

Old Brentwoods, at home, 7th Jan, A.F.A. Senior Cup, lost 3-2. Alec's gloom deepened perceptibly. Having beaten this team previously in a friendly the Hill surprised and flabbergasted their supporters by losing 3-2 after being two goals up. Burrett and Haskill gave the Hill the two-goal lead but Old Brentwoods settled down and Peters was prominent with some excellent saves. However, before half-time this lead had been reduced to 2-1, one of the visitor's having been let through by a miskick on the part of a Hill defender. Things went from bad to worse when a header from a corner went in the Hill's goal and the final blow descended when a shot rebounded straight down (but not quite straight enough) from the Hill's crossbar and was held by the referee to have gone over the line. We have no crib, he was well placed and no doubt it was a goal. "It was typical Old Boy's football," said Alec, "fast and open and at times robust." "Would you say we were unlucky to lose?" I asked. "No, not really," said Alec, "they deserved to win having pulled up from being two down." I sensed a note of regret in Alec's voice as he reflectively sipped his beer. Things that might have been different.

A ball rattled against the pavilion wall narrowly missing a window. England's future cricketers were growing careless. But then who could blame them? We might need them one day and anyway "T.A.J." was away. "What's next?" I asked, bringing us both back to our task.

Pearl Assurance, away, 14th Jan, friendly, won 2-0. "A good ground, one of the best we have played on" said Alec "we won 2-0, it could well have been more. Holding the initiative throughout, the Hill won as they pleased, scoring a goal in each half through Bedford and Les Lambert. Well that polished that one off. A win at last, a friendly, true, but still a win and none the less welcome for that.

Alexandra Park, away, 21st Jan, league, won 2-1. This was better still. Two points in the bag. "This completed the double over our local rivals and provided revenge for the previous season when A.P. took three points from us," said Alec. The gloom had lifted visibly. Out on the field it was getting dark and the players were having difficulty in seeing the ball but on the veranda it was positively brightening. "This was the game when Les Lambert played on the right wing" said Alec. "Why was that?" I asked. "Well," he replied, "we thought he would benefit from a change. See things from a different angle, you know." "What happened?" I asked. "Oh, we were one down at half-time so we brought Les back to centre-forward and put Vic Haskell back on the wing. Bailey headed the equaliser and Vic scored the winning goal. Er—from a move initiated by A. Lambert," said Alec, as an afterthought. Brooks and Pearl well backed up a particularly sound defence.

Borough Poly, away, 28th Jan, friendly, won 2-1. "Colin Dennis played at inside-left in his first game for the team," quoted Alec from the text. "What was the forward line?" I asked. "Burrett, Dennis, L. Lambert, Bailey and Haskell" said our skipper. "Midway through the first half Les scored and then—" Alec paused "A. Lambert fascinated his fans (both of them) by scoring a goal—and from 50 yards out! Of course, it should never have gone in" said Alec, modestly. Resisting the temptation to ask him if the ball was still rising when it reached the 'keeper, I glanced over his shoulder at the next one. It was:—

Westminster Bank, at home, 4th Feb, league, lost 2-1. The only thing anyone can remember about this match is that the ball went through the side of the net—or alternatively that it didn't. Which was it? Search me—maybe we have forgotten.

Westminster Bank, away, 11th Feb, league, draw 1-1. By a strange coincidence and the machinations of the fixture secretary, the Hill found themselves playing Westminster Bank again the following week. Feeling rather like crashed pilots who have been ordered aloft again immediately lest they should lose their nerve, the gallant eleven took the field at Norbury, staring rather hard at the side-nets as they did so. Bedford and Allen were brought in for Burrett and Dennis; Allen, making his first appearance in the Senior side, had a good match, scoring the Hill's only goal. Haslam and A. Lambert were again prominent but unfortunately the latter pulled a thigh muscle towards the close.

It was about this juncture that we were joined on the veranda by our old friend, Jack Beagent. Feeling in need of a slight rest from our concentrated efforts we chatted of this and that for a while until reluctantly we jerked ourselves back to the job in hand.

Uxbridge Town Reserves, at home, friendly, won 7-3. The headlines "Best Display This Season" caught my eye as I looked at the cutting from the local press. "In glorious weather Winchmore Hill's friendly with Corinthian Leaguers Uxbridge Town Reserves produced the best football seen on the Paulin ground this season" read Alec. Jim Ferraby who writes the reports, had obviously been having a splash. Brilliant forward scoring form backed up by sound defensive work brought a well deserved victory. Les Lambert scored a hat-trick. This put us in mind of other feats of the past until I remarked that it was getting too dark to write (the cricketers had gone) and anyway it was getting a bit chilly for Jack Beagent so we moved inside.

Carshalton, at home, when we lost 2-1 in a league game, and

Old Carthusians, away, friendly, also resulting in a 2-1 defeat for the Hill despite a good display by Wiseman who well held a lively centre-forward, brought us down to earth and to the next game which was

Norsemen, at home, 4th Mar, league, Groundsman's Benefit Day when the Hill beat their local rivals 2-1. The Hill were a goal up in the first minute. Straight from the kick-off Burrett received a pass and squared the ball to Haslam, playing at inside-left. Haslam's shot was parried by the goalkeeper only for Les Lambert to hit it into the net. A thrilling game ensued with Norsemen never quite recovering from the initial punch. However, they fully recovered for the dance afterwards although I cannot vouch for the speed of their recovery the morning after.

Catford Wanderers, away, 18th Mar, league, drew 1-1. It was important that we should gain one point if not two from this game against the League leaders if we were to keep in the running for the Championship and as it turned out one point was gained. Catford had the better of the midfield play but could not make headway against a strong Hill defence in which Saunders and Wiseman were outstanding. The Hill scored first through Haslam playing at inside-left but Catford equalised. Burrett hit the post with a fine shot near the end which very nearly earned the Hill both points.

Brentham, at home, 25th Mar, league, won 4-0. A decisive victory brought the Hill two precious points in their up-hill struggle to catch up with Catford Wanderers. Then, owing to various difficulties, it was not possible to play the remaining two league matches until :—

Merton, at home, Tuesday 18th April, league, won 5-3, which assured the Hill of being runners up and :—

Carshalton, away, Thursday 20th April, league, lost 1-0. The Hill's slender hopes of the Championship were dispelled when they lost a closely contested game at Carshalton by the only goal of the match. This was the Hill's only league defeat away last season.

I looked up at the clock. It was well past time. The pavilion was quiet now, even Jack Beagent had gone leaving us instructions to lock up and switch off at the main. I turned to Alec.

"Well and what do you think of the season as a whole and the play of the team in general?" I asked.

"Not one of any outstanding achievements," he replied, "but as I've said before, were it not that it suffers by comparison with previous years, being runners-up was matter for congratulation. We were unsettled by team changes, mainly in the forward line, and we had an inside-forward problem which was never really solved until Ron Carter returned late in the season. Too late, unfortunately, to affect the issue."

"Well," I said, "there's always the coming season and not so far off now, either."

"No," replied Alec "We'll win the Cup and the League this time, don't bother." And with these cheerful words of optimism we gathered up our papers, drained the last drops of beer and departed.

Behind us, as we walked down the path to the road, the pavilion loomed dark and silent. Yet it would be but six or seven short weeks, I thought to myself, before it would be echoing once again to the tramp of studded boots. Roll on October.

2nd XI REPORT

The Reserves' high hopes were sadly disappointed in the second half of the season when they were knocked out in the 4th Round A.F.A. Junior Cup and slowly declined to fifth position in the League.

The rot set in with the home Cup-tie defeat by 1-2 against Southgate Olympic Reserves. We began with an excellent 20-minute spell, and then—having failed to score—we faded out before the persistent pressure of our neighbours who proved to be a very good side. Our one goal was scored just before the final whistle, but at no stage in the second half did we look like winning.

Then followed a disastrous spell in the League which we had headed throughout the first half of the season, having gained 15 points from 10 games with a goal average 31-13. Of our last nine games, seven were lost, and to the chagrin of players and supporters five of these were at home. Our two wins were both against strong opponents, Catford Wanderers and Norsemen, yet it must be admitted that even in these games we enjoyed a certain amount of luck. We defeated Catford at home by 1-0, but for most of the game they had only ten men; and against Norsemen away we were deservedly losing 2-3 until five minutes from time when goals from a goalmouth mêlée and a Hasemore penalty provided us with two very welcome points which we had hardly expected to secure. This was, however, noteworthy as being the sole occasion on which the side fought back with the same spirit as in the early part of the season.

During this period two friendlies were played and both were won, Carshalton being defeated at home surprisingly easily by 3-0, and London Hospital by 3-2 away. With no points at stake the team on both occasions played good, carefree football.

In the League programme the last nine games had produced only four points and a goal average 14-26 which suggests not only a decline in scoring power but defensive weakness as well. Nevertheless, the single-goal defeats against Civil Service, Westminster Bank and Borough Poly were sustained in hard, keenly-fought games in which we played clever football but somehow seemed to lack the will to win. The decline is difficult to account for. It is true that there were lengthy absences of MacMeikan, D. Williams, Dennis and McCabe due to illness and injury, and that Tony Allen was frequently on first-team duty, but the incidence of team changes was no higher than from October to December when we managed to pull through whatever the side fielded. During that period—as mentioned in the previous report—the defence had a tendency to panic and the defensive covering of the inside forwards was haphazard, yet somehow our opponents rarely scored. Later on, our defence seemed wide open, perhaps because we never seemed to find a regular successor to Tudor Williams at centre-half though four players were experimented with. Two players, at least, showed no loss of form:— Tony Allen whose hard shooting produced 16 goals for the Reserves and 5 for the 1st XI, and Sid Hasemore who played soundly in a variety of positions.

There is, however, no need for pessimism for in March the return of McAdam from work in N. Wales, and of Howard Felton from Army service reminded us of the extraordinary wealth of young talent which the club possesses. Season 1950-1 should prove most successful if the selection committee can find the right captain and the right combination of players.

3rd XI REPORT

It is somewhat of an anathema to report on the "Thirds" owing to the fact that nearly forty players at sometime or other during the season found themselves in this side on Saturday afternoons. However, the side finished third in the First Division of the Minor Section of the Southern Amateur League. It was rather obvious several times that if the club had not been so badly hit by injuries and the inevitable "cry-off" (though of course Messrs. Cupid, Apollo, Venus and Co., were not far behind in restricting the numbers available at times) the side could have walked away with the championship. Nevertheless it was the game that mattered most and the enjoyable spirit of keenness and good sportsmanship which prevailed win, lose or draw before, during and after the game.

Much of this spirit was imbued into the side by the three most regular stalwarts, Nat David in goal seemed to be everywhere at once, a magnet drawing the shots of the opposing forwards towards him, and when Nat shouted "Right——" the defence always knew it was saved again. Tom Acland, back from the Services, at centre-half, rendered great service with a hefty sure boot to the forwards, adding another worry to the opposition goal minders for corners, though his attacking methods upfield needed careful watching from his own defenders point of view. The general utility player of the side Howard Bartley completes the trio. Wherever asked to play "Howie" was always a reliable and stouthearted worker for the benefit of the side.

So far as the games went this year from January 7th to April 15th inclusive the statistics read :—

Friendlies P. 2 W. 1 L. 1 Goals F. 4 A. 5

League P. 11 W. 5 D. 3 L. 3 Goals F. 17 A. 23

Final League Position (Third) P. 18 W. 10 D. 3 L. 5 Goals F. 35 A. 33 Pts. 23

Wins against Old Stationers (4-3) and Carshalton (4-2) started the year well but it was six weeks before the next league win which was against Crouch End Vampires (3-2) on the 25th February. At Cuffley, Alexandra Park completed the double over us to the tune of (0-3)—no excuses, the fault was ours, opportunities being missed and over-hasty shooting causing our downfall. Midland Bank (0-0) were a much improved side but everyone seemed to be trying to be careful on the white frost covered surface rather than score goals. The two friendlies—Ibis Reserves (3-1) with hospitality laid on to the nth degree in the palatial headquarters of the Prudential Sports Club and Trinity County Old Boys (1-4,) with ten men and only four of the regulars—were played on the Saturdays on either side of the biggest defeat of the season at the hands of Borough Poly (0-6). The least said about this the better so far as the club is concerned but it does seem strange to note the continued high position of this club's third and fourth elevens compared with the lowly position of their first and second teams. The game at Old Deer Park against Kew Association (2-2) when the skipper took over the game from a very unsatisfactory referee, and the referee let him, will be remembered by many!! The usual ding-dong battle against Norsemen (2-2) ended with Roy Morgan getting the equaliser in the last half minute of the game. The six importees from the fourth and fifth elevens against Catford Wanderers (0-3) did very well indeed against a robust and hard playing side. The return game with Carshalton (1-0) was a wholehearted team effort with those inimitable "twins" of the left wing, Phil Manners and "Tearaway" Ted Barrett making one of their only too rare appearances in the "Thirds" and of course providing the finishing touches to the only goal scored! The last league game on the 15th April on a very hot afternoon and bone hard pitch found the club had a budding new centre-forward. Against Crouch End Vampires (1-0) D. W. Ashby Esq., through injury found himself at centre-forward where after two pile-driver shots had been saved he nodded home a centre from Gosling, a keen new entrant to the side. In this game alterations in position found "The Hair" (Archie Cheek) in Don's place at full-back.

In short, the Club's middle side had a fair season and has provided new first and second eleven players, kept its end up and provided an introduction for several useful new members for future higher sides to the benefit of the Club and the spirit of the game. Here's hoping for more of that dashing teamwork, more accurate shooting on the part of the forwards and many large beers in the coming season 1950/51.

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4th XI REPORT

With the 1950/51 season now in our thoughts it serves little purpose perhaps to dwell in detail on the latter half of last season's games.

Of eleven league games played we won 7, drew 1 and lost 3. We had two or three high scoring games; after a first half struggle against Ealing at home when our visitors were leading by 2 goals we managed to draw level at half time and by grand shooting in the second half added another six, a much improved display by Gosling, culminating in two very good goals, other scorers in this game were Ron Wickwar 2, Ken Bain 2 and Ted Barrett 2. We are pleased to report that Gosling's improvement was maintained for the rest of the season and we look forward to a bright future for him.

Our home game against Old Stationers which we won 9-0, was remarkable for the 6 goals scored by Tony Chapman, Tony came up from the 5th XI, stayed with us for one game and finished the rest of the season in the 3rd XI.

Our 5-1 win against Norsemen away was most delightful; a hat-trick by Ron Wickwar and other goals by Phil Manners and Ted Barrett sealed the fate of our very friendly rivals thus avenging our home defeat.

We achieved the double by defeating Carshalton at home 3-2. Gosling 2 and Pryke 1 being the scorers.

We had an enjoyable home game with Alexandra Park, which we won 2-1 after a great struggle; although this was not a league match we had to produce top form to win. We congratulate A.P. on getting into the League for next season and look forward to our games with them.

Looking back on the season as a whole, the 4th XI has been subjected to the usual continual changes. This is only to be expected because of the demands of the higher elevens due to injuries and the good progress made by players of the 4th XI warranting a trial in the 3rd XI. Yet in spite of these changes we have had the best season for many years; one heavy defeat at Borough Poly for the last match of the season was understandable in view of having to field a nearly 5th XI against the champions.

The side has played together with a good spirit (after the game as well!), and Ted Barrett and Phil Manners have added to the fun of the game by their pleasant remarks about Football Club officials and Committees.

The members of the 4th XI thank Ken Bain and Ernie Watson for the transport provided for the away matches, it is very convenient to get back from Kew in a matter of minutes!

Skipper Watson says 1950/51 will be his last season.

Next season we are faced with a larger league programme than last year, and we hope that we shall enjoy the games, win the games and show that sporting spirit which has always been the tradition of the Hill.

5th XI REPORT

The 5th XI Record for the season has been :—

P. 25 W. 11 L. 8 D. 6. Goals for 93 against 59.

On January 7th our old friends, the Vampires, came over to play their first game of the season against the Hill 5th XI. We always look forward to our games against the Vampires, at least I know I do, for one thing because that perennial old-timer "Joe" Lynes, friend of my pre-war soccer days, is almost sure to be amongst the opposition. And Joe can not only bang a ball with quite a fair amount of accuracy, he can shift a nifty pint too ; which is important.

Well we won 3-1 and I think it was a fair result. Time was, not so far back, when the Vamps. 5th XI was quite capable of beating ours about 5 or 6-0 and their eleven fairly bristled with obvious up-and-coming senior eleven men, which may account for the fact that the Vampires have done quite well in a number of their more senior games this season. Meanwhile there is no despondency in their 5th team camp. Far from it. In fact, in the return game on March 25th they drew 2-2 with us thus partially avenging their previous defeat. Our two goals were scored by a certain outside-right playing outside-left and he would have had a hat-trick and won the game but for missing a penalty. Not content with missing it once he missed it twice ! The kick had to be retaken on account of an infringement. The goalkeeper must have moved his eyebrows or something. Anyway first the ball hit the goalie and then it hit the upright. A pity there was no third chance, after such a nice piece of bracketting.

Against Alexandra Park at Durnsford Road on 21st January, the fifth lost 2-3. A.P. have a strong side and have lost few of their games this season. We played well enough but the Park had the edge on us most of the time. After the match a few of the faithful made their way up to the Palace for a drink and we found our 1st XI installed in the bar celebrating their usual odd goal scrape home.

On 4th Feb. at home the fifth had one of their periodical goal-rushes. We beat London Hospitals Reserves 9-0. Sid Cooper at centre-forward scored a hat-trick and goals flowed in from all angles. To add insult to injury we were awarded a penalty. Our Penalty King scored from the spot (it's the only way he can get a goal these days and he didn't want to be left out when all the others had notched goals !).

Against N. P. Bank we won 4-2, Gosling who has been improving every match, getting a hat-trick.

The 11th March was the Groundsman's Benefit and as is customary all teams played Norsemen. At home the fifth won 6-1 thus completing the double against our local rivals. This makes up for our double defeat of last season. Wimberley and his boys stayed on to the Dance afterwards and we all enjoyed a good evening.

The following week, once again at home, the 5th lost to Boro' Poly 0-3. Always a hard team to beat Boro Poly played strong constructive football and I don't, personally, remember the last time we won against them on our own ground. We missed Gosling, promoted to the 4th XI, and our attack could not pierce a solid defence.

On April 1st, Duncombe Sports visited the Hill and we beat them 3-1. No less a personage than Norman Haslam turned out for the fifths and distinguished himself by scoring one of the goals. A thing he is never, well hardly ever, allowed to do in the first XI. I trust Norman picked up a few useful tips (of the football variety) to take back with him to the first XI. Unfortunately, I missed all this as I was assisting the 4th XI to lose 7-1 at Boro' Poly. A day of strong winds. April coming in like March, as usual. And that, dear readers, was the end of that for another season. We went out on the Crest of a Blast, as you might say.

Looking back on the season I find myself, inevitably, comparing it with the season before. It has been, in many ways, a very different sort of season. In 1948-49 the fifth team came into being and by the end of a very enjoyable series of games the team had grown from a mere collection of bodies, some young, some not so young, into a team—with a spirit. In fact, one might almost say, with a soul. This season owing to the advent of an extra 5th XI and the consequent "General Post" which has inevitably had to take place, there has not been quite the same atmosphere prevailing. However, as always, we have enjoyed our football and if the crowd in the bar has been somewhat smaller after the game it has been none the less appreciative. And the beer is stronger now, so we are told.

The most outstanding player for the 5th XI this season has undoubtedly been our old friend Tony Chapman. With 30 goals to his credit, 21 of which were scored with the fifths, 8 with the fourths and 1 with the thirds, he has been a veritable ball of fire, raking the opponents' nets from all angles. His rise to the 3rd XI has been well merited.

Ray Fisher, a new member from Barclays Bank, after his conversion from inside-forward to left-half steadily improved and won promotion to the fourth XI. Although this was regrettable in so far as it reduced our "Quorum" in the bar by one very staunch member, Sid Lansbury and I have decided that we must make these sacrifices for the sake of the Club.

Space does not permit of my mentioning all the players who have added to the glory of the fifth XI this season. Most of them were introduced to the reader in the last report so I am sure they will forgive me. However, I think I can safely say that they have been well up to standard and I hope we have been and will remain a nursery for the young and—may I say it—a safe harbour for the old?

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EXTRA 5th XI REPORT

Against City Albion we had what we fondly imagined to be a reasonably strong side but unfortunately the opposition were, on the average, very much weightier and on the heavy ground we went down 6-2. And that in spite of a grand, robust game from Gordon Hays who, incidentally, scored an excellent goal. Romaine notched the other. Albion were on the offensive most of the time and it was only determined tackling by our defence that prevented a bigger score.

Our visit to North-West Poly was disappointing owing to the fact that, in spite of a late kick-off, several of our side were not on time in arriving. After taking the field two short we almost scored in the first minute but even with a full side we were unable to get going. The defence, as usual, played well but there was little cohesion in the forward line and we paid the penalty, losing 5-1. Belsey scored a good goal towards the end.

We had one of our most enjoyable games of last season against Duncombe Sports, a very keen side and a fixture we hope to retain. The first quarter of an hour we were forced to play with ten men although we managed to score first. Norman Haslam turned out for us and mainly due to his efforts the forward line was kept moving. Duncombe equalised soon after the interval and a very hard tussle ensued but, aided by a stout defence and a bit of luck now and again, we held out until Haslam went through on his own and scored a great goal. Then followed further excitement until Romaine scored his second goal, a first time drive from the edge of the penalty area and a winner all the way. This made the score 3-1 in our favour. Everyone worked hard for this win and the result was a matter of no small satisfaction.

It might be thought that the extra fifths' would inevitably have been a "Scratch" side but this, however, has not been the case. There has on occasion been some very good football served up although in common with many another side there have been lapses.

Owing to the calls of the higher elevens a number of last minute changes were only to be expected and we came to look on this as an interesting variation upon the well-ordered and systematic selection of other sides. (What have you to say about that, team-captains? Ed.) It would be almost impossible to compile a list of the players who have made appearances for the extra fifths and we have once or twice been honoured by the inclusion of members of the first team. (Surely this should be the other way round, shouldn't it, fifths? Ed.) Whoever was lucky enough to turn out for us gave of their best and our record, I think, bears witness to that. Several times we have encountered much superior sides and although we may have lost heavily we have done our best to give a good account of ourselves.

Few members consistently appeared and it would therefore be unfair to single out names for special mention. It has very often been necessary to decide the various positions immediately prior to taking the field, so that a man might be playing in a position for which he is unsuited.

The side has been composed of the younger members and a sprinkling of the older, a number of the new members finding regular places in other elevens. The extra fifths has fulfilled a most useful function and the team spirit has been excellent. Looking back we can well say that we have had a good season's sport which is, after all, all that matters.

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2nd June 1950

Attendance was not so good as in recent years only 26 members "signing on."

Before proceeding with the business of the evening the Chairman, Mr. Leslie Brown, referred to the passing of Mr. F. J. Huson, a Life Member of the Cricket Club and for many years its Chairman and Honorary Secretary. Those present stood in silence as a token of respect.

The reading of the minutes was followed by the Committee's Report for the Season 1949/50. The Chairman, commenting on the successes of all, made special reference to the performances of the 5th and Extra 5th XI's. Jack Pearl was congratulated on gaining representative honours for the Amateur Football Alliance and the Southern Amateur League, and the opportunity was taken to present him with a League Badge, the first to be awarded to a member of the Club. The Chairman thanked Bernard and Frank Thompson for the provision and installation of the flood lighting which had proved invaluable for training.

Results achieved during the season were :—

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals	
					For	Against
1st. XI	30	17	5	8	61	31
Reserves	29	13	5	11	67	57
3rd. XI	26	16	4	6	55	47
4th. XI	28	18	2	8	78	45
5th. XI	25	11	6	8	93	59
Extra 5th.	19	11	1	7	70	52

The Treasurer's Report, presented by Mr. Welsford, revealed a small credit balance due, it was explained, to a reduction in expenditure.

Mr. Leslie Smith then proposed the adoption of the Fundamental, General and Sectional Rules of the New Constitution; Mr. Frank Thompson seconded and, without further discussion, the proposal was carried unanimously—a tribute to those responsible for the compiling of the Rules.

The Meeting then proceeded to the election of Officers for 1950/51. Mr. Brown had previously announced his retirement and the choice of Mr. R. Gowers as the first Chairman under the New Constitution was a popular one. Mr. Gowers paid tribute to the long and valuable services of the retiring Chairman both as a player and official of the Club from its very early days. He also spoke in similar terms of Mr. R. Guettier.

There were no changes in the remaining officers, the following being re-elected :—

Honorary Secretary	Mr. J. Ferraby
" Team Secretary	Mr. E. P. Williams
" Match "	Mr. J. Spence
" Treasurer	Mr. E. O. Welsford
Captain of the Club	Mr. A. W. Lambert

Mr. S. J. Garbett's decision not to accept nomination for the Committee was received with regret and of the thirteen proposed and seconded, Messrs. D. W. Ashby, A. Bath, L. E. Brown, A. G. Cooper, N. Haslam, F. Thompson and E. G. Watson were elected.

Opening the discussion on "Arrangements for the Season" Mr. Spence reported that League fixtures were almost complete and all that was awaited was a decision by the League Annual General Meeting regarding the formation of a 5th. Xls. Section. Friendly matches were being arranged for the 6th. XI and to fill the vacant dates of the other teams. Entry in the A.F.A. Senior, Junior and Minor Cups was agreed and following a discussion it was further agreed that if the League favours entry into the County A.F.A. Competitions, the Committee reconsider the matter. The Committee was instructed to consider the engagement of a Coach and to attempt the organisation of an Easter Tour. The future of the "Football Chat" was considered and a proposal that it be produced in association with the Parent Club was agreed to.

Under any other business, the Chairman reported that the A.F.A. had received an invitation from the F.A. to enter a team in a County Championship, the players to be under the age of 18 on the 1st September.

Mr. L. J. W. Smith reviewed the development of the Club during its 30 years of independent existence and at his instigation the following motion was passed:— "This last Annual General Meeting of the Winchmore Hill Football Club records its deep appreciation of the services of Officials and Members who have contributed to the progress of the Club from 1920 to 1950."

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CRITICISM

(The following is reprinted from our issue of December 1936. We think our readers will find much in it that is illuminating and certainly it has lost nothing in topicality during the years. We do feel perhaps that the standard of criticism may have degenerated in these days but then what hasn't? Ed.)

The art of criticising a football match is not easy; nor is a profound knowledge of it acquired casually or rapidly. Even Senior Wanglers find it difficult. Further, a good footballer knows far too little about the game ever to become a successful critic, for he wastes years of his life actually on the field of play, and cannot, therefore, appreciate what is going on. The critic, sitting at his ease in the stand, is able to tell any player, at any given moment, exactly what to do with the ball, and to point out to him, with such vigour as may seem to him necessary, what he hasn't done with it properly after he has done it. From which it will be apparent that critics are absolutely essential to the success of any side they may deign to support. Players don't like them, but who cares about the players?

To be a perfectly roaring success as a critic, you must take care to select a seat among those considerably younger than yourself (who should be, for preference, non-players) so that, although you may never have played football in your life, your remarks carry weight with those who assume that you gave up playing long before they were born. You thus acquire that reputation for tolerant broad-mindedness which is so liable to impress the young, particularly if your remarks are made in a tone of quiet but venerable deprecation.

At the outset, and to touch only lightly on the matter, as far as referees are concerned, they never do know the rules of the game, as is well recognised in critic circles ; but, as they have gradually established for themselves a prerogative to take charge of the games, abuse may be flung at them without your running the risk of being accused of favouritism towards either side.

Much the same remarks apply to your censure of the players, but be very careful on no account to praise any home player. If you do so, there is the chance of your being thought to hold biased opinions, and, as every good critic knows, impartiality is the keynote of perfect criticism. It is a truism that you may offer mild approval of the visiting team's tactics and individual efforts in an endeavour to draw the attention of the home players to their own shortcomings ; and this will show those grouped around you—who are, ere this, listening open-mouthed and profiting by your penetrating criticisms—that you are capable of being at least courteous to the visiting side.

Whenever a goal is scored you should at once explain how it occurred. It is necessary to be quick about this, as once the ball is kicked off again your whole attention will be required in instantly pointing out to your apprentices the continuance of elementary mistakes by the players. Nevertheless, your criticism of goal-scoring must be very guarded. Bear in mind that a goal by the home team is invariably a fluke, and has been brought about only by a centre or a pass becoming unintentionally a shot. When the visitors score, however, lose no time in illustrating exactly how this might have been avoided by different tactics, positioning, or tackling on the part of the home defenders. If there weren't any defenders near enough to the successful scorer blame the goal-keeper ; this is a simple matter, as it is merely necessary to assert, either that he ought or ought not to have come out, whichever he didn't do.

The following technical terms must be memorised and used in the appropriate circumstances, the tone of voice and facial expression, as well as the gestures to add point to them, being varied by the critic as his experience dictates.

1. "Corner !" whenever the ball goes behind, no matter which side is affected. This will serve to illustrate the incompetence of referees if they award a goal-kick.
2. "Offside !" whenever a forward breaks away from a long pass. This will go further to show what poor simps referees are if they don't blow up for it.
3. "Dirty !" whenever a home player vigorously charges or tackles an opponent. If the referee allows a foul you then say promptly, "Quite right—even he saw it !" If he doesn't, you ask the powers at large why he isn't wearing glasses.
4. "Shoot !" whenever a player is within fifty yards of his opponents' goal. (This should be shouted loudly.) If he scores you say easily, "What did I say ?—but I don't suppose he would have seen the opening himself." If he fails to score you remark, "Well, that beats creation—what a chance !" at the same time looking skywards.
5. "Hands !" whenever a home player clears the ball from a goal-mouth maul following a corner. Referees hardly ever allow this, so you're all right, and a shrug of the shoulders will be sufficient to convey your contempt.
6. "Penalty !" whenever a visiting forward slips or is charged in the home penalty area. Be careful about such a remark, though by this time none of the apprentices can see any good in the referee anyhow, so it doesn't much matter whether he awards it or not.

7. "Of course it (he) was (wasn't)!" whenever the referee blows for an infringement. By always disagreeing with the referee's decisions you are sure to keep right with the apprentices, who would now be perfectly prepared to back you in any court of law, if necessary, particularly if their elder brothers are playing, as they've got to get their own back somehow.
8. "Kick it!" whenever the ball comes to one of the home side. You are on safe ground here, as if the player mis-kicks you click your teeth and say, "Weak sir—very weak!" If he kicks it cleanly you lie back in your seat and murmur, "Nice work, sir!" taking care to give the impression that the player must have heard your advice to him.

Such remarks as "Highest to-day!", "Keep it on the island!", "I'll go!", etc., being non-controversial, are beneath the dignity of the impartial critic, and should never be made.

From the foregoing, it will be obvious that a critic's job is by no means work for an ordinary intelligence. It needs a quick brain, a keen eye, undaunted courage to support one's own opinions, and a hide like a rhinoceros. The profession is open to all, but few really reach the top, and those only after prolonged study of the books written about the game. To have played it ruins your chances and warps your judgement, and no self-respecting critic would admit even to so much as ever having handled a football.

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THE CLUB SUPPER

Once again the Club Supper was held on a Friday and once again your faithful scribe had booked himself a place in order to make sure you all got a report of the proceedings.

Arriving in good time (straight from the office and no time wasted) I entered the bar to find that quite a few had beaten me to it. They were getting "limbered up." Joining the crowd down at the deep end I was soon immersed in conversation with some of the boys.

A quick peep at the tables, beautifully arranged as usual, had assured me on my way in that the usual large gathering was to be expected. Back in the bar the air was warming up nicely and the crowd thickening every minute. I leaned back against the bar, sipped my beer and looked around. There was our worthy Captain, up at the shallow end near the door getting his toes dug in nicely and greeting all and sundry as they arrived. Any minute we could expect Sid Kynaston to announce that dinner was served and the battle would be on. Came the expected announcement and in we went. A rapid glance at the plan of battle showed me that I had been placed in a strategic position at the end of a table not too far from the all-important door.

Grace having been said by our Chairman, Mr. Leslie E. Brown, we sat down and surveyed our menus. These were very attractively made out, as usual, and we noted the order of the speeches.

Soup, cold meat and salads followed by a sweet made a very appetising meal and at the end of it our Chairman proposed the toast of the King.

The informal toasting gave recognition to H. S. Knight, Chairman of the parent club; to life members E. O. ("Guv'nor") Welsford, L. J. W. ("Tiger") Smith, and George Deacock; Bill Lavers, a past Captain and, incidentally, one of the Hill's finest Cricketers; T. A. J. Bennett, grand Hon. Secretary of the parent club; Jim Ferraby, Hon. Secretary of the football club—and there were hearty cheers for the lady helpers.

Once again we noted support from the Selborne Bowling Club who had no fewer than 14 members present, including their president E. J. ("Bing") Crosbie. Norsemen (with Cliff Topping), Catford Wanderers, Midland Bank, Carshalton, Crouch End Vampires and other clubs were all represented. The Club hospitality was, as ever, working full pressure.

Mr. Stan S. Pryke proposed the health of "The Club" and said that although he could not congratulate the "Hill" upon winning either championship or "pot" that they should have been runners-up in the First Division of the Southern Amateur League after being champions in the two previous seasons was, he felt, "a pretty good show." He went on to compute that "first club centenary." There had now been 70 seasons of cricket on the Paulin Ground and 30 seasons of football—"so we are a hundred not out."

Stan, continuing, made happy references to Old Stalwarts, recounted amusing stories and, addressing himself to the younger members particularly, said it was to them they looked to carry on the club tradition. "Voluntary organisations have meant so much in the life of our country in the last hundred years. There has been something good about it, and I say that although the State may claim to provide practically everything, they cannot provide the Winchmore Hill Club or any other club like it," he said, amid applause.

Having thanked Mrs. Groom (who helped so much in past years) and the ladies generally, Stan Pryke, on behalf of a few members, made the presentation of "The Captain's Cup." Stipulating that it would be the home Skipper's duty to see that it was filled "with what the visiting Skipper wanted."

Alec Lambert, captain of the Club, replied to the toast comprehensively, and in the course of it reminded members of the team placings. The first XI had finished runners-up in the S.A.L. to Catford Wanderers (Les Lambert 20 goals) and Catford were to be congratulated on their first Championship. The second XI were fifth in the league, with Gus Gowers as skipper, (Tony Allen 24 goals); third and fourth elevens, third and fourth respectively in their leagues. The two fifth teams had played a series of friendlies (Tony Chapman 30 goals). The Captain summed up the season as one of "all-round strength."

A speech of excellent quality, witty and well phrased, was contributed by Mr. W. K. Brooks. He spoke handsomely of the several welcome guests and was warmly applauded for a notable contribution to the evening's oratory.

Reply was made by Mr. I. M. Sanderson, Chairman of the Southern Amateur League, who is a life Vice-President of the A.F.A. and won his "blue" for football at Cambridge.

Surprise item was the presentation to George Male. Gus Gowers handled this pleasing interlude and thanked George very sincerely for his services in the past three years. He had given first class technical advice, placing an indelible stamp on the play of the first XI. George Male, he stressed, was a modest man, an extremely capable coach and a fine gentleman.

Acknowledging the gift of a wrist watch, George Male said how much pleasure he derived from his work and, in a brief reference to the professional game, said "I hold the belief that all professionals are at heart amateur."

Unfortunately, all but one of the entertainers arrived late and this somewhat detracted from the smooth flow of the usually well-oiled wheels of the organization. If you follow me. However, when they eventually did arrive, tired and weary after combing North London to find us, they put up a very good show. Which was just as well.

To sum up, this was perhaps not quite up to previous years' standards but may well have been the result of bad luck in the matter of the aforesaid entertainers and to the gaps caused in the programme. Sid Kynaston in his monologue brought the house down. His was the best turn of the evening, no doubt about that. Ah well, it's an ill wind.

PEN PORTRAIT

JOHNNY PETERS

In the late 1920's a boy, very tall for his age, was making quite a name for himself in schools football. An automatic choice for West London Schoolboys, he played as a junior for London v. Essex and the following season for Middlesex v. Surrey, Kent and London. He ended his school football career in 1929 by keeping goal for his school team which lifted the most coveted prize in London Central Schools football—The Lipton Trophy. That schoolboy was Johnny Peters, Winchmore Hill's 1st XI goalkeeper for the past seven seasons.

Johnny joined the Hill from Callenders Athletic (London Section) at the beginning of the 1943/4 season, having previously assisted such well known amateur clubs as Dulwich Hamlet and Wimbledon.

Since the resumption of competitive A.F.A. football at the beginning of the 1946/7 season, the Hill have the finest defensive record of any team in the Southern Amateur League and much credit for their low goals against record must be laid at the feet, or rather hands, of Johnny. The two faults which have been levelled against him, a certain reluctance on occasions to leave his charge and a lack of strength in kicking, are more than offset by his brilliant anticipation and clean handling of the ball.

Those who saw the match against Old Latymerians on 28th December, 1946 will long remember Johnny's magnificent display which was generally voted one of the finest ever seen at Ford's Grove. With the rest of the team badly off form, the game developed into a duel between the opposing forwards and our last line of defence. Johnny would be the first to admit that things went right for him that day, as some of his saves were little short of miraculous. Thanks to him and three breakaways, we emerged winners by 3 goals to 1 to collect the luckiest two points in our S.A.L. career.

It is surprising that Johnny has only made one representative appearance since joining the Hill. That was in May 1945 when he played for a North London A.F.A. XI against a R.A.F. XI which included a number of well known professionals including Stan Mortenson, the Blackpool and England international. Johnny has good cause to remember that game for, although he gave a very good display, it was one of the rare occasions when he has had to retrieve the ball from the back of the net no fewer than seven times.

From his vantage point between the posts, Johnny is better able to follow the course of play than other members of the side, and the fact that players are always ready to listen, with a minimum of interjections, to his comments and views on the afternoon's play during the "bar inquests," is proof that his knowledge of the game is respected.

As far as we know, Johnny's only active outdoor sporting interest outside soccer was in competitive walking, for which he has won more than one silver cup.

For some years past, Johnny has unfortunately experienced leg trouble which has threatened to end his football career. We have been fortunate in having his assistance during the past two seasons (he announced his retirement at the close of the 1947/8 and 1948/49 seasons) and it is the earnest hope of all members that we shall again see him "between the sticks" at the start of the 1950/51 season.