

FREE FORESTERS CRICKET CLUB



Victorious FF Women at the Inigo Trophy - July 2025

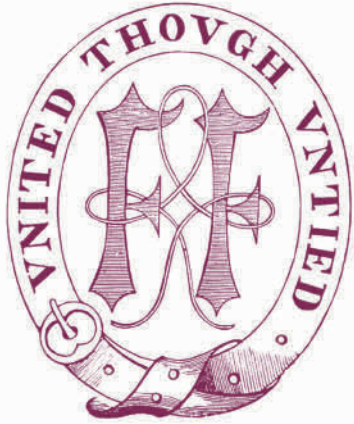
*Graham's Signature
Reserve Port*



Pleased to support the Free Foresters Cricket Club

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EDITOR'S WELCOME

Welcome to the 2026 Free Foresters Yearbook. My invitation last year for anyone and everyone to submit an article fell on the path, was eaten by the birds and did not bear fruit, alas, but I repeat the invitation now for next year's edition! Delving into the Club's rich history, recounting some of your own experiences of FF cricket, or whatever takes your fancy really: if it's relevant in some way to cricket and the FF, and

will not result in the Club being sued, please give it a go.

As ever, my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed, not least those who took the photographs, principally the seemingly ubiquitous Omkar Khot, which supplement the text so well and which drive home how lucky we are to have so many attractive fixtures against good teams on beautiful grounds. My thanks to Om for his patience and skill in assisting your technologically inept Editor with various stages of the Yearbook and for uploading and captioning the photos. I would also like to thank those who took the trouble to pen some moving tributes for the Obituary section which, alas, contains quite a few distinguished Free Forester names this year.

Paul Stubbs has done a superb job collating the statistics. I would urge

all Match Managers to make sure that the names of fielders who hold catches are filled in, at least for the FF, on the scorecards. We want the fullest log possible of the matches, so as well as Root making 103 and Cummins taking 6/28, we should record that Carey took 5 catches. Please help Paul in this way.

The Quiz is about cricket since January 2025 so I hope that everyone can have a stab at a few of the questions at least. There is no need for the encyclopedic historical knowledge of the Club Treasurer, Bernard!

Enjoy a happy browse, hopefully reading about some of your own magnificent exploits last year, and best of luck for the forthcoming season.

JOHN HAMILTON

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND HOUSEKEEPING

Members and their friends are warmly encouraged to meet over a drink or BBQ at the following FF matches as well as attend the AGM and other social events during the season. Any additions to this list of dates will be posted on the website.

MONDAY-TUESDAY 30-31 MARCH

Quadrangular Golf at Royal Porthcawl GC
FF, MCC, XL Club, Grancogs
(Amalgamation of Grannies & Incogniti)



*Garri Jones, Robin Jones, Rob Perkins,
David Churton at Golf Quadrangular*

THURSDAY 9 APRIL 18.30

AGM followed by pre-season drinks, East India Club, 16 St James's Square, London SW1Y 4LH.



*Like all good athletes, Garri Jones and Jono
Arscott tuck into a Full Welsh breakfast at
Royal Porthcawl, Golf Quadrangular in 2025*

SATURDAY 30 MAY 18.00

London drinks at Amie wine studio, the night before the match vs Guards in Chelsea.13 Eccleston Yards, London, SW1W 9AZ

FRIDAY 5 JUNE 13.00

Drinks gathering in the Coronation Garden behind the Warner Stand at Lord's on Day 2 of the England v New Zealand Test Match

WEDNESDAY 15 JULY

BBQ at Seaton CC, Devon, after the FF v MCC match



*Paul Askew, Garri Jones and Mel Ragnauth
at pre-season drinks*

FRIDAY 28 AUGUST 13.00

Drinks gathering in the Coronation Garden behind the Warner Stand at Lord's on Day 2 of the England v Pakistan Test Match



Paul Askew leads the charge at London Drinks. amie wine studio, owned by Will Sandbach



Lord's drinks - a wonderful opportunity for Foresters of all generations to come together

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Before the Ashes series in 2023 I questioned whether “Bazball” would survive the “Ashes” test.

In an extraordinary series we saw it fail comprehensively in the first two Tests, only to stage a remarkable comeback and, but for rain in Manchester, nearly win from two down.

Sadly, its weaknesses were cruelly exposed by the Australians this winter. If you will forgive the obvious play on words, what, if anything, will rise from the ashes to replace it?

In an idle moment, of which I have many, I was musing how Free Forester cricket might be described in the style of “Bazball”. The best I could think of was ‘Free-For-All’ though it suffers from its connection with “punch-up”. I shall award a small prize for the best alternative. Emails to the Hon. Sec.

who shall be the sole arbiter of the competition.

Once again I must thank the Officers of the Club for all they do in an increasingly complex world to keep the FF show on the road. The Club once again has an extensive fixture list against some fine cricket clubs on some of the loveliest grounds in the country.

Please help Match Managers by asking to play; please be competitive but play within the spirit of the game; please be generous in defeat and modest in victory; please engage with the other side; please pay your subs and match fees; the Club cannot exist on thin air.

Above all, enjoy the fun that can be had playing ‘Free-For-All’ cricket!

GENERAL SIR JACK DEVERELL



Sir Jack at Burton Court

FROM THE SECRETARY

2025 was a successful year for the Free Foresters. On the field our strong and varied fixture list was enjoyed to the full by our broad playing base and there were some superb individual and team performances. Many congratulations to the FF Women's squad on an unbeaten season under the canny supervision of Paul Askew. Paul's sustained energy in driving the FFW onwards and upwards is the stuff of legend. Heartfelt thanks also to Nick Turk and Tom McIlwaine for their inexhaustible enthusiasm as Fixtures and Match Secretary respectively. Do read Tom's beautifully written, witty report on the season, supplemented by Omkar Khot's photographs. Omkar has also been the driving force behind the tremendous surge in the online interest shown in the Club. Our social media accounts are burgeoning under his knowledgeable eye. Many thanks to him.

To all the Match Managers for their work in getting teams onto the field, my sincere thanks. Off the field I would like to pay particular tribute to Paul Stubbs who has the title of Membership Secretary, but who does so much else to keep the Club moving smoothly in the right direction.

Please also heed the words of Bernard Critchley and Sir Jack Deverell; the Club cannot exist on thin air and it is the responsibility of all members to pay their subs and match fees promptly; Match Managers are the heartbeat of the Club and, frankly, they should not have to ask you for your match fee; you should be offering it uninvited. Bernard reminds us of the tremendous value of taking out Life Membership. I did so many, many years ago and it represents probably the best value for money in sport I have ever had.

Above all, Free Foresters cricket should be fun: hard, competitive cricket on some glorious grounds in good company. Have a great season in 2026!

*JOHN HAMILTON
Honorary Secretary*

TREASURER'S REPORT

This is the third report that I have written for the Yearbook since being appointed as Treasurer and whilst there remain many pressures on the Club's finances, progress is being made both in the collection of match fees and the reining in of expenditure.

As we continue to field teams in an ever-growing and diverse fixture list, I do want to pay tribute to the many match managers who collect the match fees to help defray the match costs, such as lunches and teas, as well as to pay the match officials. At the Committee meeting before Christmas, it was decided to keep the match fees at the same level for the 2026 season but to extend their scope to include all matches on the fixture card, and not just to restrict them to the regular fixtures against other wandering clubs, schools and services teams.

We have always tried to keep the annual subscription at a relatively affordable price but there has not been an increase for some time. We have decided to raise the annual subscription to £60 (£30 for U25s), but I would also encourage any of you who are able to do so, to consider taking out Life Membership at £600.

I am grateful for the sponsorship income which has been received in 2025, and I know more has been promised for the 2026 season. I do not want to single out any individuals, because I will probably inadvertently omit someone, but thank you all for your assistance in gathering the financial support.

We have been able to provide members with a range of Club merchandise, which we hope will be further enhanced in the current year as the shop comes online. It has always been our intention

to provide playing kit at an affordable price, and all items are priced to produce a modest profit which is reinvested into more stock.

I will present a full set of accounts at our AGM in April, after which the accounts would be available for members to view on our website. In advance of this, I would point out that, at the time of writing, there is approximately £32,000 in the Club's bank account which will be significantly enhanced by the receipt of members' subscriptions in April.

Finally, as I have said in earlier years, I would be pleased to hear from any members who have any thoughts regarding ways of enhancing our finances, whether it be through arranging mutually funded fixtures or encouraging sponsorship and donations.

BERNARD CRITCHLEY
Honorary Treasurer

CANDIDATES OFFERED MEMBERSHIP FOR 2026

The following 30 candidates have been offered membership.

Joshua Allan

Alex Gordon-Martin

Tom Newman

Morgan Barnes

Jake Holmes

William Powell

Toby Brown

Billy Hughes

Rollo Quinault

Robert Clark

Louis Ingrams

Eoin Simpkins

Felix Cole

Amartya Kaul

Ben Smith

Adeko Collymore

Henry Kay

Alastair Taylor

Jamie Cowell

Moin Khan

Ben Turner

Joshua Dodd

Riaan Naik

Jack Turner

William Fort

Thomas Nelson

Vihaan Weerasinghe

Rory Fulton

Cian Newland

Ethan Wright

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

After a successful “first” season with formal and regular comms being sent via our social channels, 2025 was a hugely positive year.

The key success was the Instagram account, where we had the most engagement from members, opposition clubs and players, members’ families and friends/supporters. My thanks to club friends, such as Seaton CC, and other host clubs and grounds, who have also been highly engaging with us and regularly sharing FF content to their subscribers.

Through regular posts, stories and shares from the groups listed above, we had a huge uplift in traffic to our page in 2025, with views of the FF Insta page reaching over 120,000 at the height of summer, and this is a minimum figure, whilst the Facebook page is slowly growing.

For 2026, the priority will be continuing to increase our Instagram presence and uptake on X, whose platform popularity is decreasing more generally. Working with Paul Stubbs and Katerina Tanti, we will also work to enable scorers to share live updates from PlayCricket on that channel.

Finally, a tremendous thank you to all members, officials, spectators and opposition for sharing and sending their photographs and videos throughout, without whom we could not showcase the wonderful world of Free Foresters cricket.

OMKAR KHOT

QR Codes

please scan to access our channels

instagram
@freeforesterscc



WhatsApp



Facebook
Free Foresters CC



X (Twitter)
FreeForestersCC



Please note WhatsApp Community is for Members Only

FF WOMEN 2025 SEASON REPORT

Paul Askew, Manager

The 2025 season, our eighth, opened on Thursday 29th May at Aldershot. As in 2024, FF Women got off to a winning start against Army Women. The day comprised two T20 games. The fixture has been an ever-present since FF Women were established and the matches are hotly contested. FF Women's long-standing coach, Andy Mawson (also now a batting coach of the Surrey CCC U15 boys, standing second right below in his Surrey gear) took the team through its paces ahead of the game. His astute briefing helped forge a purposeful, attacking but measured approach.



The sides at Aldershot – FFW captained by Anjali Ketan

In the first game, the Army batted first and were dismissed for 111, concluding with a remarkable hat-trick by Middlesex's Artemis Downer to wrap up their innings.

FF's opening bowlers, Alicia Adams (3-0-23-3) and Danni Eckley (4-0-22.2), had done the early damage to the Army. Our powerful opening batters - South African, Suni Viljoen-Louw (70*), and Surrey Academy's Daisy Feast (32*) - reached the target without loss.

Following the ten-wicket win, the second game saw FF batting first with a new order. We continued in a powerful vein



with excellent contributions across the top order to post 134 for six in our 20 overs. Opener and all-rounder, Artemis Downer scored a brisk 17 together with FFW debutant from Essex, Paige Roche, who compiled an excellent 50* (retired). There followed a steady 35 from FFW Captain, Surrey Academy all-rounder, Anjali Ketan at No 3, ably supported by Alicia Adams' quick 15 at No 4.

In a closely fought game, FF Women again came out on top restricting the Army to 113 for 4 in a display of disciplined bowling and sharp fielding - winning by the good margin of 25 runs. Amerleigh Peacock, a left-arm seamer,



Army captain receives the PoM Graham's from Paul Askew

25th June for one T20 and one 35-over game. Our thanks go to local FF, Quentin Hughes, for helping with the arrangements where we were delighted to be able to play at the picturesque Durham City CC ground next to the Racecourse. We were also pleased to be wearing the kit of our new sponsor, Jensen IP Law. FF were, once again, able to field a strong side captained well by Maya Barnwell.

was the pick of our bowling with three wickets for 24 in her 4 overs, Also worth reporting was a notably miserly spell of leg-spin from captain Anjali Ketan of 3.5 overs for only three runs including one maiden.

Next on the fixture list was a new opponent, Scotland A. The sides met at Durham over two days on 24th and



The T20 on Day One, which ended in light drizzle, saw FFW chase down the DLS-revised target of 142 with the loss of only one wicket. Artemis Downer scored a fluent 75* and our friend

Post match speeches and awards at Durham City CC on the banks of the River Wear



Bella Howarth winning the port

Bella Howarth (of the Blaze Academy) - returning to the FF fold to open the batting after three years away at university - scored a hard-hitting 54. Earlier, Middlesex's Sarah Pearson had been the pick of the FF bowlers (4.0.17.3).



Day two saw our second game played in excellent conditions. FF, batting first, posted an impressive 259 for 8 in our 35 overs. We saw a series of good partnerships to keep the pressure firmly on the Scotland A bowlers. Three FF innings perhaps stood out - our opener from Loughborough University, all-rounder Amelia Kemp (61), Durham City CC's Zaina Ahmed deploying local knowledge for her 63 runs and from Bella Howarth (47*), this time batting at six, with another skilful, confident and hard-hitting innings. Scotland A rather fell away against good FF bowling and catching to end all out for 137 in their 21st over - the pick of the FF bowlers being Amelia Kemp (4.0.29.3), Artemis Downer (3.4. 4.0.3) and South African, Elandri van Rensberg (5.0.29.2).

FF Women next took on the 2024 ECB league club T20 national competition winners - Gunnersbury Women CC in a

Kylie White with the Graham's port and Gunns mascot



Yasmin Daswani at the toss with Kylie White



T20 match. The game also celebrated the mighty Gunns' centenary. The Gunns' captain and FF friend, Kylie White, made us most welcome at their ground in Barnet. Yasmin Daswani captained another strong Forester side. FF batted first and posted 176 for 5 in our 20 overs. Suni Viljoen-Louw set the tone for FF with a rapid-fire 42, opening together with debutant Laila Moledina who scored a measured 45 in their 94-run opening partnership. Yasmin Daswani (17) and Artemis Downer (32) later picked up the pace with an excellent partnership to retain the FF momentum. The Gunnersbury batters never really got going against disciplined high-quality bowling. Seamers Darcy Dalwood, Maya Barnwell and Sarah Pearson were aggressive yet miserly with the new ball, with the spinners able to benefit as our opponents failed in their attempts to dig themselves out of the hole - ending on 116 for 6.



The sides in the evening gloaming, David Moore umpire (l) and Katerina Tanti scorer

The next game was a 30-over fixture on Tuesday 19th August against the Sussex Martlets at Horsham - as last year on the same day as our men's game v the Martlets. A strong bowling performance by FF's seven bowlers restricted the Martlets to 151 for 9 - Charlotte Reed with the best figures of 6.1.21.3. FF Women passed the Martlets' score for the loss of only 3 wickets, Laila Moledina top scoring with 65* and backed up by Mya Ketan with 45 runs.

The next fixture, on Thursday 31st July, was a return after a year's gap to compete for the Inigo Trophy at the HAC ground in the City of London vs Lloyd's Women's cricket team and the

J.P. Morgan Jaguars in T20 matches. We had won the inaugural event in 2023 at Chelsea's Burton Court. The purpose of the day, generously sponsored by Lloyds brokers, Inigo, was to encourage and celebrate women's cricket in the City. Yasmin Daswani captained a young FF side with Andy Mawson there to coach.



Match breakfast

The unseasonal drizzle at various points during the day failed to dampen the spirits of players and spectators. The wonderful Inigo hospitality, the friendly rivalry between the teams and the presence of the ceremonial HAC Pikemen made for a memorable occasion.



Mawson's briefing under lowering skies

It is also worth recording our appreciation for the incisive and moving speech made by ex England player, Lydia Greenway OBE (Kent, Southern



*The ladies at Spencer CC
on a sunny evening*

Vipers and England) - there to present the awards - about the benefits (both personal and social) of participation in women's sport generally and the rapid growth in cricket in particular. It was clear how much the City sides had improved since 2023. Nonetheless, the superior experience and strength of the young FF team was evident in, once again, bringing home the trophy.

The penultimate game was against our long-standing friends, Spencer CC. The T20 match took place on Friday 22nd August. This time FF Women ran out winners, easily overhauling Spencer Women's modest total of 97 for the loss of only four wickets, Ivreen

Daswani leading off the victorious FF



*Anjali Ketan fascinated
by HAC regimental history*

Dhaliwal top scoring with a fine not out 56, with Ayesha Shah, earlier, having done the main damage with the ball with excellent figures of 4.1.15.5.

The final game was a short-notice fixture against Brazil Women on Friday 29th August – who were kindly introduced by Tim Abraham and hosted by Shepperton CC on their first tour to Europe. Following the incredibly dry summer, the teams were aghast at the rainforest strength downpour the night before the game which boded ill for the match.



Despite the valiant efforts of the ground-staff, a patient set of enthusiastic teams and good sunshine and wind on the day, a persistent damp patch at a wicket-end three yards from the playing strip meant the game had to be abandoned without a ball being bowled. We do hope the fixture might take place in future.

In conclusion, in addition to the obvious on-field success in winning all games, the 2025 season goes down as marking an important further step in the development of the Free Foresters' entry into women's cricket. The explicit aim over the last couple of seasons has been to make the transition from a start-up led by the centre and therefore run by the men, to becoming an established section of the club devolved to the participants. How far this took place in 2025 can be debated, but progress was certainly made while there is clearly further to go.



The sides on a frustrating day at the low-lying Shepperton CC: Anjali Ketan captain, Andy Mawson coach, Paul Stubbs scorer and Keir Hopley umpire

The club's thanks are due to our sponsors, Jensen IP Law, for their support. I would also like to thank our players and those such as Yasmin Daswani, Anjali Ketan and Maya Barnwell for taking on captaincy and sharing in Match Management duties. Thanks, too, are due to our most hospitable opponents, parents, our wonderful coach, Andy Mawson, and my key helpmates in the organisation, Katerina Tanti and David Moore (who

also scored and umpired a number of games). We also remain grateful for the experienced eye of Richie Stubbs in helping us navigate the changing scene in women's cricket.

On a personal note, having been a part of the initial start-up team, I was particularly delighted to find that some of our original strong players who had come on board as 16 and 17- year-olds were now keen to return with their

friends after some years absent. This would indicate from the perspective of the club as a whole, that FF has now established a degree of awareness and goodwill within the ever-growing and developing women's game.

PAUL ASKEW

MATCH SECRETARY'S 2025 CRICKET REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

A critic of PG Wodehouse once observed that a new novel by him generally contained the same old characters doing the same old things, but with slightly different names. Wodehouse's response was to write in an introduction to a later novel that this time he had written the same old characters doing the same old things, but this time *he had used the same old names too*. In many ways an FF season is like that. Not only do we have the same old problems – the fickleness of availability, the tyranny of weather, the irritating youth and athleticism of schoolboy cricketers, but we also tend to, like migratory birds, or salmon, or politicians, do the same things year in, year out. Players find matches that they like and play in them year after year. (In Akshay's case, this is all of them, for which multiple Match Managers

are extremely grateful.). This means that any reader hoping that this review will break new ground will be disappointed; although the details are different, the sense of the 2025 season is unchanging. I suspect that my predecessor from 1925 could have written a very similar report. I hope that he would have been lucky enough to have been supported by such an extremely talented and generous group of Match Managers, players, guests, scorers and umpires as I have been; I suspect he would have been, because the character of the FF – fun, friendly, competitive and occasionally late, absent and badly dressed/present at the wrong ground - remains unchanging too.

2025 was a good season for the Free Foresters. Availability felt as if it was slightly improved from 2024, although this may have had more to do



*Questions asked -
Akshay Sreenivasan appeared for FF
in 35 matches in 2025, the first time
he hasn't topped the charts in years!*

with the proactive nature of the Match Managers than actual availability, as they shanghaied people more effectively. The fixture list was largely unchanged, with only a couple of obvious mismatches and the return to the office so trumpeted by business magazines having seemed to have been avoided by FF members, who still seem able to play a remarkable amount of midweek cricket while 'working from home'.



Last year I wrote that we remain short of seamers. Perhaps unsurprisingly, we still remain short of seamers, although nobody was as short of them as Akshay, who found himself having to use your correspondent's lesser spotted right arm dribble (last seen when Tony Blair was still not only Prime Minister but also yet to invade anywhere) as an opening bowler against the Worcester Gents. The non-turning off break delivered by someone who is rather happier batting at five than bowling is still the bedrock of our bowling line up. Students remain keen to actually attend the University which they are paying a fortune to attend, rather than travel to FF games early in the season. The North still

remains a very long way from London, which does tend to limit availability for matches there and geography does still tend to confuse some members, although the question 'Which tube stop should I take for Repton?' was a new one. But generally, just as the problems remain the same – rain, trains, roadworks on the M5, the power of schoolboy batting these days – so do the pleasures – the camaraderie of FF matches, the satisfaction of getting 11 together, everybody turning up and enjoying themselves.

It has been a good year.

SCHOOLS FIXTURES

Matches against the schools remain critical to the long-term future of the FF. In fact they are probably more so now than ever, as we must use them to both retain and gain fixtures but also recruit members for the future. Things remain difficult. The schools are still less open to FF fixtures than they were in years past, for the reasons articulated last year. They are still getting better with each passing year, as the arms race that envelopes school sport continues. The standard of some of the better schools is such that they would challenge many ECB Premier League teams, which is perhaps unsurprising given that so many of the schoolboys already play for them. Put entirely brutally, we are also getting worse, as time tends to work in one direction only, and that is not always favourable to us. The games are also still played at the beginning of the season when



*United Though Untied - Felix Kenney
(playing for OHJs against FF) flanked by
Ben Moulton and Will McKegney in August*

we are at our weakest, which makes it hard for us to compete. Nevertheless, there were some good results this year and we seem to have largely broken the hoodoo that left arm schoolboy spinners had over us in 2024, if not the hold that their batters had over us.

The season began on Good Friday against Marlborough, with the FF scoring an effective 277-8 declared (never declare, FF Match Manager; it is only asking for trouble), with Fulton (R) scoring a clinical 100*, well supported by Fulton (J) 59 in an excellent display of family run scoring, and Carman (44). Sadly the College was able to score the runs relatively comfortably, perhaps helped by the Match Manager's inexplicable refusal to bowl Turk.



FF XI at Marlborough

The Free Foresters returned to the immaculate surroundings of Harrow School on a breezy spring afternoon, expecting to face the school's 1st XI. It quickly became apparent that our opponents were in fact the 2nd XI—though perhaps “nominally” only, as a number of talented players took the field in blue caps. Nonetheless, the Foresters delivered a commanding and professional performance, dispatching the hosts with ease to register a handsome nine-wicket victory.

Harrow won the toss and elected to bat. They soon found themselves in trouble, unable to cope with a disciplined and penetrating Foresters attack. Caspar Baker (3–20) led from the front with an incisive spell, nipping out key wickets with pace and accuracy. Mo Rizvi bowled a miserly spell of 5–2–6–3, tying the schoolboys

in knots and reaping rich reward. Zac Jones (2–23) and Parv Agarwal (1–23) offered excellent support, while Karan Parmar contributed with a maiden from his only over. A combination of sharp catching and smart ground fielding ensured Harrow were skittled for 73 in just under 29.2 overs.

The catching was clinical, with contributions from Flavell, McIlwaine, Agarwal, and Cripps — the latter taking a particularly sharp chance to break a stubborn partnership. Harrow never recovered.

The reply was brisk. After the early loss of William Fort (16), who was caught behind, Tom Flavell (39*) and Angus Cripps (22*) made light work of the chase. Batting with calm assurance and timing the ball sweetly, they knocked off the target in 10.2 overs. There were no alarms, only fluent strokes and an efficient wrap-up.

A thoroughly dominant performance from the Foresters, who outclassed their hosts in all departments. While the identity of the opposition raised an eyebrow at the toss, there was no doubt about the result by tea.



Cheltenham College - one of the many magnificent grounds on our fixture card

Against Wellington we found ourselves playing a fifty over game, decided upon by the umpires, to the surprise of both Captains, the Match Manager, the school coach and the players. Fifty over cricket does not generally suit early season FF teams, and this was no exception. They scored an effective but not unreachable 248, we should have got closer than 210 and looked like we would while Graham and Arjun were at the crease, but subsided limply (so limply that an England team of the 90s would have been at home) once they were dismissed.

Some superb batting brought Sherborne victory over Free Foresters on The Upper on Sunday, as a large crowd enjoyed both the glorious weather and a thrilling match.

As is customary, Free Foresters batted first and the Old Shirburnian opening

partnership of Tom Gibbs and Barney Talbot-Williams got them off to a very positive start with a 52-run stand. However, two dismissals in quick succession both prompted a rebuilding job and also proved – again – the truth of Geoff Boycott’s maxim that the scoreboard always looks a little different with the addition of two wickets. This was also the cue for the spinners to settle in for a long bowl, which they did to good effect, and the pressure told with a run-out before the dangerous Ed Atkins was caught in the deep. Lunch was taken after an absorbing morning’s play, with the score nicely poised at 129 for 4 from 34 overs. After lunch, our opponents played with greater freedom – helped by some rather slipshod fielding – and advanced to 245 for 8 before declaring. Gibbs’ well-paced innings of 83, and a quickfire half century from Alistair Carman were the key contributions, leaving Sherborne with a tough target in

a maximum of 36 overs, compared to the 55 we had received.



A delightful Sunday at Sherborne

It was apparent to all that the pre-tea session would be crucial, and the school's openers had clearly received the memo. They set about the Foresters' attack with gusto and, at the interval, the score had already reached 70 for 1. Nonetheless, the target was still looking somewhat distant – and the required rate was around 8 - a rate

that climbed a little higher as a couple more wickets went down. However, the school captain was now at the crease and he proceeded to play an absolute gem of an innings. With 10 overs left, 71 were still required but their skipper's half-century (off just 28 balls) meant the target was coming into view. With six overs remaining, it was down to a run a ball – albeit with 7 wickets having fallen – but the school were able to finish off the game with an adroit eighth wicket partnership of 37, mixing powerfully-struck boundaries and high speed between the wickets. The end came in the penultimate over: another boundary through the covers took the skipper to 72* from 48 balls and brought the home side the spoils. It was an outstanding run chase, leaving those of us who felt the declaration had come a little late looking a little silly.

Following a couple of heavy defeats

in previous years, it was satisfying to record a victory over Winchester College in 2025. We arrived with a strong XI and played a typically rotated 1st XI from the College - who the day before had beaten a powerful Harrow team. Whilst winning is never the primary objective of our fixtures, it is important for the schoolboys to see that the Free Foresters play a good level of cricket and possess high quality players within their ranks

Having won the toss and elected to field first, the new ball pair of Alexander Peggie and debutant-candidate Joshua Dodd got stuck into their work immediately. Peggie bowled with more pace, Dodd with more lateral movement - both extremely effective and ultimately far too good for the schoolboys. Dodd recorded figures of 2 for 10, and Peggie 2 for 17 as our hosts were placed at 32-4 from 12.



Jed Crerar receives the MoM award, presented by his old schoolmaster Will McKegney at Winchester College

FF XI and scorer at Lords, Winchester College

After a short spell from the Barnes CC overseas (also on FF debut) Grainger-Balding, Messrs Khot and Ireland showed no sign of mercy as they continued to inflict significant damage on the Winchester scorecard. Their 17 over bowling partnership yielded combined figures of 6 maidens, 3 for 32 as we went to lunch in a commanding position. Winchester were 76-7 with the only consistent resistance coming from a 1st year pupil on debut for the 1st XI having scored 80 for the Under 14s the day before.

Opener Peggie and part-timer Smart were asked to finish the job after lunch, and they did just that with Peggie bowling youngster Mitchinson and Smart taking a brace as the College were dismissed for 110.

Our chase was strangely uneventful as openers Christian and Crerar (another Candidate on debut) put on 45 for the first wicket before the former chipped one back to Humphreys having scored 20. Adam Forbes (45*) joined Crerar (44*) in the middle and both of them showed their class to bring us to victory inside 30 overs. There was a flurry of dropped catches which might have made things more interesting if taken: but given the strength in depth of our batting lineup, this one never felt in doubt after the opening partnership.

And so the FF restored pride and parity in this fixture, which is always an enjoyable day out and well celebrated in the adjacent Queen Inn beer garden. Huge thanks as ever go to all at Winchester College for hosting, playing and catering to a high standard as we look forward to the



2026 fixture

The game against Shrewsbury, played on a glorious, sunny day, was in many ways FF cricket at its most FF. We scored a lot of runs, with everyone chipping in, but Louis Sabbagh-Holt leading the way with a maiden FF ton and must surely have felt confident when we declared at 297. That the school scored the runs in less than 50 overs (quite a lot less), despite the presence of an FF seamer, a youthful fielding side and two early wickets, was a disappointment, but the



Louis Sabbagh-Holt enjoys the spectacular scenery of Malvern College

The victory against Malvern was both pleasing and unusual. Pleasing, in that we had thrown away a victory the year before and they are a good side, and unusual in that it was a remarkably clinical affair. Good bowling throughout (highlights being Akshay's control and poise) and solid batting (with Watkins leading the way with an unbeaten 61). Most unusual – normal service will no doubt be resumed next year, when we will contrive to lose from a position where it would be easier to win.



Posing at Malvern

Repton have become one of the strongest schools on the circuit in recent years, and this year was no exception. A strong team, boosted by the presence of the leading run scorer in the Derbyshire League, felt reasonably confident, especially after dismissing the school for 227, with Sabbagh-Holt leading the way with 8 wickets. In the chase the FF never quite got going, losing wickets at difficult times, and only Ollie Chaplin ever looking really comfortable in an innings studded with astonishing reverse sweeps. Sadly, we fell short by nearly forty runs; next year will be different.

Eton, who beat us in both T20s last year, found themselves on the wrong end of two excellent FF performances this year, being beaten comfortably in both games. Probably the high point of the FF school season, these wins were down to two excellent team performances, marshalled on field by Arjun and off it by Mark Rochester.

game was played in an excellent spirit, everyone had fun (apart from their number 5, who was suffering quite badly from pad rash)



Foresters lining the Repton stairs

After the disaster of 2024, the match against Bradfield was not one which your correspondent was looking forward to this year. Sadly, he need not have worried. It started raining after about ten balls and never stopped. Lunch (and tea) were both nice though.



FF at Upper Club, Eton

The FF side arrived at KCS in their customary fashion - trickling in with the match just minutes from getting going. After Ali Carman had loudly noted his disapproval for the school team's changing room music, the KCS opening bats showed their utter contempt for the FF on-field bowling, racing to 177 before the fall of the first wicket. The pitch proved to be something of a batting track, with a bumpy outfield made hazardous by the recent heatwave. The FF never quite managed to generate the jaffas needed to dismiss two very handy opening bats. Candidates Ben Smith and Cian Newland were largely pummelled at one end, while Akshay Sreenivasan (17.3-1-88-1) tirelessly plugged away at the other. Not even the fielders were safe, with Alex Gordon-Martin wearing about 12 searing strikes at cover while Arjun Bhardwaj was grilled on the

boundary by a relentless press corps of 12 year olds on their lunch break. At last, the FF managed to remove one, caught on 79 behind square leg after a somewhat casual sweep, and then the other, caught at long on for 192, the highest ever total for the school. The school nobly declared with 55 overs left to chase down the 336 posted. A doable total on a batter's track. Unfortunately, almost every Forester did an excellent job of



Rhys Jones at the helm against his old school at KCS, Wimbledon



*Post-match nutrition
in Wimbledon Village*

performance, with the FF chasing down 144 for the loss of eight wickets against a very strong team. Once again, congratulations go to Mark Rochester for his marshalling of available FF resources – a fine performance.

looking dangerous before falling with a score not likely to move his season's batting average much, with Carmen (32), Gordon-Martin (25) and Clarke (42) the pick of the FF batting. With 20 overs to go, skipper Rhys Jones (8*) tried to rally the tail to block out for the draw. Alas, with a barrage of short bowling at one end, and some tidy offies from the other, the FF were bowled out with 7 overs to go. With the FF now 0-4 in this fixture, pride is on the line ahead of 2026. We go again!

The match against Rossall was a good old fashioned draw, with the school managing 180 and us replying with 140

– neither side ever looked like winning. Cricket as it should be.

Our final school match was against Grey College, from South Africa, hosted by Tonbridge. This was an excellent

SECRETARY MATCHES

It is important to start by confirming exactly what these matches are. They are not age limited and are open to any FF member. They are however our strongest and most high profile matches and members should be aware that teams are picked on merit. Members should be regularly playing a strong standard of cricket and in certain cases should be able to commit to the physical challenge of multi-day cricket. The Secretary matches are (generally) the games against the full-Service sides and the Universities, with other matches added on an ad hoc basis.



*Captains and Umpires at Tonbridge -
FF v. Grey College*

RESULTS

Free Foresters
278-10 & 209-5

Cambridge University
341-7 (dec) & 239-8 (dec)

Free Foresters
344-10 & 123-2

Oxford University
246-10 & 220-10

Free Foresters
1294-8 (50)

Royal Air Force
238-10 (47.2)

Free Foresters
259-8 (50)

Army
228-10 (46.4)

FF SECRETARY'S FIXTURES 2025

A successful season for our prestigious fixtures, winning three and drawing one.

Our annual 3-day fixtures against both universities were played in June, drawing with the Light Blues and beating the Dark Blues by 8 wickets. In July we beat Royal Air Force by 56 runs and the Army by 31 runs in 50-over matches.

First up Cambridge University, who won the toss and elected to bat. Wickets were hard to find on a dry flat pitch and CUCC were 65-1 at drinks. A second wicket soon fell but a third wicket 59-run stand between AP Ferreira and F Kottler saw CUCC to 134-3 at Lunch. FF grabbed another 3 wickets in the second session but 121 runs saw CUCC at 255-8 at Tea. CUCC declared at 341-7 giving FF an hour till close. FF finished the first day on 73-2 with Ethan Berlusconi on 56.

Day 2 started poorly and FF found themselves 134-5 at the drinks break. However, a 63-run 6th wicket stand between Ethan Berlusconi and Ravi Yarwood-Paintal steadied FF. At Lunch FF were 186-7 with Ethan Berlusconi on 120. A 100-run 8th wicket partnership between Ethan Berlusconi and Elliott Watkins saw FF through to drinks in the 2nd session. Just before Tea FF were bowled out for 278, with Ethan Berlusconi finishing on 190 off 222 balls in 253 minutes with 24 x 4 and 1 x 6. CUCC finished the day 94-3.

Day 3 and FF had something else to cheer as Henry Redmayne grabbed his 5th wicket of the innings just before drinks but CUCC fought on to be 157-6 at Lunch. The declaration came an hour into the 2nd session following a 118-run 8th wicket partnership. This gave CUCC a session and a half to bowl out FF. Unfortunately, Ethan Berlusconi fell



The University Parks, Oxford

early and at Tea FF were 63-1. A 105-run 2nd wicket partnership between Thomas Flavell and Arjun Bhardwaj steadied FF and at drinks in the final session FF were 123-4. James Nelson and Yuvee Malhotra frustrated CUCC, who were eager for the win, with a 91-run 5th wicket partnership. Having gone past 200 runs and time running out the CUCC captain, AP Ferreira, shook hands with James Nelson and settled upon the draw.

Ethan Berlusconi 190; Thomas Flavell 78; James Nelson 55*; Henry Redmayne 5-86; Louis Sabbath-Holt 4-99.

We assembled again in Oxford the following week and winning the toss found ourselves in the field. Early wickets were difficult to come by on a green pitch and OUCC were 106-2 at Lunch. OUCC reached Tea on 215-5, with OUCC captain and FF member Justin Clarke scoring 138. It might have been the cookies on offer which assisted Thomas Nelson grab his first FF 5-fer including a hat-trick, all LBW, to help dismiss OUCC for 246. FF set about the chase and finished the day on 122-2.

Day 2 saw FF close the gap for the loss of 2 wickets and we were 213-4 at lunch. A 164-run 5th wicket partnership between Sikandar Rizwan and Aizaz Ahmed saw FF pass 300. However, quick wickets saw FF all out for 344, a lead of 98 runs. Wickets continued to fall in the 3rd session and OUCC finished the day on 132-6.

Day 3 saw a delay due to rain and OUCC rallied through to drinks without losing a wicket at 195-6. Wickets fell after drinks and at lunch OUCC were 216-9. 2 overs into the 2nd session FF bowled out OUCC for 220, a lead of 122 runs. Thomas Flavell went inside 3 overs, but Elliot Watkins and Cole Seggery, with a 101-run 2nd wicket partnership saw FF to 119-2 and, with Cole Seggery hitting the winning runs, FF won by 8 wickets inside 19 overs. Thomas Flavell 40; Arjun Bhardwaj 73; Cole Seggery 35 & 72*; Sikandar Rizwan 80; Aizaz Ahmed 79; Thomas Nelson 5-67; James Nelson 7-121; Louis Sabbath-Holt 4-67.

In July, FF travelled to Vine Lane to play Royal Air Force in a 50 over game. FF won the toss and decided to bat on a dry pitch in humid conditions. The opening pair, Oliver Sheen and Thomas Nelson, got us off to a good

start putting on 104 before the fall of the 1st wicket. At drinks FF were 134-2 and looked comfortable against a strong RAF side, who had dominated the Inter Services T20 Tournament, and had reached 200-3 when a sudden rain shower forced the players from the field but soon passed. The downpour changed the conditions and wickets soon fell, with FF finishing on 294-8 in 50 overs.

RAF set about the chase but James Nelson struck with 3 wickets in his first spell to see RAF at 88-4 at drinks. A wicket in the over after and RAF were 88-5. Still requiring 207 runs at 8.7 an over, FF could sense victory as RAF eased to 195-8 with 10 overs remaining. The final 2 wickets fell and FF secured another victory over the RAF.

Oliver Sheen 52; Thomas Nelson 72; Cole Seggery 65; James Nelson 4-40.

Top 5 Batters	Runs	Games	Innings	Top score
Ethan Berlusconi	193	1	2	190
Arjun Bhardwaj	185	3	5	85
Cole Seggery	172	2	3	72*
Thomas Flavell	153	4	6	78
Thomas Nelson	88	3	3	72

Top 5 Bowlers	O	M	R	W	Best
James Nelson	78	8	305	14	4/40
Henry Redmayne	31	4	103	8	5/51
Louis Sabbath-Holt	45.5	7	166	8	4/19
Thomas Nelson	48	5	173	6	5/35
Yuvee Malhotra	31	3	137	5	2/24

The final game was against The Army, who invited us back to RMA Sandhurst rather than Aldershot, their spiritual home. The surroundings of the Academy in its final preparations for the Sovereign's Parade, that would see the

next cohort of Young Officers take up their new postings, seemed fitting for this fixture.

The Army won the Toss and put FF into bat on a dry pitch in cloudy conditions.

*Cole Seggery receiving
the MoM Graham's vs RAF*



Early wickets fell but a 66-run 3rd wicket and 75-run 4th wicket partnerships between Arjun Bhardwaj and Sanjoy Bassi (3rd) and Joshua Dodd (4th) saw FF at 184-4 with 11 overs left. FF finished on 259-8 in their 50 overs.

Needing just over 5 an over The Army thought that the run chase wouldn't be too hard, but they didn't count on Henry Redmayne who took early wickets in his first spell to reduce The Army to 40-3 in the first Power Play. Wickets steadily tumbled and The Army were all out for 228, with Omkar Khot dismissing Man of the Match Stavone Gabriel on 90 off 56 balls.

Arjun Bhardwaj 85; Joshua Dodd 51; Henry Redmayne 3-17; Omkar Khot 2-45; Akshay Sreenivasan 2-24.

PAUL STUBBS

FF WESTERN SERIES 2025

After a day or two of beautiful sunny coastal relaxation for those booked in for 7 days or longer, we made our way to Budleigh Salterton's wonderful new ground, all finished now, with the outfield parched dry from the hot sunny weather.

Sun 13 July @ Budleigh Salterton CC v BUDLEIGH SALTERTON

FF 251 ao (Jamie Baldwin 62, Edward Fane-Trefusis 50, Charlie McKegney 37) BS 250 ao (Will Sandbach 5-43, Edward Fane-Trefusis 3-46) FF won by 1 run

FF: Robin Jones (capt), George Bretten, Neil Baker, Jamie Baldwin, Peter Deakin, Will Sandbach, Charlie McKegney (wk), Edward Fane-Trefusis, Felix Kenney, Rhys Jones, James Deakin, Harri Jones.

Invited to bat first, Jamie Baldwin timed the ball well at the top of the order and looked set for another century against Budleigh until running himself out. Middle order contributions from George



*Will Sandbach after a match-winning 5-42
on Day 1 of the Western Series*

*The Manager with scorer-extraordinaire
Peter Langford - running the Budleigh
second hand shop?!*

Bretten, Charlie McKegney, Edward Fane-Trefusis and Will Sandbach took the FF score to a competitive level on a slightly variable wicket with a fast outfield.

After a splendid tea and a glimpse of the Wimbledon final, Will Sandbach and Ed Fane-Trefusis took the new ball with devastating effect. The former castled three amongst his first four, with the latter inducing nicks behind for his two, and the home side were seemingly down and out at 46-6.

When the opening bowlers took a rest, Felix Kenney produced a wicket with his first ball in the Western Series to make the score 60-7. However, number nine (and tactical replacement!) Ed Doble launched a stunning counter-attack in partnership with 15 year old wicket-keeper Marcus Robinson to completely change the outlook of the



match. Doble had reached 80 from 37 balls with 5 sixes, before Charlie McKegney, standing up to the returning Will Sandbach, pulled off an electric leg-side stumping: 157-8.

Keggars followed this up with a sharp one-handed grab off Ed Fane-Trefusis to account for the number ten, but not before young Robinson had accelerated nicely to take the score to 214. Home skipper Joel Murphy was

last man in, and he turned back the clock with several fine strokes to keep his team in the frame.

12 were needed from the last 12 balls, then 6 from the final over, with all results still possible. Will Sandbach kept things tight, and 4 were needed for victory from the final ball. The ball was struck into the outfield, and with two runs being run, Felix Kenney threw hard and fast to the bowler's end. Murphy, anticipating overthrows, set off for a third run that would secure at least a tie, but Sandbach quickly got across to parry the throw, and was able to return to the stumps and remove the bails to secure a 1 run victory (and man-of-the-match!!)

A perfect start to the tour...and again the Budleigh hospitality extended to a very sociable curry dinner after the match.



Curry dinner at Budleigh Salterton

*Captain and Manager
think tank at Seaton*

The FF were again invited to bat first, and left-arm quick Aashay Dube proved a handful. Neil Baker held things together, but when he was bowled, the score read 56-3, soon 75-4. But skipper James Fulton had cunningly held himself back, and he soon made batting look easy!



Mon 14 July @ Seaton CC v DEVON DUMPLINGS

FF 261-6 dec (James Fulton 111, Omkar Khot 40*, Neil Baker 33)

DD 264-4

DD won by 6 wickets

FF: James Fulton (capt), Neil Baker (wk), Robin Jones, Will McKegney, Omkar Khot, Edward Fane-Trefusis, Charles Stuckey, Johnnie Jackson, Felix Kenney, Rory Fulton, Eoin Simpkins.

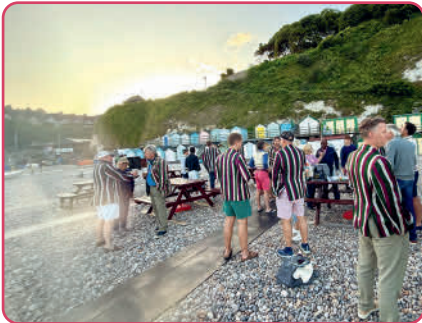


*Openers Rory Fulton
and Neil Baker v. Devon Dumplings*

First in partnership with Western Series debutant Johnnie Jackson, then with the cultured (of course!) Omkar Khot, Fulton struck regular boundaries and accelerated to a fine century. He added two sixes to his 20 fours, and it was a surprise when he was eventually caught on the deep midwicket boundary. Felix Kenney added an aggressive unbeaten cameo in a half-century Hurst Johnian partnership with Khot, before the declaration after 51 overs.

*Skipper Will McKegney
at the toss vs. Somerset Stragglers
as Bernard Critchley holds court*

Harry Everett opened up for the Dumplings, and looked in good nick. His second wicket partnership with Seaton Chairman Damian Baxter took the score to 132, and he continued on to a deserved century (and man-of-the-match award) before he was also trapped in front by Will McKegney with the total an appropriate 222-2. Omkar Khot produced an absolutely marvellous direct hit run-out, but the Dumplings were able to cruise to victory from just 40 overs.



Paella and drinks on Beer Beach

Quickly overcoming disappointment, the entire FF touring group and families and supporters gathered on Beer beach for a most enjoyable Paella evening, al fresco, kindly arranged by Will Sandbach.

Tue 15 July @ Seaton CC
v SOMERSET STRAGGLERS

SS 177 ao (Will McKegney 5-26)
FF 180-4 (Chris Sandbach 67*,
George Sandbach 61*)
FF won by 6 wickets

FF: Will McKegney (capt), Chris Sandbach, George Bretten, Will Sandbach, George Sandbach, Nick Turk, John Ratledge, George Wissett-Warner (wk), Johnnie Jackson, Oscar Ratledge, Felix Kenney.



*Father & son opening combination
- John and Oscar Ratledge*



Skipper Will McKegney inserted the Stragglers, and gave Will Sandbach the new ball. A leg-side wide tested keeper George Wissett-Warner, then a wide off-stump full toss was only just reached by Harry Everett. His third ball was however a devastating leg stump yorker, and the previous day's centurion was left thinking he may as well have consumed his Graham's Port overnight!

Wickets fell at regular intervals, especially once Will McKegney introduced himself into the attack. George Sandbach added two wickets of his own, aided by the catching of his brothers,

*Brothers in Arms
- Chris and George Sandbach following
their match winning partnership*

and the Stragglers were reduced to 102-7. An eighth wicket partnership brought some respectability, but Wilma completed his Michelle with his third clean-bowled, James Deakin left unbeaten guesting for the visitors.

The FF reply soon hit problems, opening bowler Sunil Lachit ripping out two Ratledges and a Bretten, and when George Wissett-Warner ran past one, the scoreboard read 65-4.



However, Chris Sandbach steadied the ship whilst playing himself in, and was joined by his brother George, the more flamboyant of the pair, striking three big sixes.

The partnership was worth an undefeated 115 when the FF raced to victory from just 35.2 overs, Harry Everett capping his day with 0.2-0-12-0..!

A splendid evening dinner was once again enjoyed at The Bistro up on Beer

Head, with all players, supporters and families gathered, totalling over 50!

**Wed 16 July @ Seaton CC
v MCC**

FF 293 ao (George Sandbach 80,
James Fulton 66, Charlie McKegney 53,
Will McKegney 30)
MCC 199 ao (Will McKegney 6-83,
Akshay Sreenivasan 3-26)
FF won by 94 runs

FF: Peter Deakin (capt), Neil Baker, James Fulton,
Charlie McKegney (wk), Will McKegney, Jamie
Baldwin, George Sandbach, Akshay Sreenivasan,
Omkar Khot, Arjun Bhardwaj, Rory Fulton.



Tuesday evening at Beer Head Bistro

*The Academy's Academy! Harri Jones and Freddie Jackson,
both teammates for Berkshire U12s in 2025, were both sub
fielders against Somerset Stragglers.*



*Messrs Kenney, Fulton (Jr.),
McKegney and Sreenivasan in discussion*

*Stunning Seaton - FF v MCC
on Day 4 of the Western Series*

McKegney, and then with his brother Will (whose innings included a fine six!), to ensure that a defensible total of nearly 300 was posted.

New MCC skipper Miles Kantolinne chose to bowl first and gave the new ball to his candidate, James 'United Though Untied' Pyman, who quickly reduced the FF to 3-2! This became 27-3, but George Sandbach joined James Fulton, and the two left-handers batted assertively to take the score to 120 before Fulton was surprisingly stumped. Charlie McKegney maintained the run-a-ball scoring rate, and the FF went to lunch at 194-5.

First ball after the interval, George Sandbach nicked a good one to miss out on what would have been a well-deserved century. Omkar Khot batted sensibly in partnership with Charlie



*Papped! James Fulton and Arjun Bhardwaj
stop for media duties pre-MCC*

George Sandbach and Will McKegney bowled without much luck as the MCC openers compiled 74, one big six requiring the unique fielding skills of Akshay deep in the undergrowth



(a shambles in the brambles) outside the ground at the Colyton End!

Skipper Deakin persevered with his openers, and was rewarded when Sandbach made the breakthrough. McKegney then found his groove, and four wickets, three disturbing the timbers, gave the FF the upper hand at 144-5.

Jack Ellison batted well for his fifty, but the sixth wicket partnership was broken at 186 by McKegney's fifth wicket. Akshay now joined the party from the Members' End, and removed Ellison thanks to a Keggers stumping, before castling candidate Pyman with his next ball. There was to be no hat-trick, but the FF were now on fire, and in Akshay's next over came a stunning moment. An attempted drive

*Will McKegney
and Hon. Sec at Seaton*



went spiralling into the air, and Will McKegney, fielding at 40/45 on the off-side (known these days as short third man), ran with full commitment towards square and launched himself to hold on to an extraordinary catch at full stretch with his right hand just above the ground...before being mobbed by his ecstatic team-mates!



*Yardmaster General (Ted Sandbach)
and recipient (Felix Kenney)*

It was fitting therefore that the final wicket was taken by Wilma, with a second caught-and-bowled, for a splendid match-winning six-fer...the margin of victory an exact reversal of last year!

The evening continued at Seaton with both sides, many supporters, and countless children of all ages enjoying the traditional barbeque masterminded by Charlie McKegney, admirably assisted by fellow 'safe hands' George Wissett-Warner.



Victorious XI vs. MCC

Thu 17 July @ Sidmouth CC v **SIDMOUTH**

FF 108 ao
Sid 111-8 (Arjun Bhardwaj 3-21)
Sidmouth won by 2 wickets

FF: Jamie Baldwin (capt), Chris Sandbach, Dave Maasdorp, Will Sandbach, Charlie Stuckey, Akshay Sreenivasan, Rory Fulton (wk), John Rattledge, Arjun Bhardwaj, George Wissett-Warner, Oscar Rattledge, James Deakin.



*Chef's table - George Wissett-
Warner and Charlie McKegney tend
the coals at the Wednesday BBQ*



Shambles in the brambles - Akshay familiarises himself with the Seaton flora whilst looking for a lost ball

*3D - Doctor Daddy Dave
taking care of family duties pre-match*

Persistent drizzle and sea mist caused frustration and a start delayed by over an hour, but skipper Jamie Baldwin won the toss and decided to bat first with eleven batters in the side. However, this Sidmouth wicket proved not to be the usual 'road', and wickets fell at regular intervals. Only 3D (Doctor Daddy Dave) Maasdorp, and Will Sandbach (who ran out of partners), struck the ball with any certainty. The Doctor's 29 proved to be the highest score of the match, as the FF innings fell away from 84-4 to 103 all out in just over 30 overs.

through, they looked firm favourites at 49-1. However, the introduction of spin brought almost immediate success. Arjun Bhardwaj bowled the other opener, and then helped by Rory Fulton's stumping and a Chris Sandbach slip catch, was on a hat-trick.

Wickets from Akshay and Oscar Ratledge reduced the home side to 88-6, and five penalty runs as a result of a mis-directed six (local rules), meant that the target became 109 - although no '9' could be found to change the scoreboard accordingly!

The tension cranked up still further with two excellent run-outs by Arjun, one a direct hit, and 97-6 became 103-8, with the batting side under intense pressure. They held their nerve however to get over the line in the thirty-third over, with the whole ground bathed in beautiful sunshine.



So a close encounter to end another wonderful week on the East Devon coast. I would like to thank all 27 players who featured during the week, not least the match captains Robin Jones, James Fulton, Will McKegney, Peter Deakin and Jamie Baldwin. We are extremely grateful once again to Peter Langford and Bernard Critchley for their first-class officiating, Bernard also handling the tour finances.



*FF XI for the final time in
2025's Western Series*



FF warmdown post-Sidmouth

It was lovely to see so many former players and supporters, especially the ever-growing young families (and grandparents!). It was again especially nice to have Cherry Bretten and daughter Charlotte and her children and nieces on holiday for the week, as well as Paul and Lucy Askew; John and Maggie Hamilton; Bill, Justine and Tilly Lawry; and Garri Jones in non-playing roles.

A special mention also to Omkar Khot, making a comeback this year as a 'reverse non-cricketer', but still providing wonderful support with his photographic record and social media reports. He also produced one of the funniest moments of the tour, using the Barrel's wi-fi code to stream highlights of the exciting final day of the third Test

with India from his phone to their large screen! Tremendous effort that...

We enjoyed mostly sunny weather for the five matches; and with extremely high availability of players again, and the best-ever mix of off-field activities, the 2025 Western Series was another memorable FF experience.

NICK BALDWIN

ACADEMY MATCHES

The Academy began the season with two T20 games against the RAF. The first was tied, which was no small achievement and founded on the solid base that was Akshay's miserly left arm spin. The second was lost, but credit must go to Yuvee Malhotra who managed to come back from an economy rate of 12 in the first game to bowl well in the second.

The games against the Army were close defeats. In the first, we fell seven short of their target of 140, with Arjun top scoring and Louis Sabbagh-Holt bowling beautifully. In the second, we were less close, with the Army bowling us out for a below par 118 and beating us by six wickets. Sabbagh-Holt was again the pick of the bowlers.

The first game against the Navy was perhaps the FF Academy at its worst.



Arjun Bhardwaj, Academy Captain, enjoys some light reading at Aldershot

We were second best in every regard, and the Navy produced an unexpectedly efficient performance to cruise to victory by 45 runs. The second game was the FF Academy at its best – with a strong team performance with the bat leading to a score of 189, which we comfortably defended. A much better end to the day than beginning.

The RAF Development XI were comfortably defeated twice on an excellent day at Vine Lane. (Comfortably might be stretching it a bit, but we did beat them twice.). In the first game Ollie Sheen led the way with the bat and Akshay (obviously) with the ball; in the second Ollie again did the honours with the bat, while James Nelson, (4 overs for 10 runs) was instrumental with us romping to victory by 1 run. Superbly led in the field by Arjun, this was a great day of cricket all round.

Beating the Club Cricket Conference U25s was deeply satisfying. The batting was strong throughout, with Amartya Kaul and Will Fort both making fifties, while with the ball Ravi Yarwood-Paintal and Arjun both bowled well for their two wickets. We restricted them to 267 and chased it down for the loss of eight wickets.

Our Beynon Cup games were less satisfying. Despite topping 180 in both games, we lost both, unable to restrict the opposition. There were plenty of good performances, but on the day we just couldn't get over the line.

CLUB MATCHES

The club matches (against Old Boys sides, other wandering clubs, and the university second teams) are at the heart of FF cricket. Many of these games are becoming harder to organise, not because we struggle to

find players, but because we struggle to find opposition. The recreational game in its truest sense (as opposed to league cricket) is in a bad way – people are less and less willing to play, to administrate, to manage and many old and long-established clubs are in danger of disappearing. We continue to aim to reverse this trend and are hoping to be able to return some long lost friends to the fixture list in due course.



Furry Foresters support was much appreciated in 2025!



Ted Peggie with a wardrobe masterclass en route to Cambridge



Radley Rangers v FF

Returning to the fixture list this year was the Cambridge Crusaders game. Sadly, it was not one of our better days, with the students rolling us for 74 and chasing it down without too much fuss. We will do better in 2026... meanwhile, in Oxford, the FF were scoring 297 (Nicholls and McCreery both getting to three figures), before we bowled the Authentics out for 220... while in Radley, the FF were scoring 293 (Mawdsley 118) and bowling the Rangers out for 224. No mean effort to



Tom Clarke presents Josh Allan with a bottle of centurion's Graham's v. Incogniti

The Chelsea Flower Show - another magnificent floral number is revealed at The Royal Hospital, a week after the RHS showpiece!

put out three teams on the same day, even if a less inept Fixture Secretary would have heeded the warning that three games on one day is a bit much. (For 2026, Nick Turk has tattooed this warning on my arm.)



Thoughtful FF and Incogniti cakes at Merstham

Burton Court is always a lovely place to play, and the Guards are always lovely people to play against. This year was no exception, with the might of the Household Division being both excellent hosts and grist to Akshay's mill (6-42), while James Richardson enjoyed himself to the tune of 94. A good win.



Nottingham University was a new fixture, introduced to us by Ollie Chaplin. It was a fantastic day out, and a great addition to the fixture list. Match Management was slightly complicated by the decision of one person to apply under two names, which did confuse things slightly, but we got there in the end. Arjun cruised to 130 (and it was a cruise – he looked in a different class from any other FF batter this year) and we made 288-7, batting probably too long. The University got off to a dramatic start, with their openers taking our seam attack to the cleaners, before wickets pegged them back. Both sides went for the win to the very end and it was a brilliant day all round.



*Money on Crimson, Ivory and Green!
Ben Moulton soaks up the London nightlife*

The Staffordshire Gents is an always enjoyable fixture but was slightly ruined by the rain this year. The game started late due to the wet conditions. The Foresters won the toss and batted first, but none of our batsmen was able to build on promising starts. All Foresters batsmen were out caught, so some back-to-basics coaching about hitting the ball along the ground may be required! Harry Wood (31) and Leo Hadcock (30) were the top scorers as the Foresters were bowled out for 143. The Staffordshire Gents started their chase well, but unfortunately, at tea, the heavens opened and we weren't able to

*Amartya Kaul's century v. Gloucestershire
Gypsies earning him another Graham's*

finish the game. As ever, the Staffordshire Gents were great hosts and lunch and tea were much enjoyed. Hopefully, we will be luckier with the weather (and we will bat better!) next year.

Matches in the dog days of June against the Oppenheimer XI were lost, against the Old Wimbledonians and Old Wykehamists won and the Crusaders Australia drawn; the one constant in these was the presence of Akshay, who once again in 2025 was bowled seemingly endlessly. If it is a midweek day in an English summer, then somebody, somewhere is being beaten in the flight by the bandana wearing Svengali of spin.



The game against the Gloucester Gypsies was notable for several things; their enthusiastic use of Afghan seam bowlers, their belief that the law about men behind square on the leg side was more of a guideline and another Amartya Kaul hundred. They deserve great praise for continuing to fight for victory long after the battle was lost; would that the ANSF had shown such pluck.

The next day saw many of the same players reconvene to meet the might of the Worcester Gents. Sadly, while we were lucky to witness another Kaul hundred we didn't quite have the bowling

Hamish Smart presents Old Wimbledonians' captain with a bottle of Graham's Port - in celebration of their centenary



Arjun Bhardwaj with a high-class hundred against Old Amplefordians

to defeat them and they cruised to a well-earned victory by four wickets. It was in this game that the seam bowling reserves of the FF reached their lowest ebb, with McIlwaine (2-42) bowling an 11 over opening spell of right arm dribble.

The game against the Old Amplefordians got off to a delayed start, after they forgot to turn up. This had several advantages; it allowed us all to enjoy a lovely pub lunch first, and for our players, like a sort of wandering cricket version of the Avengers, to assemble from across southeast England. The game itself was played on a spicy track,

Omkar Khot and Will McKegney following a match saving 8th wicket partnership at Hurstpierpoint

which made Arjun's hundred even more notable; the OAs dug in well to finish at 88-8 in response to our 214-4.

The Old Hurst Johnians had much the better of our draw with them; they batted well and bowled accurately. We did well to withdraw with our draw intact. We weren't so lucky against the Hampshire Hogs, who rattled up over 300 before bowling us out for under 200.



The 150th anniversary of the game against the Rifles saw us asked to bowl on a sunny day with Pratt taking the new ball alongside McKegney. Pratt got bounce and movement in a miserly spell in which he repeatedly beat the bat. He was unfortunate to get only one wicket which fell at drinks with our hosts 51-1. Bhardwaj and Sreenivasan had their turn with the ball next with Bhardwaj attacking the stumps and forcing mistakes to take four wickets in a flurry. At the other end Sreenivasan was in a battle with the always formidable George. Sreenivasan certainly had the upper hand in this fascinating contest with the usually fluent striker of the ball, giving up just four runs; however, he was unable to stop his quarry fully. This put the score on 70-5 when it was time for the spin of Penn. Again showing the benefit of attacking the stumps he took a quite remarkable four wickets

without giving up a run from his two overs. Walter took the final wicket to close the innings on 89 runs. Quite the turnaround from drinks.

To mark the occasion of the 150th anniversary, our hosts had brought a team of buglers who played us off the field for lunch as well as heralding our host's captain who brought out a bowl which he hoped we can play for in our annual fixture.



Rifles and FF (with buglers) at St. Cross Symondians CC celebration of their centenary



Stuart Walter receives the trophy following victory against The Rifles

It was then our turn with the bat with Aziz and Quinault both making starts before falling in quick succession. Simpkins joined Bretten at the crease with the score 34-2 with both providing stability whilst nudging us up to the required score. Bretten's 'run a ball' 41 put Simpkins in position to finish the game off with a boundary securing the win by 8 wickets.

The post match events saw the FF presented with the new trophy, Penn presented with the Player of the Match prize and The Rifles assuring us they would get their revenge next year.

The game against Cobham was dominated by Kiwis, with Josh Allan (who scored his second hundred of the season) and Akshay (with 7 wickets) dominating in a comfortable win. August saw the FF travel up for the now annual Yorkshire Tour. First up was Romany at the resplendent Hovingham Hall. Upon winning the toss, Tour Skipper Joe Benson elected to bat in the spotless sunshine. With most chipping in, Foresters ended up on 248 - highlights coming from Kiwi Nic Robinson's classy 52, Ali Carmen's swashbuckling 35, and Benson's lower order bombshow.



The glorious Hovingham Hall

Seeing triple - Rob Wood displays the latest eyewear trend in Yorkshire



An absorbing, seesawing second innings followed. After a hot start, tight bowling from Akshay Sreenivasan and Will McKegney pegged Romany back to 155-6. However, a sterling 120 from the Romany number four eventually led the home team to victory in the final over. McKegney led the way with final figures of 4 for 60, with a wheelbarrow being requisite after Sreenivasan's 20 overs on the spin (again). Another fantastically enjoyable and tight fixture at Hovingham Hall, played in great spirit with top notch teas.



Will McKegney adds some flair to his hotel room in the idyllic village of Hovingham

After sampling the Shambles' finest sherbet, the noble Yorkshire Gentlemen awaited on day two at Escrick Park. Once again, the soothsayer skipper called heads and instantly called "bat" in a similarly subtropical Yorkshire. Much like at Hovingham, runs were shared around the well-oiled FF machine, with McKegney this time starring with the willow (61). Declaring on 242-8, YGs then struggled to amass the requisite runs, eventually batting out for the draw on 166-8. Cracking figures came from newbies AJ Cook (61-3) and Henry Kay (24-2), showing

the high quality northern FF candidacy in progress. Another ripping Yorky Tour in the books! Talks continue to extend the tour to three days in 2026, with the northern tour now cemented as a peak in the FF fixture list.

We can probably draw a veil over the Cryptics game; Arjun scored a hundred (obviously); we scored lots of runs (obviously); they scored one more than us. For the loss of but a single wicket. Definitely a bat second game next year.



James Pyman with a highly sartorial warm up vs. Cryptics

After Lasagne gate in 2024, the FF were keen to restore pride against the Sussex Martlets in 2025. Thanks to a much better day of weather, a fine start to the day in the form of a massive breakfast supplied by Omkar Khot's mother, 6 wickets from McKegney and some sparkling batting from Josh Allan (disappointingly only a 50 this time) we were able to beat the Martlets by six wickets. A much more enjoyable day for all concerned, including, probably, the Martlets.



Pre-Martlets breakfast in Horsham



No. 7 Hamish Smart (72) and No.11 Will Sandbach (97) put on 165 for the 10th wicket against The Hurlingham Club, from just 126 balls!*

Superb batting by Sandbach and Smart propelled us to 254 against the Hurlingham; sadly they were able to chase this down to win by two wickets, despite excellent bowling by McKegney.

The next day at Vine Lane against the Aadastrians, Arjun (astonishingly) did not score a hundred – Tom Flavell did instead, making 150 with his customary elegance and style. This was a classic FF game, with two strong batting sides putting over five hundreds out between them, with the game finishing in an honours even draw.



FF at Vine Lane



Hat-trick hero - Artemis Downer

SUMMARY

Another good year for the FF – we even managed to avoid falling victim to teenage left arm spinners quite as often this year. On a personal note, I would like to thank my predecessor, Nick Turk, who once again went above and beyond to help and to all of the Match Managers, without whom this could not happen.



Arun Bhardwaj presented with FF socks as a thanks for taking Arjun to 38 matches in 2026!

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	lost	Tied	No Result	Cancelled
Free Foresters	48	21	9	17	0	1	7
FF Academy XI	15	7	0	7	1	0	0
FF Secretary's XI	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
FF Women's XI	9	8	0	0	0	1	4

*Hon. Membership Secretary
and Hon. Match Secretary at Harrow*



Joel Barber's extraordinary 136
helping FF to a narrow win at the HAC*



*Ali Carman enjoying the balmy
conditions vs. Cossoney!*

PLAYER STATISTICS FOR 2025

These figures only reflect those matches recorded in Play-Cricket. There are 2 matches for which, alas, we do not have full scorecard details recorded. Our policy is to have all our games recorded via Play-Cricket in part to allow complete statistical analysis.

Top 5 Batters	Runs	Games	Innings	Top score	Average
Arjun Bhardwaj	1038	38	37	130	30.53
Thomas Flavell	663	17	19	150	39.00
Amartya Kaul	439	7	7	135	62.71
Alastair Carman	424	18	17	58*	30.29
Oliver Sheen	339	14	14	55	33.90

Top 5 Bowlers	O	M	R	W	Best	Econ	Strk rt	Ave
Akshay Sreenivasan	280.4	42	1238	65	7/81	4.41	25.91	19.05
Will McKegney	162.1	23	784	46	6/22	4.61	21.15	15.41
Louis Sabbagh-Holt	123.1	9	595	33	8/53	4.83	22.39	18.03
Arjun Bhardwaj	164.5	13	901	30	4/12	5.47	32.97	30.03
James Nelson	119	12	513	25	4/40	4.31	28.56	20.52

Top Fielding records	Catches	Other	Total
Thomas Flavell	13	2	15
Arjun Bhardwaj	11	3	14
Alex Mistlin	6	6	12
Alex Thomas	6	4	10
Josh Sharratt	3	7	10

Number of matches played (six or more matches)

38 Arjun Bhardwaj	11 Elliott Watkins	7 Amartya Kaul, Neil Baker, Aizaz Ahmed, Stuart Walter, Alex Mistlin, Eoin Simpkins, Alexander Peggie, Moteeb Syed
35 Akshay Sreenivasan	10 Thomas Nelson, Yuvee Malhotra Thomas Clarke, Alex Thomas	6 Will Sandbach, Henry Redmayne, Robert Wood
18 Alastair Carman, Will McKegney	9 Ravi Yarwood-Paintal, Moin Khan, Sikandar Rizwan, Josh Sharratt	
17 Thomas Flavell	8 Lucas Smith, Felix Kenney	
14 Oliver Sheen, Tom McIlwaine, Louis Sabbagh-Holt		
13 James Nelson, Omkar Khot, James Richardson		



Arjun Bhardwaj played the most matches for FF in 2025. He is pictured here receiving a plaque after scoring 118 against MCC for Shenfield High School in 2024. Arjun's award was presented by then MCC President, Lord King, during the tea interval of the fourth day of the third Test Match between England and India at Lord's.

BOOK REVIEWS 2025-2026

Victory In Australia: the Remarkable Story of England's Greatest Ashes Triumph 1954-5

by Richard Whitehead (Bloomsbury, 2025)

Blood on the Tracks: England in Australia 1974-5

by David Tossell (Trinorth, 2024)

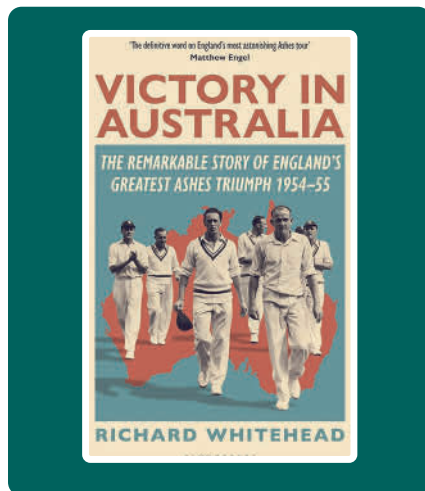
After notoriously inserting the opposition at Brisbane, rendered helpless to prevent Australia from amassing 601-8 declared, England captain Leonard Hutton mused to Bodyline veteran Jack Fingleton, 'Pitches are like wives; you can never be too certain how they are going to turn out.' To which Mrs Dorothy Hutton might reply, 'Husbands are like rural buses; you never know when they are going to turn up.' After all, he had been abroad for 8 months by the time that his boat home finally reached port in 1955. 'Victory in Australia' tells the tale of what had happened in the meantime.

First, Hutton had to be confirmed in his

post by evading the knives of Messrs Allen, Warner and Robins from whom 'there was no limit to the politicking and plotting' in the MCC Committee Room. This was despite his success on

and off the field in a controversial tour of the West Indies the previous winter (for which see David Woodhouse's compelling 'Who Only Cricket Know', which acts as a prequel to Whitehead's book). The 'cabal's' promotion of the amateur David Sheppard, then 25, who would naturally only excuse himself from his training for the priesthood to tour if offered the captaincy in Australia, adds an entertaining sub-plot, but the selectors could see that this was Hutton's team.

Spending an hour or more with this book is like relaxing with a single malt and a cigar in an oak-panelled room. The writing sings, centuries of



endeavour and flair flow from the bat of a young Colin Cowdrey and there is a memorable quote on every other page. The surly Johnny Wardle, with his classical approach, damns his rival Tony Lock who 'never had to resort to flight to get anyone out'. Lock would be omitted from the party, but no spinner at all would be selected in the Brisbane debacle. This all-seam approach invariably fails (are you reading, Ben Stokes?). However, only when Alec Bedser is dropped do England settle on a winning combination. This is a decision Hutton cannot bring himself to voice to his leading bowler, who reads the team pinned brutally to the dressing room door at Melbourne.

And then came Tyson. Reciting Shakespearean soliloquies at the top of his mark, he would rip out the Australian middle order with untimely haste. In his own words 'The Typhoon' revels in

the 'glad animal action' of bowling fast and invites Fingleton to revisit his nightmares of Harold Larwood.

But for the sheer terror of reading about fast bowling behind barely screened eyes – the way cricket lovers of my generation use to watch Joel Garner from behind the sofa – we springboard twenty years to 'Blood on the Tracks,' the name of a Bob Dylan album re-

leased during the same winter as that Ashes series. Richard Stilgoe's creation of 'Lilian Thomson – the fastest lady fast bowler the world has ever seen' is shorthand for a pair of opening bowlers who, as Wisden tells us, 'would have been too good for far better batting sides than Denness's'.

John Edrich, seeing the ball as clearly in his interview for this book as he had done at the time, gives a technical insight into the battle. But he doesn't spare the reader. 'Most [of Thomson's] deliveries came at my body and lifted off a very good length. Then came the death ball.' I found it impossible not to separate the blood superimposed on the pitch for the cover photograph from the gruesome narrative. And there are 6 Tests to endure!

Tony Greig's counter-attacking century at Brisbane was full of drives on the



up. These he would mark by signalling his own fours to bait Lillee in a high-risk strategy which was improbably successful and – as would be the case throughout the series – made the games more competitive than the scoreline suggested.

But there was no hiding place for captain Mike Denness, the charming Scotsman, who considered dropping himself from the third Test and then did so from the fourth, to the satisfaction of his many critics. Someone had addressed a note to ‘Mike Denness, Cricketer’ to say, ‘If this letter reaches you, the Post Office thinks more of you than I do.’ Redemption follows for him in the final Test where, with the Ashes long gone and Thomson (and, for most of the match, Lillee) injured, Denness strokes a match-winning 188.

On the flight to New Zealand the thought that had been buzzing around the heads of the England batsmen was finally voiced – ‘Thank goodness we got out of there alive.’ Even the crowds there were easier to handle: in Auckland an alcohol ban had rendered them teetotal. The intensity of the cricket drops and merely postpones the post-mortem on the Ashes. Cue a reappearance for Sir Leonard Hutton, bizarrely, to blame ‘a shortage of good young players’ on ‘full employment’. This was running at 4.5% in 1975, but clearly it wasn’t apparent in prosperous Pudsey.

Of these two books, Whitehead’s has the more permanence and feels like the definitive voice on the action, leaving Alan Ross’s ‘Australia ‘55’ to stand as a travelogue of the tour as a whole. ‘Blood on the Tracks’ is a different kind of book: narrower

in scope but with thrilling passages and an interesting discussion on the background to World Series Cricket at the end. Reading both was a pleasant and much-needed diversion from following the 2025-6 Ashes series, which will sadly not generate any literary offerings of such calibre.

JOE IRELAND

OBITUARIES

We extend sincere sympathy to the families and friends of the Free Foresters whose deaths are recorded here.

Sir John Blofeld

11 July 1932 - 30 November 2025

Elected 1958

Sir John Blofeld was a cricket enthusiast from his earliest days, winning his prep school colours at Sunningdale, whence he progressed to Eton and King's College, Cambridge. As well as being a Free Forester he played once for Norfolk, making 36 in one innings. After being called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in 1956, he began practising as a criminal barrister. He took Silk in 1975 and became a High Court judge in 1990. Away from work, he was Deputy

Lieutenant of Norfolk, Chancellor of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and enjoyed watching Test cricket and gardening. He was also Master of the Mercers' Company in 2003.

The elder brother of the cricket journalist and commentator Henry Blofeld, Sir John Blofeld was also, unwittingly, the inspiration for the name of the James Bond villain, Ernst Stavro Blofeld. Author Ian Fleming confirmed that, stuck for an evil name, he went through the list of members of Boodle's Club where Sir John and his father were members. Fleming said that after a yelp of delight at the sight of the name "Blofeld" he had ordered a pint of champagne and never looked back.

Axel Burrough

1946-2026

Elected 1978

Paul Askew writes:

I met my dear friend Axel through the Free Foresters. He was born in Bristol, the son of an architect, went to Clifton College – that wellspring of FF talent – and studied at the Cambridge University School of Architecture as a member of Magdalene College.

We played over many years together in Wilts and West Country sides brought together by John Bretten, Richard Sprague, Chris Cutforth, Paddy Stewart-Morgan and James FitzGerald - including the Western Series when still at All Hallows School. In retirement from playing the game, we would regularly sit together at Lord's.

Axel was elected in 1978 (the same year as me though he was nine years



older). We served together on the committee during the fabled Colonel Wilson presidency – Axel from 1985-1989. He was a much-loved tourist, purveying his deft, left-arm orthodox. Though rarely being required to bat, he always came prepared with a little-used wand. He and FitzGerald (both born in 1946 and contemporaries at Cambridge) were often to be found in the pub afterwards discussing south-paw spin tactics and techniques with other sundry intellectuals... of which there were, of course, many. On one occasion during the post-match analysis at the Harbour Inn in Axmouth, I recall, for example, Fitz being adamant that the key to SLA bowling was:

...all about the feet. I can't remember Axel's response to this counterintuitive assertion, but doubtless it was with his characteristically sharp wit.

He leaves his dear wife, Jeni Walwin, and three much-loved daughters Eve, May and Dora.

Here is what his architecture practice, Levitt Bernstein, said about the loss of Axel: 'It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Axel Burrough, a former director of Levitt Bernstein, who led the major cultural and arts projects within the practice up until his retirement in 2011. Even after retirement, Axel continued to enrich and inform his two legacy projects right up until last year – the Bristol Beacon and LSO St Lukes.

His portfolio of work that was to follow has been prolific, including the wave of National Lottery funded projects won in the 1990s and 2000s. These include

the King's Lynn Corn Exchange, the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, Stratford Circus and the Theatre Royal Stratford East, The Regent Theatre and Victoria Hall in Stoke-on-Trent, Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre refurbishment, and the original conversion of St Luke's Church for the London Symphony Orchestra. He developed this work to win other projects like Liverpool's Victoria Gallery & Museum, the Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds and the Bristol Beacon.'

Ed De Moura Correia

1958 - 2025

Honorary Associate

Elected 1993

Nick Baldwin writes:

I first came across Ed (or Eddie) on the MCC Western Schools Week in the 1980s, playing against King's Taunton,

Downside, Blundell's, Monkton Combe and Millfield. I was immediately drawn to this extremely interesting and engaging character with the fascinating name and Dutch accent! Ed was tall and athletic, and a very useful all-round cricketer, often making valuable contributions with bat and ball and in the field, where his extensive reach was used to good effect in the gully region. His batting was elegant and positive, and he also used his height well when bowling attacking off-spin on around 5th stump line. He always struck me as making the most of his ability at all times, and very much with the success of the team in mind.

Ed always had a twinkle in his eye, and enjoyed funny moments on the field of play, especially when captains explained strategies designed to bamboozle schoolboy batters. He was totally invested in the concept of

all-day declaration matches and very much bought into "a cunning plan", delighting when it brought a positive and humorous outcome!

Ed came across to play in quite a number of MCC matches, and we would compare fixture lists and diaries to see where we might play together. Into the 1990s this extended to FF fixtures too, and, of course, included matches against Ed and De Flamingo's, both in England and on tours to Holland, when he very kindly invited me to stay at his house in Rotterdam.

Ed had a huge love of, and enthusiasm for, our wonderful sport, and, as an MCC member loved being at Lord's and in the pavilion. He also had a passion for the development of cricket in the Netherlands, and, as well as his administrative roles with De Flamingo's, he became involved with the national set-up. He was the National Coach of

the Dutch Women's XI. But my favourite memory is of seeing Ed sprint onto the Lord's turf in ecstatic jubilation as a member of the Dutch support staff when England were defeated in the opening match of the 2009 T20 World Cup.

A true gentleman of cricket, a legend in the Netherlands, and a great friend of the Free Foresters.

Robin Jones writes:

Eddie was a unique cricketer in my experience – not in terms of bowling or batting but rather that he was of Portuguese/Dutch origin. You don't get many of those in the cricketing world and whilst I never discovered how he fostered his love of cricket, love it he did. His boundless enthusiasm whilst welcoming the FF to Bloemendaal Cricket Club on the Dutch tour will be remembered by those who were there with great affection. He never told

me what he made of John Ratledge celebrating a 100 by drinking a beer out of his box but his knowing smile spoke a thousand words. Eddie was a more than useful off spinner using his 6 ft plenty height to extract disconcerting bounce out of the deadest of pitches, never mind on the trampoline that was Bloemendaal artificial. He also was a handy batsman wielding his 3lb Millichamp like it was a twig. Eddie would fly over in late April for the MCC/FF double header against Millfield School and would be holding court with Richard Ellison, Garri Jones and others late into the night discussing his many theories – both cricketing and pharmaceutical as this was his industry of choice. It was a complete shock when we heard of his death as he was a keen cyclist and as fit as a fiddle. There was a collective intake of breath from many of us who were fortunate enough to know him. His

work for Dutch cricket , particularly the Ducks (the Dutch U19's) will be sorely missed. He leaves a wife, Marcia.

Boa viagem, goede reis: travel well, Eddie.

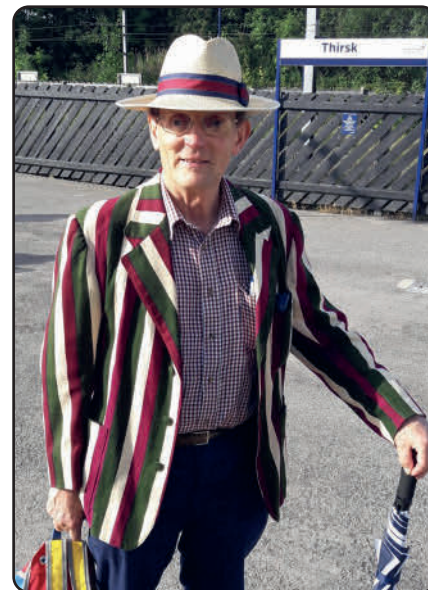
Colonel Mark Faulkner

13 April 1955 – 17th April 2025
Elected 1979

Mark's son, Alex Faulkner, writes:

Mark was an Army Officer in the Royal Dragoon Guards (5th Royal Enniskillen Dragoon Guards until 1992) for 34 years from 1975, until retiring from the Army as a Colonel in 2009. Following his Army career, he was Head of Centre at North Yorkshire Youth Activity Centre from 2009-2021.

A top-middle order batsman, Mark loved representing the Free Foresters and



made many friends in the Club. Although his appearances were some-times irregular due to his Army commitments, he was always eager to play for the Free Foresters when he could, and he fondly remembered playing many enjoyable matches for the Club. He would regularly don his Foresters blazer whilst watching England at international matches in his later years.

Nigel Goodeve-Docker

18th September 1944

15th February 2026

Elected 1969

Rupert Cox writes:

Nigel Goodeve-Docker was a man of remarkable charm & personality. An almost “*Back to The Future*” style character who embodied many of the old-fashioned traits of yesteryear. A strong intellect allied to a selfless nature made him an outstanding captain in amateur cricket. That people would travel from far and wide to play in his matches said everything about him.

To me, Nigel would not have looked out of place in an episode of *Jeeves & Wooster*. He still wore the same whites on the cricket field that he had worn at Wellington College and when I jealously asked him about his weight, he said it had hardly changed since the early

1960s. His batting too had vestiges of a bygone era - he batted with a smile on his face, he played one way, attacking in an unapologetic, swashbuckling style.

Born in September 1944, Nigel grew up around Newbury. Only a few years ago, during Waif Week, I drove him around Hermitage (on the outskirts of Newbury) and the farm where I work. The sheer joy and animation on his face was moving. He went to Horris Hill (1952 to 1958) and on to Wellington College (1958 to 1963) on an exhibition; after a year, he was awarded a full scholarship.

A gifted Classics scholar, he went up to Brasenose College, Oxford, where he found time – of course – to play cricket for the Authentics. These were strong Oxbridge years: the Nawab of Pataudi captained in 1963, Richard Gilliat in 1966, and Imran Khan would follow soon after! It is not difficult to

picture Nigel in the Parks, batting with panache and thoroughly enjoying the theatre of it all.

Just weeks before his Finals in 1969, Nigel lost his father, Guy. On the surface he bore that loss with quiet composure and dignity – though one can only imagine the weight of it at such a moment.

He joined Wedlake Bell as an Articles Clerk and formally qualified as a solicitor in February 1970, specialising in tax and international tax law. The profession suited his sharp mind and disciplined temperament. In time, through quiet ability rather than noise, he rose to become a Senior Partner – a testament not only to his intellect, but to the trust he engendered.

But there was always more to life than work for Nigel. In October 1973 he married

Jeannie, and together they formed a devoted and enduring partnership — one grounded in loyalty, humour and shared adventure.

From the 1970s onwards, Nigel was running an array of cricket matches playing for the Free Foresters, Pelsham, Hampshire Hogs, Gemini, MCC, Incogniti, I Zingari and The Grannies, and later he would become a much-loved Honorary Waif. He ran matches for many clubs but he was famed for a 40-year tenure of both the Foresters v Leicester Gents and Pelsham v Bradfield Waifs. Such was his reputation that he was selected to run the jewel in the crown at Wormsley: The Foresters v the luminaries of the JP Getty's XI.

It seems fitting to say there were vintage cars! A classic Rolls Royce and a Bentley, and later a Rolls Royce Phantom 2 known as "The Lady!"

She was driven to multiple cricket matches and down through Europe on adventures with Jeannie and friends!

The family grew — Kate (1977), Mark (1979) and Philip (1982). Nigel was immensely proud of his team and never happier than at the head of the family, with Jeannie alongside him. He led his family as he led his cricket — generously, firmly, and with humour.

My first experience of Nigel's match management was the 1986 Free Foresters 2-day game at Uppingham School v Leicester Gents. Fresh out of Bradfield College — after a slightly early dismissal — with no mobile phones, Peter Came and I lost our escort on the journey to our billet. We returned sheepishly to the ground and slept in the car. Nigel was mortified — not at us — that we had not booked into a reputable hotel and billed him.

Standards mattered to Nigel. So did hospitality.

In time, Nigel left Wedlake Bell (1995) but the batting went on — never a thigh pad, just a towel in its place and certainly never a helmet to be seen. An old-school eccentric — we loved playing in his matches and he was a joy to bat with. Like Gower with the Tiger Moth there was Nigel of vintage cars and ancient flannels! While Gower had laser-like vision, Nigel was bespectacled, but both elegant left-handers had patches where you stood at the other end in awe. You could not help but admire them.

Unsurprisingly, Nigel was a successful man of the law, but life was not all plain sailing. Just days after a successful Pelsham v Waif Golf event at Rye Golf Club the family were struck by tragedy. In April 2013, Philip, in memory of his

grandfather on an expedition across the Greenland Ice Cap with two friends, was caught in an extreme polar storm rarely seen in modern times. After an extraordinary fight for survival, Phil died – but his actions in shielding and sustaining his companions directly contributed to saving their lives.

For his courage and selflessness, Philip Goodeve-Docker was posthumously awarded The Queen's Commendation for Bravery, formally recognised and published in The London Gazette. It was a national acknowledgement of what those who knew him already understood – that he placed others before himself.

The family bore that loss with immense courage. Nigel led as he always had – steady, composed, protective. It was heartbreaking to witness and impossible to ease.

Thank you, Nigel, for your friendship and direction. If only there were more like you: amateur cricket has lost a trailblazer, and a very kind one at that.

Nicholas Hordern

Elected 1956

Frances Barnes writes:

Members will regret the passing of Nicholas Hordern, a talented cricketer with a fine classical style, who died earlier this year, aged 91. Author, historian, broadcaster, and journalist, he was Captain of Cricket and rugby at Stowe, and was additionally educated at Geelong and Oxford. After an international career in advertising, he turned to writing and journalism. His history of the conquistadors, *God, Gold and Glory*, was a top-seller around the world, and he was a jazz pianist as well

as a journalist. Brother of former MP Sir Peter Hordern and cousin to acclaimed actor Sir Michael Hordern, Nick's gift for friendship was an outstanding characteristic.

Tom Morkill

Died 8 August 2024 Aged 85

Elected 1961

Colin Sharman

12 November 1929

9 February 2024

Elected 1954

Colin was the owner and a distinguished Headmaster of Westbourne House School in Sussex. He bought the school in 1961 when it was on the brink of closure and transformed it into the thriving school it is today, serving as Headmaster from 1961-1989. Despite suffering an appallingly complicated multiple fracture of his left ankle during his final year at Sherborne, he went on to play a lot of good cricket and high-level squash.

At his Memorial Service, Headmaster Martin Barker said, "We are fortunate in the course of our lives if we come to know more than a very few men or women of the highest human nature, furnished with integrity, kindness,

humour and compassion. Of these rare people, Colin Sharman was one."

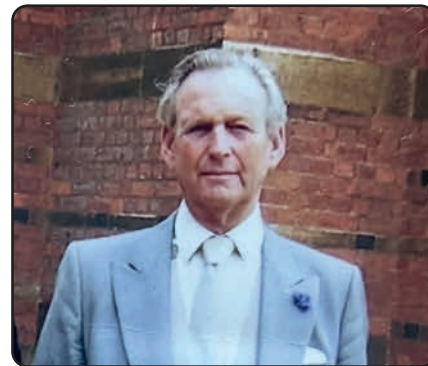
He is survived by his wife of nearly 70 years, Jen, daughters Jane, Caroline and Juliet, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Antony Winlaw

21 March 1938 – 21 June 2025

Elected 1961

Tony Winlaw's father, Roger, played 52 games for Surrey and taught at Harrow. Tony played in the Eton v Harrow match in 1955 and 1956, competing against Henry Blofeld. He went on to play wandering cricket for the Harrow Wanderers, of whom he was President, Free Foresters, IZ and MCC. It was whilst working as a sports writer for the Daily Telegraph, covering cricket, rackets and Rugby that



he conceived the idea of a limited overs competition for the old boys teams of public schools; the directors of The Cricketer liked the idea and thus was born The Cricketer Cup which thrives to this day.

E.W. Swanton was Telegraph cricket correspondent in the 1960s and produced a magnificent, encyclopedic volume *The World of Cricket* (your Editor's choice as his desert island cricket book!), of which Tony Winlaw was an assistant editor. In addition, he was a handicapper for the Jockey Club and British Horseracing Board for many years. In his later years he covered cricket for *The Times*.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

FF bond over conversation during a rain delay



FREE FORESTERS ANNUAL QUIZ 2026

Q1 Who was sacked as England Women's captain in March 2025 after nearly 9 years as skipper?

Q2 Which county won the Women's Vitality Blast?

Q3 Which county won the Women's Metro Bank One Day Cup?

Q4 Who scored a century in the Women's World Cup Final in November but finished on the losing team?

Q5 Which country won the Women's World Cup in November?

Q6 Who are the only two wicketkeepers in men's Test history to score a century in each innings of a Test?

Q7 At Old Trafford in the 4th Test v India, which player became only the fourth Englishman to score a century and take 5 wickets in an innings in a Test Match? Can you name the other three?

Q8 In the Oval Test v India, which English bowler set an unfortunate record for the most wides in one over in a Test?

Q9 In June 2025, for the first time in first-class cricketing history, over 60,000 matches, a team lost despite having scored 5 centuries. Which team was it?

Q10 On July 14th 2025, Justin Greaves was the only man to reach double figures (11) for his team: leg byes (6) were next highest, with 2 players scoring 4, and one making 2. There were 7 ducks. For whom were they playing?

Q11 In the innings cited in Q10, who had bowling figures of 7.3-4-9-6 and was Man of the Match?

Q12 Who made the highest score (136) in the World Test Championship Final at Lord's in June, and who had the best bowling figures in an innings (6/28)?

Q13 Name the Somerset batsman who scored 371 in his first innings of the season but only managed another 298 during the rest of the year?

Q14 Which (former?) England Test player captained Nottinghamshire to the County Championship title?

Q15 Who scored the most runs in the 2025 County Championship, 1425 @ 64.77, with 6 centuries and 7 half-centuries, but was not selected for England or the Lions?

Q16 The only England batsman to have been run out (for 82 and 16) in both innings of a Test died in September. He also faced the first ball faced by an England player in a World Cup match in the inaugural tournament in 1975. Who was he?

Q17 Who took the most wickets in the 2025 County Championship?

Q18 Which county won the T20 Vitality Blast in 2025?

Q19 Which county won the Metro Bank One Day Cup in 2025?

Q20 Which county had the misfortune to lose both of the above finals?

Answers: 1. Heather Knight 2. Surrey 3. Lancashire 4. Laura Wolvaardt, captain of South Africa 5. India 6. Rishabh Pant (134 & 118) at Headingley v England 2025, and Andy Flower (141 & 199) Zimbabwe v South Africa, Harare 2001 7. Ben Stokes (141 & 57/2) The previous three were Tony Greig, Ian Botham & Gus Atkinson 8. Josh Tongue (11) 9. India, at Headingley, 1st Test 2025 10. West Indies 27 all out v Australia in Jamaica 11. Mitchell Starc 12. Aiden Markram and Pat Cummins 13. Tom Banton 14. Haseeb Hameed 15. Saif Zaib (Northamptonshire) 16. John Jameson 17. Tom Taylor (Worcestershire, 58) 18. Somerset 19. Worcestershire 20. Hampshire

We're A Couple of Swells

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FREE FORESTERS CRICKET CLUB



Paella Evening on Beer beach – July 2025

YEARBOOK 2026

UNITED THOUGH UNITED