

Wadham College Cricket Club Tour Report: Cambridge, July 22-24 2011

With the support and impetus from our new President, Stephen Stow (Law, 1973), Wadham Cricket toured for the first time in ten years. A party of 36 alumni and students, cricketers and Freebooters, arrived from as far afield as Canada, Morocco, Geneva and Leighton Buzzard to show Cambridge how it's really done.

On a four seasons in five minutes Friday evening, the early XI were thumped by the cunningly misnamed Philanderers XI at Girton College in the designated warm-up game. We knew we were in trouble from the very first ball when it sailed back over the bowler's head for 6. By contrast in our first over, the President did his hamstring. In the spirit of a touring educational establishment, we learnt lessons. One should warm up properly, and observe the opposition - if their attitude to hydration is isotonic, ours should be somewhat less gin and tonic.

A sunny Saturday saw us play ourselves at Fenner's - the lovely county-standard Cambridge University ground. Exceptional catering came from River Farm Smokery, one of the UK's top purveyors of fine smoked produce, courtesy of Wadham alumnus Christopher Swales (Classics & English, 1989).

In an unusually structured game, all Freebooters were given two wickets, and first XI players one. It thus took 17 wickets to conclude an innings! Once again, education was very much at the fore. The Freebooters learnt how much easier it gets to bat on the flat tracks professionals prepare for themselves, and the bowlers learnt that 17 wickets is a lot. As we were our own opposition however, the lesson on hiding the beer was forgotten. Consequently enough wickets tumbled, a close match was had, and everyone, especially cricket, was a winner. Special mention must go to Michael Berryman's all time top score passing of the ten run milestone (with an on drive for four, no less). Fenner's may have seen many centuries but it will not have heard a bigger cheer.

Saturday night was a blur of food and dance, but a glorious cloudless Sunday saw the party split before departing. The best XI lost decently to the extremely capable Granta CC 3rd XI on the Clare College pitch. Meanwhile the Freebooters showed their mettle and ground out a moral victory (AKA draw) with a spectacular rearguard action against the Jesus Long vacation XI at their beautiful pitch in the Jesus College grounds. Over 50 overs were batted out. There was even a brief moment when it looked like we might win, but Jesus, frankly, came back from the dead to leave honours even.

Awards:

Catch of the tour – Adam Hoque (History, 1987), (honours, cricket)

Drop of the tour – Gervase Clifton-Bligh (Mathematics & Philosophy, 1989), (honours, dancefloor)

Shot of the tour – Michael Berryman (Jurisprudence, 2006), (honours, international relations)

Special thanks must go to Luke Peake (Economics and Management, 2006), and Paul Foley (Experimental Psychology, 1987) for organising the tour, and once again to Stephen Stow (Law, 1973), for his enthusiastic support of Wadham Cricket.

Your faithful and humble servant, Dorothy.