



### Over 50s Annual Report - The 2007 Season

As in previous years that I have been secretary the year commenced with a tour. This time it was to Sri Lanka, a delightful country with delightful people. Then we met our tour guide Nissanka. We 'slowly' visited nearly all of the country that it is possible to and on this trip the scenery and the visits outweighed the cricket.

The Mount Lavinia Hotel in Colombo was a magnificent one and I have been informed that Bob and Donna Macey have been forwarded contracts to be the resident dancers! Kandy was the religious centre and included fire dancers and sacred religious artefacts. Not forgetting the game at Dambulla which was just up the road and the torrential rain!! A further game at Asigyrā and a good win. It was hard to envisage Test matches being played at these venues, but England will be in the autumn and winter. A game to forget on the way to Dickwella with the resort to ourselves including afternoon tea for 34 people. The game reserve at Yala provided great moments for photography and of being up close with leopards and I believe that Sri Lanka's big five were seen by most.

We must not forget Stuart Munday's Lords Taverners and the handing over of cricket kit to local kids next to the home of Maninga the Slinga, with the tide mark of the Tsunami some six feet over our heads. A beautiful country and a good tour was enjoyed by all.

Perhaps this season has seen the real commencement of the transition of the Devon Over 50s. The Championship team again started really well by beating Hampshire that included a jaw-dropping knock from Mike Canning on a beautiful day.

From then on I don't think that I was off the telephone arranging players, cancelling players and rearranging players. To be honest it was a nightmare. From wins against Wiltshire and thanks to the groundsman at Truro a win over Cornwall. The frustration of travelling to the Isle of Wight for some of our opposition delaying and not wanting to play, but eventually overcoming them.

Then a good win over Somerset and then the Channel Islands and Dorset games being cancelled due to the dreadful summer.

We topped our group and had a home tie against Oxfordshire at Bovey Tracey to progress. We fielded well but let them get perhaps 15 runs to many but 160 should have been gettable. As their skipper said in the bar "You lost it, we thought at tea it was all over".

Once again, as against the Channel Islands last year, we scored too slowly and let too many maidens go by. We ended just 10 runs short.

The "second eleven" captained by Dave Amery, took on numerous fixtures including, Cornwall, There were other fixtures at Torquay, Sidmouth, Kilmington against Suffolk and at Sandford against Wales and Shobroke Park against The Strollers.

I wish to thank Dave for his efforts in getting the teams together despite the weather and I thank all those that played. With the number of players that wish to play these games are indispensable.

The club does now need people to step forward and take on roles to ensure that we continue to thrive. Committee membership is not arduous, and only happens three times a year. So please give it a thought. We need all to contribute.

I would also like to ask members to be on the lookout for new players. They must be out there and we need to get them interested.

A special thanks must also go to Gary Ponder and Steve Preston for the sponsorship that has been arranged for the next couple of years. It is nice to know that someone is behind us and that gives stability. Thank you very much to Gary, Steve and L & G Driver Training.

Thanks also to Chris Theedom, who is relinquishing his post as treasurer and team Manager. Chris really pulled the team around and brought an organiser's skill in setting up this club as one that is envied amongst our peers. He leaves, as like a few of us, he realises the moment may have passed and the team will move on and I hope that those that follow will do so with integrity, ambition and a willingness to succeed. He will be a hard act to follow and we wish Jackie and Chris well for the future. I know that he wants to carry on playing and will do so at Sandford and with the 2nd XI. Bob Eames has also decided to stand down from the players' representative and a replacement is required. We thank Bob for all he has done.

I would like to thank Steve Ripley for his hospitality for hosting the committee meetings, and Stan Newell in his role as President and for his ability to cajole and coerce spectators and players to purchase tickets for the draws. Unfortunately Stan has been unwell and will not be here tonight we wish him a speedy return to form.

Once again I would like to thank the ladies who support the team home, away and abroad especially towards the end of the games when it appears something in the water makes them even more vociferous and the realisation from the players that they will have to drive home.

We wish the team well next year.

Stuart Lott - Secretary