



# The Carlton Lockdown Newsletter

Till the gates of Grange Loan are open again

ISSUE 18

## 'They came to see me bat...' When WG Grace came to Carlton

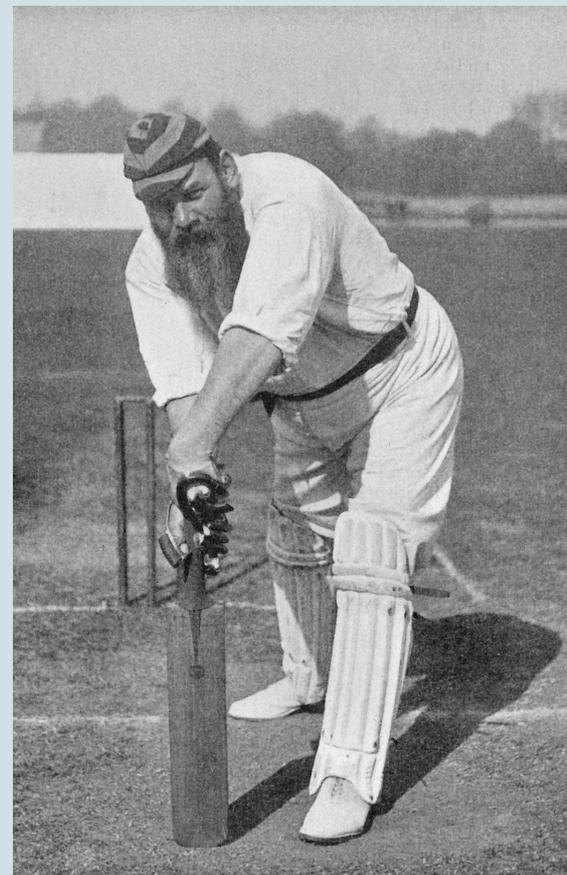
**Jake Perry's [The Secret Game](#) tells how in 1872 the 'Champion Cricketer' played at Carlton.**

WG Grace did not utter his most quoted line on his visit to Carlton as a member of the United South of England XI, but he could well have done. WG might have amassed 2739 first class runs in 1871 at an average of 78.25, but in his two innings in Edinburgh he could score only 8 (before he 'played forward too soon and was cleverly caught by Carlton's JB Richardson') and 17 (caught again by Richardson).

The United South were an itinerant team of the day who would field top players to take on local sides, invariably formed of 22 'gentleman' cricketers. They had been invited to Edinburgh by the enterprising Carlton committee who had also selected the 22, ensuring an adequate leavening of Carlton players. While Carlton's Richardson had the distinction of catching the great man twice, it was a Grange player Dr Joseph Cotterill whose knock of 95 (with '5 mighty hits out of the ground') who sealed victory for the 22 Gentlemen of Scotland.

The match was not played at Grange Loan, Carlton had yet to come the present site, but at an adjacent Craigmount Park. 3000 spectators braved the early spring weather and Carlton made a handy profit of £100, equivalent to over £11,000 now.

How about an invitation to Ben Stokes next season?



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# The Wicket Takers

## *Searching the records for Carlton's leading wicket takers*

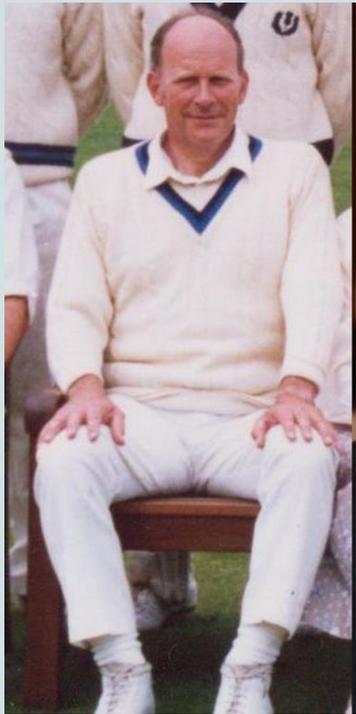
Since 1950, Carlton's bowlers have returned 646 five-fers, around 9 per year.

### **Alun Davies**

(right) has the most with 35, ahead of **George Innes** with 32 (two of which were for the 2nd XI).

Bruce Dixon, racked up 23, before moving to West Lothian. The former President of CricketScotland is now a non-playing member at Carlton.

Restrictions on the number of overs bowled may make the 5-fer harder for more recent players but **Dave Carter** has 13 spread across the 2s, 3s and 4s. Of first teamers **Alan (Spike) Macleod** has 8.



Not only are bowling restrictions now a factor for wicket takers, there are also fewer games in the season for modern players. Between 1961 and 1990 Alun Davies played 706 matches for Carlton, regularly turning out well over 30 times per season. Over all formats, he took 1104 wickets. You can read more about Alun and his contribution to Carlton in [this obituary](#) following his sad death last year.

### **George Innes** has

the best bowling figures for the 1st XI with a haul of 8 for 25 at Jock's Lodge against Royal High in 1982.



Best at Grange Loan is **Tom**

**Freshwater's** 7 for 8 demolition of Stoneywood Dyce in 2015. For home grown players, **Omar Ahmad** took 7-20 against Watsonians in 2014. In total, Omar has 6 five wicket hauls - all for the 1st XI.



The best ever return for the 2nd XI at Grange Loan is **Russell Weir's** remarkable 9-41 against West Lothian in 1982. In fact, this is the best return for any bowler ever in Carlton colours. When asked about this achievement recently, Russell claimed to remember nothing about it, a memory lapse unkindly attributed to the overzealous celebration that may have followed. Although, since the match was lost, the celebration might have also been a wake.



For the 3rds, **Gavin Rittoo** took 7-22 in 2011 at Cavalry Park against EU Staff and **Harry Simpson's** 5-17 against St Boswells in 2017 is the best at GL.



For the 4s, a clutch of juniors have returned 5 wicket hauls, including most recently the 5-5 taken by 13- years-old **Isaac Foley** at Melrose at the end of last season, but it is **Gavin Rittoo** (again) with 6-15 (a spell which included 5-3 in 12 balls) against SMRH 3 in 2010 who tops the rankings. Away from GL, **Matt Spencer** leg spun his way to 6-19 against MDAFS in 2015.

**Euan Murray's** 5-10 against SMRH4 last season at Cavalry Pk leads the 5th's efforts, narrowly overtaking **Charlie Kentish's** 5-13 in 2017 against Gala-Hawick at Peffermill. Everyone looks forward to the first 5th XI 5-fer at Grange Loan.



**Charis Scott's** 5-2 against Watsonian Women at Myreside is the stand out Women's performance. Like the 5s, the Women still await a 5 wicket haul at Grange Loan.

As an interesting aside, the list of 5-fers includes two fathers and sons - Andy and David Macpherson and Jeremy and Gordon Weatherhead. It's a family business.

# Martin Robertson

## ***Carlton's hard hitting Fixture Secretary makes a plea for a 6th XI***

I enjoyed reading Dave Carter's recent article - was it really 1987 that he and I joined the club? 34 seasons with Carlton!

My move to Edinburgh that year meant finding a new club. Living in Morningside gave me a choice between Marchmont or Carlton,

Grange Loan or the Meadows? One of my easier choices.

I turned up at nets and was warmly greeted by then skipper Richard Swan. He asked whether I batted or bowled but he seemed more interested in whether I had a car or not. Sadly I did not, so it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI for me.

I'd previously played for Stirling County and the culture difference between my two clubs was highlighted by two washed out games, both away to Poloc.

The first saw me as a Stirling player: we travelled, it rained, we drank, we drank some more then were driven homeward.



About 30 minutes into the journey the driver was instructed to pull into a service station. The car emptied only to see Stirling legends Bruce Russell and Willie Morton depositing their clothes on the forecourt, streaking across 4 lanes of dual carriageway and diving into Hogganfield Loch.

In the other match, I was now a Carlton player. We travelled, it rained, we forewent tea but instead had an interesting tour of the Burrell Collection. So

it's good to see Bob and Eric maintaining Carlton's high cultural standards.

It's been said many times before, but Carlton was a totally different club in the late 80's - just 2 teams, no juniors and no women's section.

The real change started with Pete Nettleton's junior section. The huge success of that venture gave the club a problem, where were these youngsters going to play after junior cricket? The answer might be obvious now, but at the time it was considered absolute madness to start another team when we could barely produce two XI's on a Saturday.

*Cont'd over*

However, the Council wisely decided that 'if we build it they will come' and so it proved. The early days were tough, but Carlton has never conceded a match due to lack of numbers. The success of the 3rds spawned the 4ths and now the famous 5's. While some have suggested that these teams have been developed purely to allow my continued selection, I couldn't possibly comment.

The size and vibrancy of Carlton has also been greatly enhanced by the addition of the women's section. It goes from strength to strength. Maybe starting another women's XI is the way to go?

What having multiple XI's has given Carlton is strength in depth - on and off the field. When I joined the club I think that there were, maybe 6 or 7 genuine 1<sup>st</sup> team players. Now there are probably 15 or 16 such players who can seamlessly rotate in and out of the 1<sup>st</sup> team. This has massively strengthened the club, allowing each of the teams to hold their own in their leagues and encouraging healthy competition for places across the board.

Disappointingly season 34 looks like it's not going to happen. So here's to season 35. Let's hope that Dave and I can play a few matches, even if we do need to start a 6<sup>th</sup> XI to ensure we gain selection.



## Missing Cricket?

***Competitive cricket seems as far away as ever.***

*Do you miss the biting wind whipping through your sweater and chilling you to the bone at Peffermill?*

*Do you miss the ball shooting from short of a length and hitting the bottom of your middle stump at the Meadows?*

*Do you miss the successive catches dropped off your bowling?*

*Do you miss the opposition's faltering attempt at tea, with no trace of an empire biscuit to be found?*

*Do you miss losing 4 tosses in a row?*

*Do you miss your own umpire triggering you when you've got a thick inside edge?*

*Do you miss bowling a full spell up the hill against the wind?*

*Do you miss them saying 'lots of overs' as you go out to bat?*

*Do you miss swinging blindly at a straight one?*

*Do you miss them saying 'bad luck, that was an unplayable one' as you return moments later?*

*Of course you do. You miss cricket.*