



# The Carlton Lockdown Newsletter

Till the gates of Grange Loan are open again

ISSUE 19

## At Last!

Confirmation came on Friday that inter-club matches can take place from Monday 10 August. Quick off the mark, Carlton's u14 have arranged to take on Watsonians u14 on Monday. Then the 1st and 2nd XIs meet Heriots on Tuesday.

A schedule of senior fixtures for the remaining weeks of the season has been drawn up by ESCA. Games will be played on strict COVID compliant conditions and will be mostly T20 format. Sadly spectators are not permitted at this stage.

Carlton's fixtures for next weekend are:

**Sat 15 August**

Carlton v RH Corstorphine (GL) 12.00

Carlton 3 v Edin Accies 2 (Newfield) 14.30

Carlton 5 v Morton 3 (Inch) 11.00

**Sun 16 Aug**

Carlton 2 v Marchmont (GL) 11.00

Carlton 4 v Morton 2 (GL) 14.30

## Carlton Beer Garden

Well on its way to becoming Edinburgh's premier night spot, the hugely popular Beer Garden will be back on Friday and Saturday with exciting added attractions.

This Friday - a selection of award-winning handcrafted pies from Morningside's Pie Not? will be available.



## Crocks News

The cricket world has been rocked with the news that a nagging ankle injury means that Carlton's 4th XI - previously known as the Positively 4th XI, [the only cricket team in the world named after a song by Bob Dylan](#) - will take the field without their perspirational skipper. Also missing through injury will be Eric Edwards (shoulder) and Al Murray (finger). Paul Kentish takes over the 4s' reins. Some controversial bat-first decisions are expected.

In this issue: Banter from Bill, A Match to Remember, A View from the Air

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# Banter from Bill

**Bill Lothian lives adjacent to the ground at, roughly, extended deep fine leg. He is a Carlton social and dog walking member and, more significantly, husband of Helen, an all important member of the club's tea rota.**

**During his career in sports journalism Bill was privileged to interview some of cricket's great and good - and enjoy a great deal of banter with a wide circle of people who make cricket the most sociable of sports.**

**He shares some memories.**



Rahul Dravid, George Bailey, Kim Hughes, Sir Gary Sobers, Sir Ian Botham (now Lord), Jimmy Adams, Dennis Lillee....

Not a bad middle order, eh? And I'm proud to say that in the course of my journalistic career, almost exclusively with the Evening News, I interviewed all of them, which I hope shows that Edinburgh is far from the international cricketing backwater some might imagine.

And if you think I can drop names better than I dropped catches in an all too brief playing career with Leith Academical CC, in my defence some of the more colourful yarns came from rank and file cricketers.

For example, how I revelled in discovering my tennis pal and MCC member Mike Diggins (ex-Heriot's) had a family pet dachshund called Larwood by his MCC father on the grounds that "it operated with four short legs and its balls could swing in either direction."

Then there was the tale which reached me of a young West Indian lured from the Caribbean to pro with Edinburgh Accies.

Typically the opening weeks of the season brought snow and ice and the more it fell, the more miserable the young Carib felt.

To lift his spirits a colleague issued an invitation: "Come round to our house for lunch - the whole family enjoy a Sunday joint."

You guessed it; he turned up on the doorstep proudly offering his host some cannabis based on his interpretation of a "joint."

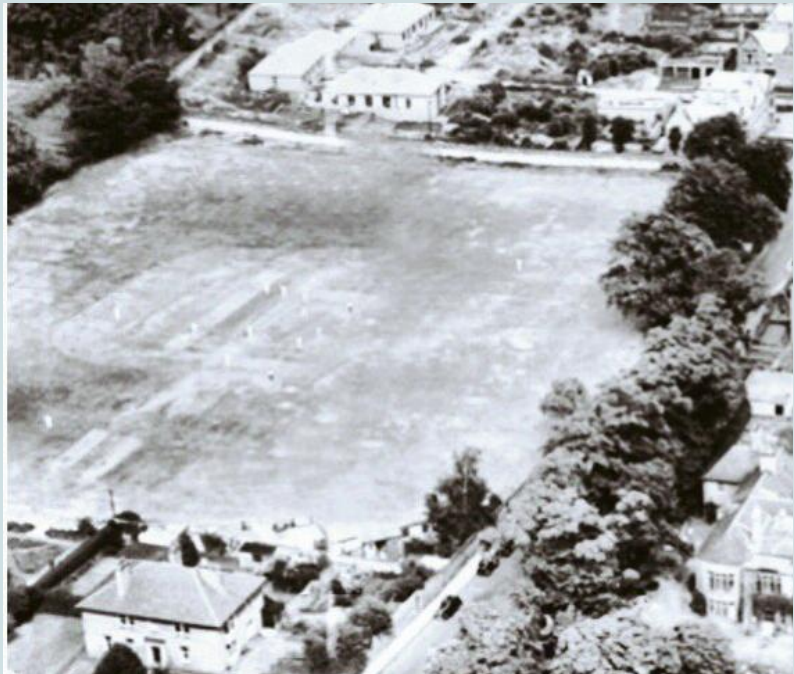
A highly intriguing yarn was told to me by another tennis friend who was told by his hairdresser that her sister's partner was none other than Sir Viv Richards.

"And have you met him?" he asked. "Oh yes, we had a family gathering in Longstone Bowling Club and Viv turned up with my sister."



# Grange Loan From the Air

Carlton's Twitterati enjoyed an unfamiliar sight of their beloved Grange Loan ground this week. @ScottyCricket shared an aerial reconnaissance photograph showing the ground to good advantage with play in progress. (Image cropped below to focus on the ground.)



Here is another image from the same series, dated 1949 on the [Britain from Above](#) website, showing part the ground from a different angle



I must confess that I couldn't personally authenticate these stories - they were what I was told - but I **was** in a restaurant at Santon, Johannesburg during the 1995 rugby World Cup when Ian Botham walked in. One of our company turned ashen and disappeared under the table from where he informed us he had once filed a story alleging the England all-rounder's infidelity and at that moment he genuinely feared for his future. Our pal was smuggled out under cover of a raincoat.

Coincidentally I had been on the point of re-introducing myself to the Great Man having spent a day in his company a few years earlier. When Botham crossed the Alps he took elephants; when he walked from Dundee to Freuchie during one of his many charity yomps he took me (and a few others). The deal was to highlight the charity and get a few snippets for the paper along the way but for the first half of the walk I was being kept at arm's length. Then, another journo acquaintance and a close friend of Botham, the Sun's Chris Lander, seemed to put a word in and I was welcomed to the inner circle and invited to slug from a giant bottle of what was billed as "lemonade" but was actually Tequila.

By the time we reached the Freuchie clubhouse Ian (first name terms now!) had been expounding at length about how the Stewart family were apparently taking over English cricket. "Alex is the wicket-keeper, Micky is the manager and I expect Mrs Stewart will be the next tea-lady" he said with an air of resignation which contrasted with his championing of cricket loving John Major, of whom I'd not yet heard, as a future UK prime minister. Clearly a man with a political ear to the ground even then. **Bill's Banter continues next week**



23 August 2014

***Relegation battles are not the stuff of Carlton's recent history. Promotion has been a more frequent end of season ambition, with both the 3s and 4s levitating through ESCA's Divisions. But for the 2nd XI, 2014 had been difficult and they arrived at the final match with a mathematical chance of escaping the automatic relegation. All they had to do was beat Holy Cross and hope West Lothian lost to Edinburgh South.***

The first challenge was to get the match played. Heavy overnight rain had soaked the ground but a determined effort ensured a prompt start.

Skipper Brad elected to bowl first. An early success for Ahmad raised hopes, but Holy Cross recovered well and made steady progress. The sky turned black and heavy rain soon fell forcing the players from the field, seemingly washing away any remaining hope of a result. Tea was taken and as the rain stopped, more work was required to dry the sodden ground.

However, both teams were keen to play. Holy Cross finished on 189/9. With 39 overs of spin, Carlton had bowled 50 overs in an amazing 2 hours 36 minutes leaving a good chance of 50 overs to chase the target.

A good start was needed, but at 46-4 things didn't look great. Ali Shah and Rob Atkin got things back on track and at 116/6, 84 runs were needed time for someone to stand up - Matt Wells and Frallardice did that. As the light faded, it looked like they would go all the way to a wonderful victory. However, Wells' luck ran out on the last ball of the 49th over.



With one over remaining, 4 were needed to win. Fraser took a single off the first ball bringing Rory on strike. Second ball - dot, third - dot, and Rory was bowled by the fourth - 187/8. Two balls to go and the skipper walks to the wicket, pretty much in darkness. Let's hear what happened in his own words:

"So, I walk to the wicket thinking that after playing cricket for 32 years, this could be my chance to win a game with the bat. No pressure. It really is pretty dark out here. As I approach Fraser out of the gloom, he asks me what my plan is. As he was on 38 not out, I was hoping he'd have one. Anyway, I said that I'd try to get bat on ball and get him on strike for the final ball. So I took guard as Russell runs in and bowls and I didn't see it. It wasn't fast, but it was dark (did I mention that?) Luckily it didn't bowl me. So, now we're down to one ball to go in the season, 2 to tie but 3 to win. Russell runs in and I see this one but I'm pretty sure my foot movement was minimal. [Anyway, contact is made, hitting it back over the bowler's head. It's not going for four despite the fieldsman not seeing it. So we run, hard, and make two but a third is not possible.](#)

'189/8 and it's a tie. There is no audible sound from the boundary and the overwhelming feeling is that a tie is not good enough and despite an amazing chase, we're probably relegated. We shake hands and walk off.

'It's a pretty sombre atmosphere.

However, word filters in that, because West Lothian's match was washed out, a tie is enough and once a few calculations are done, and then redone, the place goes mental. We've somehow climbed to third bottom in an incredible match and an incredible end to the season.'

And just on cue out came the rainbow ...



Actually, it wasn't all over - the 2s would have to wait until the following Saturday for the Premier Division play-off when, thankfully, RH Corstorphine's win secured Carlton's place in the Championship.

Reflecting on this match more recently, Brad commented:

'Looking back, it was a tough season but it was an enjoyable one - a great bunch of lads. It was a very young team in a tough division usually playing opposition with an overseas player and a bunch of experienced players. Many of that team went on to play 1st team cricket which is a key role of the 2nd XI and hopefully that tough season stood them in good stead for future challenges.'