



THE ARROW

The Newsletter of Carlton Cricket Club

June 2024

Issue 68



GRANGE LOAN - A SPECIAL CENTENARY

June 2024 marks the Centenary of one of the most important events in Carlton's history.

June 1924 saw the completion of the protracted negotiation through which the club acquired ownership of Grange Loan. The successful purchase owed much to the vision and persistence of NL Stevenson who had for a number of years pressed on the club the imperative of acquiring the ground, which it had occupied on an annual lease since 1904. But it was not until the site was advertised for sale in 1923, and a builder had made an offer, that the club was galvanised into action. Negotiations followed and were ultimately successful.

As Stevenson put it, 'Our beautiful enclosure had been saved from the speculative builder, to be handed over as a perpetual heritage to future generations of Carlton cricketers.'

We should all raise a glass to him.



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Following the successful conclusion of the negotiation, the club was faced with the considerable challenge of financing the purchase. Four senior members, including NL Stevenson, accepted joint and several liability for the purchase cost of £3000 (£230,000 in today's money) and a round of intense fund raising was embarked upon. An appeal to the membership raised just over £1000 - as noted in the newspaper report shown below.

However there was a long way to go and it was not an easy task. Strenuous efforts had to be made to raise the residual and in a trenchant article in Carlton's booklet reviewing the 1924 season, incoming skipper CS Paterson lambasted the membership for their lack of support:

'Are we to rest content with saying thankyou and do nothing to help ourselves?Do we intend to remain placidly aloof and allow our friends to shoulder their responsibility?.... If that is our attitude.....then I say quite frankly that we are 'Not playing the game' and are utterly unworthy of all that has been done for us.

'The Purchase Committee expects and has good reason to expect assistance from every member in raising the necessary funds.....Let us one and all resolve *to do our bit now.*'

Eventually the debt was cleared in 1926 with the assistance of a Sports Week and a 2-day 'Grand Bazaar' in the Assembly Rooms which produced a profit of £1,100 - 'A sum more than sufficient to pay off all the club's debt and leave the ground free of any liability.'

We can only speculate how the club could go about raising £230,000 nowadays.....

CARLTON PURCHASE THEIR GROUND.

OVER £1000 AT ONE MEETING.

For a considerable time past the Carlton Cricket Club have been negotiating for the purchase of their field at Grange Loan. The matter has been in the hands of an influential committee appointed from among the members, and at a general meeting of the club the committee were able to report that the purchase of the field had at last been completed, subject only (one of the parties to the transaction being an heir of entail to the formal approval of the Court of Session.

The financial obligations involved in the purchase are considerable but, on an appeal being made to the members present at the general meeting, sums amounting to upwards of £1000 were immediately subscribed. It is confidently anticipated that the remaining members of the club and the many others interested in Carlton cricket will be equally generous in their support, and that before the present season closes this delightfully situated enclosure will belong to the club, free of debt, and will be secured for the playing of the game of cricket for all time.

CARLTON CRICKET CLUB BAZAAR

(TO COMPLETE GROUND PURCHASE SCHEME).

MUSIC HALL, GEORGE STREET,

WILL BE OPENED

TO-DAY, AT NOON,

By the Rt. Hon. **THE EARL OF STRATHMORE.**

TO-MORROW (SATURDAY), at 2 P.M.,

By **LADY SLEIGH.**

HELP TO PASS ON BEAUTIFUL GRANGE PARK...FREE OF ALL ENCUMBRANCE...AS A LEGACY TO YOUTH...THE FUTURE TRUSTEES OF SCOTTISH CRICKET.

Above The Scotsman 5 July 1924;

Left Advertisement from The Scotsman Friday 15 October 1926 - 'Help to pass on beautiful Grange Park free of all encumbrances as a legacy to youth, the future trustees of Scottish cricket.'



Left; NL Stevenson in 1924 (age 49) - Stevenson had been skipper since 1911 and continued until 1926. After a break of 7 years he took up the helm again in 1934 and continued until 1946. In total he was skipper for 26 seasons. He first played for Carlton in 1895, taking two wickets in his first over. He was Best Bowler in 25 seasons, the first in 1896 (when he was also best bat) when he took 81 wickets @ 7.4 and the last in 1943. While his average in the war restricted season of 1943 is not known, he does report in 'Play' that his final two balls in club cricket secured wickets. He ended his career on a hat trick!

U15 ON THE MARCH AGAIN

Good luck to James Stronach and Carlton U15s in the ECB Finals Day at Doo'Cot Park on Sunday 30 June.

They meet Aberdeenshire in the semi final. If successful they will meet the winners of the Clydesdale-Livingston tie in the final. Victory will set them on the road again South of the Border with the ultimate objective of a return visit to Lord's to defend the trophy won last year.

2014 - TRAILBLAZERS

There are some familiar faces in the 2014 U15 side which was victorious in the ECB Scottish Final winning a tense match with Grange at Merchiston. (Sadly there are too many who no longer play cricket). Carlton bowled first and dismissed Grange for 56 with Calum Everett taking 4-9. Tristram Holden 3-4 and skipper Angus Beattie 2-4. What seemed a simple batting task soon became more challenging as Carlton slumped to 23-4 after 8 overs. But Saif Khan (in his first year at Carlton) and Sam Marchbank came together at 37-6 to see the team home and the celebrations began (photo rt). Carlton side to match itself against English opposition eventually falling in round 3 to Nottinghamshire's Plumtree CC.



Carlton Golf Club and the Evening Dispatch Trophy

In Carlton's early years the members formed a Golf Club to play socially and to enter local competitions. They soon became a force to be reckoned with.

In 1890, and to mark the opening of the Braids Golf Course, the Evening Dispatch, then one of two Edinburgh evening newspapers, instituted the Evening Dispatch Trophy. Huge interest attached to the event and reports of crowds of spectators over 10,000 were regular. [The competition still survives and its 124th contest has just been completed, attracting less of a crowd.]

Carlton Golf Club entered the first competition, falling in the semi-final to the eventual winners Thistle. They were more successful the following year when they won the trophy beating Stockbridge in the final. That year they also won a similar competition at Troon sponsored by the Glasgow Evening Times. Carlton went on to win the Dispatch Trophy in 1894 and 98 and were runners up in 1893 and 95. By the then rules of the competition, having won it three times Carlton took permanent possession of the trophy - pictured right.

A new, considerably grander trophy was commissioned, which is still in use today, (below). Carlton won the new trophy in 1903. The following year they were beaten in the semi-final by the eventual winners Alban. While Carlton Golf Club continued to enter the competition until the 1930s, they never recaptured their early glory failing to get beyond the early rounds.

The club fell away in the 1930s and the Trophy languished unrecognised in the Grange Loan clubhouse.



In 1994 there was a revival of interest and, led by David Ponniah, Carlton again entered the competition. Unfortunately the team (Ponniah, Hugh Parker, Alun Davies and David Raistrick) could not emulate their predecessors and fell in the first round, beaten 12 and 11 by Bank of Scotland.

Carlton in a spin!

FOUR-TIMES winners Carlton Cricket Club make their Dispatch Trophy return tomorrow after an absence of over 90 years. But they will be hit for six if they pull off a first-round shock against Bank of Scotland at the Braids.

For cricket commitments mean it would be difficult for Carlton to raise a team for Saturday's second round!

"It's just as well we have little or no chance of winning tomorrow," said David Ponniah, the man behind the club's return to the event.

"Two players in our Dispatch team — Scott Baker and Hugh Parker — will be playing cricket, while I am due to be in Glasgow on Saturday."

by **Martin Dempster**

GOLF REPORTER

Ponniah, a lecturer in civil engineering at Edinburgh University, decided to try and resurrect Carlton's golfing connection after finding out about the club's past successes in the Dispatch Trophy.

He added: "The original trophy is still in our clubhouse and, having taken up golf myself about three years ago, I thought it would be a good idea to try and raise a team."

"I had no problems getting people to play, and we will be going out tomorrow to enjoy ourselves."

As Ponniah told the Evening News, victory would have presented difficulties in that the next round would be on Saturday when cricket and other commitments would challenge availability.

Sadly Carlton were as unsuccessful on the cricket field the next day as they were on the golf course, being well beaten by Heriot's.

Undeterred (*Tu Ne Cede Malis*) they entered again the following year (with Parker and Davies replaced by Richard Dickinson and Scott Baker) only to suffer another heavy defeat at the hands of Baillie Gifford. Since there have been no further attempts to match our ancestral prowess.





The Carlton Golf Club, including Dr Simla Paterson, EF Currie, Douglas Currie and WB Taylor, pictured in 1903 with the Dispatch Trophy.

It is perhaps no wonder that in their heyday the Carlton Golf Club were so successful. Among their number were: WB Taylor (rt) who won the Irish Amateur Championship on 3 occasions. Described in a newspaper as 'a rattling good bowler before he became a capital golfer,' Taylor was President of Carlton in 1901-2; Dr Simla Patterson, who won a number of ties in the GB Amateur Championship; and Douglas Currie, who won the R&A Gold Medal at St Andrews.

There is a legendary tale of Currie who is said to have shot 73 round Bruntsfield Golf Club one Saturday morning, after which he made his way to Grange Loan where he scored the exact same figure against Brunswick. NL Stevenson describes him as a hard-hitting aggressive batsman, 'another splendid batsman who could - and did - hit the ball very hard. Many of his drives had a peculiarly low trajectory like a well-hit shot into the wind at golf. I saw him hitting the sighting screen half way up, the ball at the moment of impact appearing to be still on the rise.' In 1913 he scored 115* against Stewarts FP. Douglas Currie was Carlton's best bowler in 1905 (a year in which he also won the Gold Medal at Mortonhall GC) and captain between 1906-08.





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Large grounds attended the Dispatch Trophy in its early years. In the 1930s over 90 clubs entered. Photos taken from [Blog post by Johnny Jones](#)



In 1894 the Evening Dispatch was unable to reproduce photographs, relying instead on engraved illustrations taken from photos, such as this depicting the successful Carlton team in that year's dispatch trophy. It shows WB Taylor, his brother John Taylor, Simla Paterson and Thomas Lugton. Simla Paterson was a doctor at the Edinburgh Infirmary and Lugton was for a number of years Secretary and Treasurer of Gullane Golf Club.



DOUGLAS CURRIE

Douglas Currie may have been a fine cricketer and an even better golfer. But it is not through his sporting exploits that his name lives on.

Currie, a very wealthy man, died childless in 1940. The largest part of his wealth was assigned to a range of charitable causes including the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

In 1973 a lifeboat financed through his charitable foundation was commissioned and consequently bore his name. It was first stationed at Kirkwall and then transferred to Macduff where it served until 1984. After brief duty in Fraserburgh and Portpatrick, the boat was sold to a private party in 1992. It is now moored at Fraserburgh and can be visited.

Douglas Currie's wealth came from ownership of the Caledonian Rubber Works a firm founded by his father William Currie. The works were in Dalry Road and there was a retail outlet in Princes Street (in the building now next to Primark). William Currie latterly lived at 3 Grange Loan.

Among the many products made by the firm was the Eclipse Golf Ball, patented in 1877. It was one of the first gutta percha balls whose ready availability made golf much more accessible and popular. Currie took out advertisements to warn golfers to beware inferior imitations.

Another golf related patent taken by Currie in 1891 was the first ever for a metal wood golf club. It had a gutta percha facing. It did not prove a success and metal woods only game into the game in the late 1970s.



Photos - Above left Douglas Currie in 1912; rt The Douglas Currie; Left - The Eclipse Golf Ball - auction prices exceed £400. Below - Beware inferior imitations.

ret

THE "ECLIPSE" GOLF BALL

(CURRIE'S PATENT.)

Beware of Imitations.—The "Eclipse" has been greatly improved this season, but as a number of inferior Balls have been got up to imitate its outward appearance, we are now making all our Balls embossed on each side, thus insuring that our clients will thereby get the real "Eclipse" Ball, and prevent fraudulent imitations being offered to them as our genuine Ball.




EXTRACT FROM "THE FIELD," July 23, 1881.—"We have thoroughly tested the specimens sent, and were agreeably surprised to find how near they came to the high estimate put upon them by the Patentee. Most assuredly they do not get hacked; not only did we play for four hours with the one Ball, but for nearly two minutes afterwards we hammered away at it with our niblick, and no trace of hacking could be found."

"THE 'ECLIPSE' GOLF BALL."—The "Eclipse" continues to grow in favour with Golfers, as the unsolicited testimony of experts abundantly testifies. At the commencement of last season it for a time lost its good name; complaints as to chipping, splitting, and durability—or, rather, non-durability—were frequent, and, as the Patentee speedily discovered, not without cause. The increased demand for the Ball had necessitated the construction of new machinery, and in the augmented plant was found a flaw which accounted for the short-coming. This, however, has since been remedied. A correspondent writes that he has played every alternate day for two months with a couple of these Balls selected at random, and never drove any that gave such entire satisfaction."—*Field*, April 2, 1887.

To be had from all India-rubber Depôts and Golf Club Makers.

PATENTEES AND SOLE MAKERS:
WILLIAM CURRIE & CO.,
 Caledonian Rubber Works, Dalry Road, Edinburgh.

FRAGGOLF

In 2014 as part of the pre-season entertainment a new sport was unveiled at Grange Loan. It was a hybrid of cricket and golf. Contestants used a cricket bat to hit a cricket ball to 'hole out' by hitting distant flags placed around the ground. Covers strategically placed acted as hazards. After a highly competitive afternoon, a team led by Bruce Smith emerged triumphant.

Fraggolf's designer, Fraser Watts, claimed Fraggolf would soon sweep the globe. But it never quite caught on and the 2014 event remains unique in the sporting archive. Bruce Smith's team are therefore the current Fraggolf World Champions



Familiar faces wait to tee off in the [Fraggolf Tournament](#).



Bruce Smith with his team - current Fraggolf World Champions.

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£3065.33

so far



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On the tee..... FRASER WATTS

'I hit the green on the 17th at Sawgrass' - something I have been telling anyone who would listen over the past 6 months or so.....and will be telling people until I die (I never understand why folk think I'm so irritating....!)



My mate (Gregor Maiden – Grange (boo) and Scotland (hurray) cricketer...) and I entered a Hole In One Club competition at Auchterarder golf course and were lucky enough to win an all expenses paid trip to play the famous TPC Sawgrass golf course in America last September. We played 3 rounds of golf and stayed at the on site luxury hotel which was brilliant and a real bucket list item for me.

For those that don't know, the 17th is a hole where the green is almost completely surrounded by water and is famous for lots of professional golfers hitting their ball in the water during a big tournament that takes place there ever year. So hitting the green is a very exciting for an amateur golfer.

Myself, heavily pregnant Jane and Rory travelled out with the rest of the group (there were about 20 of us in all) and we all had an amazing time – managing to tag on a bit of travelling around Florida at the end of the trip. A super holiday with lots of great memories made!





Sight Reading

With the adoption of super-visible pink balls, the iconic sight screen at the Lovers Loan End of Grange Loan was deemed redundant and has been dismantled.

This will be a relief to many Carlton players who spent sleepless nights before matches worrying whether their vague memories of knot tying lessons at scout evenings long ago would stand up to the nodological test the sight screen presented. Hoisting the sail presented a particular challenge even on the rare day when the wind was not blowing. Add the wind and the fun began. On many Saturdays several attempts were necessary to get things in position. A committee would slowly form as additional players and passing dog walkers offered their advice on the correct procedure. No more. Young players have it easy these days.



Sight Screens at Grange Loan



The recently dismantled sight screen originated from the 1990s. Proprietary sight screens could not do the job since the drop in elevation from the square required extra height to match the batter's eyeline. Former Carlton scorer and treasurer Chris Paul (l) came up with a design to meet that challenge and the and base frame was



manufactured by a local blacksmith.

There had previously been a sight screen at Grange Loan in the form of an structure which moved on rails. This screen can be seen in early photos of Grange Loan such as that above which shows AS Cairns posing and is thought to date from 1911. This structure was removed in 1949 after which players had no sighting assistance until the Chris Paul structure took its place.

The Sight Screen Fights Back

Max D'Ulisse tells of his painful tangle with the Grange Loan sightscreen in June 2021

At the end of a 2s game I volunteered to do the sightscreen - the boys had just won and they wanted to enjoy their celebrations. Pete Deakin and I went down to do it together and as we were heaving it down he yanked on one side and down came the white sheet with its metal bar right onto my head. Originally I didn't think anything had happened, however I then felt a gush of wind to my head and felt my head and saw my hand was covered in blood. Pete took his jumper off and put it on my head and sadly his jumper was basically red pretty soon. He walked me to the clubhouse where Brian cleaned most of the blood and made sure I wasn't concussed. I then broke the bad news to my Mum. It was a trip to the Sick Kids and the RI where. I got 4 staples put into my head and was on concussion watch when I got home.

Weirdly enough, mine wasn't the only head injury that day as Will Hardie got smashed with a ball.



30 Years On



Scott Fraser made a number of First XI appearances some years ago. After a long wait he finally took possession his First XI Cap (#303) earlier this season

Scott reviews how the game has changed since his first spell at Carlton

Those who have played or trained with me will be familiar with my assessment of my current physical status: “It’s not IF I am injured these days, it is WHERE.” Cricket is hard on my body, but it wasn’t always like this...

I should explain, my name is Scott Fraser and I have recently returned to Carlton after an almost 30-year break. That gap was not just from Carlton; it was from the game itself. So, I was asked if I would share some memories of my time at the club, some of the changes I have noticed and what, perhaps, has stayed the same.

Firstly, I should explain why it has taken almost 30 years to return to cricket. I spent five years at the club from 1992 to 1997, but a career in cooking meant weekends were reserved for running the pass instead of running between the wickets. So, at 21, the kit went into the loft and only came down when I decided to donate it to the club a few years back. And that was that, or so I thought.

My drift back to Carlton, like many others, was thanks to my two kids, who had started to play. It only took a couple of games as a spectator and optimistic chirps of “we could revive our cricket careers” with a few fellow dads to light the cricketing fire again. So, armed with a half-bottle of wine, a laptop, and a credit card my subs were paid and boxes of spanking new equipment was soon winging its way to my door.

I was to discover that cricket had changed quite a bit since I was a boy.

The kit is different – gone are the bulky white cricket jumpers that let more wind through than they stopped. Similarly, my baggy woolly bunnet (great in April, not so much in August) has been replaced by lightweight cotton caps.

Also, resigned to the cricket shed in the sky is the slip cradle, an upturned boat-like structure designed primarily to stave fingers - replaced by an orange plastic wedge that seems to have been designed to do the same damage. The bats these days seem heavier, or I am weaker, but I suspect it’s a combination of both. Finally, coloured kit, pink balls, and helmets are now the norm – none of which were around or commonplace when I last played.

The game has shifted as well. No longer do we have the losing draw format, something I still don’t quite understand. Instead, the driving force seems to be T20 and the influence on starting quick and hitting big is a sizable difference.



It's in the family - Scott's daughter Elsie won the Most Improved Girl Player Award last season

Recently, a few of the First XI watched a Fourth's game I was playing in. They cheered each catch, wicket and dive, it was such a boost to the team. I was also honoured to be presented with my First XI cap recently, roughly 30 years after I won it. The fact that they set aside time on game day to present it to me was humbling and an incredibly proud moment.

Perhaps the biggest change I have seen is a personal one. As I rested my aching body – counting the niggles and strains, it dawned on me that I am now one of the older playing members. With that, I feel a duty to offer the same levels of encouragement and guidance that I was given when I was a young player.

I must concede that all the juniors I have played with have buckets of more talent than I have (or ever had), so there will be no technical suggestions from me. Instead, I can only hope to demonstrate other Carlton traits: a positive attitude, energy in the field and simply being a good teammate.

Which brings me to my last observation: to those youngsters reading this – firstly, I am impressed you have reached this far. Secondly, it only feels like yesterday that I was 16, diving across the Grange Loan turf. Thirty years have gone in a flash. So, enjoy your cricket, cherish each moment, because before you know it, it may be a case of “where,” not “if,” you are injured.

Another change is the introduction of technology. Pitchero has replaced the paper team sheet and Google Maps has removed the need to “not lose the car in front or we will never find the ground”. I also admit that I was a giddy child when I found out one of my games was being streamed on Frogbox. “Daddy is gonna be on the telly,” I boasted to my disinterested kids. In truth, it is a fantastic way to keep connected with the rest of the club's fortunes and allows me to replay our successes (and my failures) deep into the night, not just in my mind, but now in full HD on my phone.

One of the most noticeable changes is how busy the club has become. There were two men's teams and a Sunday/3rd XI when I played, as well as a few junior teams. I think it is so healthy to have such an active playing membership, and I am especially delighted there are so many women playing at the club. The quality of cricket across all of the teams is also something I was not prepared for. I am impressed and humbled at just how good the standard of cricket has become throughout the teams and not just at the top. But, what is a club without its members and culture? This, I am delighted to say, is what has stayed the same. I have been struck by the constant friendliness and openness of everyone I have encountered. Some, I remember from the past – for example, I remember playing with Alasdair McLeod and Charles Stronach to name a few - the latter doesn't seem to have lost much pace over the years! Most are new to me, but every person I have met has been warm and welcoming.

Something else that has stayed the same is the mutual respect for each other regardless of ability or role. I love this aspect of the club – the interest shown across the teams, from the Firsts to the Fifths, is so encouraging. Everyone asks how you did at the weekend and a good catch or score is always acknowledged at Tuesday's training.



*Long experience in catering makes Scott determined to raise the quality of 4th and 5th XI teas to new heights - here are his Manchego and Chorizo Scones.
Buen provecho!*

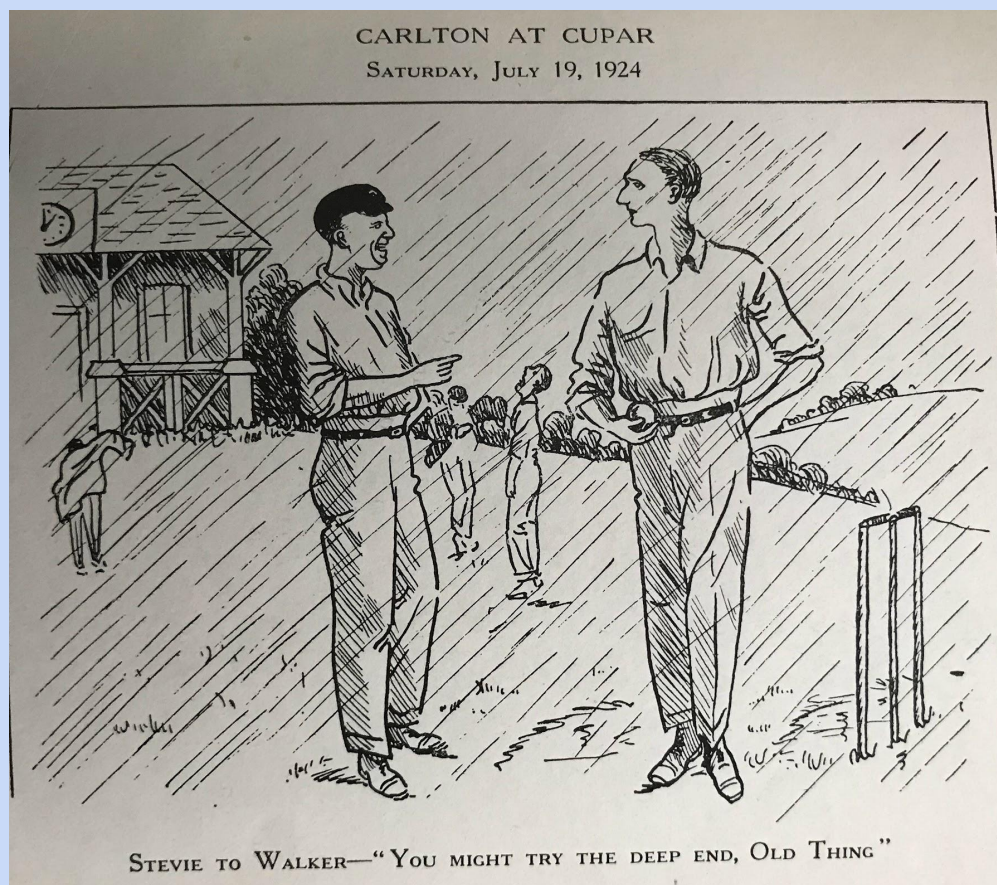
BOWLING FROM THE DEEP END



April and May this year have been amongst the wettest on record. April's rainfall in Edinburgh was over twice the monthly average but that was topped in May with 3 times the average for the month. On 23 May, when the photos above were taken, a month's rainfall came in 24 hours.

It is scant consolation that the Met Office also say that May was the warmest May on record.

But there have been wet seasons previously. This cartoon, by an unnamed Carlton artist, reflects the fact that the 1924 season was one of the wettest in living memory. The match it celebrates was abandoned when heavy rain intervened with Carlton on 24-3 chasing Cupar's 120 ao. The characters in the cartoon are Stevie (skipper NL Stevenson) and bowler Alec Walker, who took 4-55 in the match and 58 wickets in the season. The joke is still in regular use today.



Carlton were a big draw in those days and Cupar made great efforts for a celebratory occasion. The rain dampened things, but the mood was not helped by Carlton turning up nearly two hours late.

STEVIE TO WALKER—"YOU MIGHT TRY THE DEEP END, OLD THING"

CARLTON SOCIAL CALENDAR

COMING SOON AT GRANGE LOAN

Friday 19th July - Sausage Sizzle

Saturday 20th July - PIZZA GEEKS and Sports Quiz

Friday 2nd August - Junior Social event (format tbc)

Sunday 11 August - Junior 6s with BBQ

Friday 30 August - Junior END OF SEASON

Dates to be Confirmed

2nd XI Social

Senior End of Season event

STAY TUNED TO PITCHERO FOR FURTHER DETAILS



Eyes down for a Full House

Spot anyone familiar at the recent Bingo and Curry Night?



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