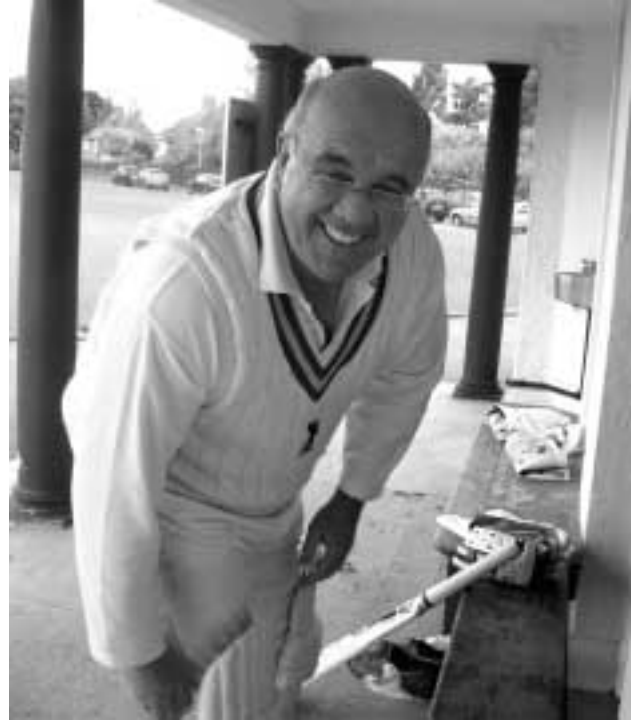


fellow tragics, known as the Broad Halfpenny Down Brigands XI. The Wombats won the toss and batted, reaching 9-182 with contributions from Collins 47 not out, Hodgson 31, Bonnell 22, Bell 18 and Poulos 9 (run out). In retrospect, the excellent lunch provided by our hosts was plainly designed to slow the Wombats down in the field. Their efforts were probably unnecessary. The injury list had grown and, although the match may have been won, a halt to play by rain with the Brigands at 3-130 permitted an early and welcome adjournment to the historic Bat and Ball Hotel.

Sir Peter Gross is an English High Court judge. He is also a cricket tragic and friend of Captain Wombat. Thus it was that the Wombats found themselves, in their penultimate match, playing on a 'flattish' paddock, freshly mown, in the village of Nether Westcote in the Cotswolds. The field was conspicuous for its clump of trees located at short fly slip and in relation to which a set of complex local rules had been developed. With a score of 158 off 35 overs (McLeod 33, Bell 23, Bova 18), the Wombats were competitive but, again, the tactic of an excellent afternoon tea with a barrel of beer from the local brewery ensured a tense finish. With 9 wickets down (with 5 for Bova) and an over to spare, the village scraped over the line. Magnanimity in defeat was required yet again! For most Wombats, however, results were a secondary consideration. It is not expected that many changes will be made for the next tour.



Collins QC at Hambledon

Barristers' hockey 2005

By Ed Muston



The run on team (back row) Larkin, Anonymous Victorian (ring in), Anonymous Victorian (ring in), McManamey, Gunasan Narianasamy (ring in), Scotting, Pritchard (front row) Jordan, Son of anonymous Victorian (ring in), Rohan Geddes (ring in), Muston, Tim Pritchard, Mim Pritchard.

NSW Barristers v Victorian Bench and Bar

Five years have now passed since the recommencement of the annual NSW Barristers v Victorian Bench and Bar hockey match. While the score in the now legendary revival game of 2000 has long since been forgotten (by everyone in NSW anyway), time has done little to erode the NSW Barristers' bittersweet memory of the reporting of that match in the subsequent edition of *Victorian Bar News*. And so it was that on the evening of Friday 21 October 2005, members of the NSW Bar hockey team found themselves touching down at Tullamarine, troubled by the absence of several experienced members of the 2000 team (stalwarts like Bellanto QC, Ireland QC, Callaghan SC and Katzmann SC) and with the words 'too old, too fat and too slow' (used by the Victorians to describe the team) still burning in their ears.

In the previous four encounters, the closest NSW had come to defeating the Victorians was a 2:2 draw at the Homebush Olympic Pitch in 2001. At noon on Saturday 22 October 2005, a quick headcount revealed that a total of only six NSW

barristers had survived the long journey to the Hawthorn-Malvern Hockey Centre to restore the honour of the NSW Bar. In these circumstances, the Victorian squad (which included a seemingly inexhaustible – in every sense of the word – supply of interchange players) may have been forgiven for thinking that they were safe for yet another year. However, to have leapt too quickly to this conclusion would have been to greatly underestimate the impenetrable defence of Scotting, the crafty midfield play of McManamey and Larkin and the highly unpredictable striking power of Muston, Pritchard and Jordan in the front line.

To have done so would also have ignored the ‘ring in rule’, exercisable by any touring team. This year Rohan Geddes donned the goalie’s pads for the NSW Barristers. Rohan (a tax partner at PwC and former goalkeeper for Gordon’s 6th grade team ‘The Legal Eagles’) no longer resides in NSW but is an outstanding goalie. He was quite literally all that stood between a respectable score line and something which more closely resembled Poulos QC’s bowling figures on a bad day. At centre-half was Ganasan Narianasamy, a law clerk. Ganasan is another ‘legal eagle’ who was happy to join the touring party and cites as the highlight of his hockey career the day he was selected to represent Malaysia at the 1980 Olympics (the low point being the following day when Malaysia thoughtlessly announced that it would be boycotting the 1980 Olympics due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan). The NSW Bar’s numbers were further buoyed by three Victorians (who played in balaclavas and have asked that their names not be published in any match report) and cameo appearances by both Mim (aged 6) and Tim (aged 4) Pritchard (who between them dragged the average age the players on the field down to about 45).

Despite the best efforts of all who turned out for the NSW Barristers, the Victorians ultimately managed to escape with a 3:1 victory and, as such, were the first team to raise the newly



Muston goads the Victorians with a bit of sledging

minted Rupert Balfe – Leycester Meares Cup. A most enjoyable celebratory dinner was held at Borsari’s on Lygon St. following the game. That said, insofar as the celebrating was concerned it could be inferred from the grins, hats and sunburn (which adorned most of the passers by) that Makybe Diva’s win in the Cox Plate that afternoon well and truly trumped the Victorians’ victory in the hockey.

Thanks must be extended to the Victorians for organising the ground, the umpires and some excellent post match refreshments. Thanks also to Scotting, whose organisational efforts at the Sydney end made the game possible.

Finally, the NSW Barristers v NSW Solicitors game is due to be played on 27 November 2005. As the barristers have won that game comfortably for the past few years, it is hoped that their pride will be restored on that occasion – having more than six players who are practicing NSW barristers might even help (believe it or not).



Pritchard lines up for a shot on goal.