

## **RFA CLUB REPORT**

April is an anxious time for the Club Manager. The match result cards have stopped dropping through the letter box and there are lots of matches unaccounted for. E-mails seem to have done little to help - perhaps they have even contributed to the problem! But at last, after much communicating, an acceptable number of matches have been completed and reported on.

While in no way approaching the late Tom Wood's persuasive skills, as in the 1988/9 season when 75 matches were played, the current manager squeezes a respectable average of about 35 matches per season. This time the Club has so far played 37 fixtures (27 wins, 10 losses); 5 matches are known to have been cancelled, one of them because the match manager had been called up to serve in Iraq; and there are a further 7 unknown results - watch this space!

There were more frivolous incidents reported this year than previously. Bob Dolby experienced modern technology when after his match v Cambridge a mobile phone was used to add up the score; later, at a highly non-recommended pub round the corner from the Bedford Modern courts, Stuart Kirby asked for 'a large red wine' and was given a half-pint glassful! Andy Pringle reported on the other Cambridge match as being so close that the result was in doubt until the end. Alas, the Club team lost, and then, to add insult to injury, there wasn't even time for a beer.

Match manager Fuller (Ian) was away in Spain while his son was valiantly, but unsuccessfully, defending the Club's honour against the Alleyn Old Boys - we lost by a mere two points. Phil Atkinson contributed to the Club's victory over the Old Bedford Modernians by playing for the opposition. Tom Maconie and Jesters' match manager Nick Geere decided to trim their teams down to 3 players and play short games in order to attend the Strawson Dinner in good order (Result: RFAC 45, Jesters 39). Colours are awarded to Bill Gunyon for having managed not only his appointed match v Old Blundellians before Christmas but also Charles Hattersley's match against the same opposition in January.

On a more serious note, Tonbridge - a good side this year - inflicted the first defeat on the Club for 16 years, despite Tony Hamilton's effort to provide an appropriately balanced four. Iain de Weymarn enjoyed managing the match against his old school, Bloxham, where 'a great time was had by all', and Keith Love's side earned their 'lavish lunch' at Eastbourne by playing good fives, as usual. All match managers have already unwittingly agreed to do it all again next year.

The President's Cup, immaculately run as ever by Bhaswar Baral with help from his family and friends, was won by Prashant Chopra and Ed Hatton, beating Ben Brookes and Ed M-M-Crichton in a hard-hitting final. The RFA Club side, run by Ed Fuller (taking over from his long-serving Dad) reached the semi-finals of the National Club Championship (Wood Cup).

Denise Hall-Wilton  
April 2005