

After the usual hectic start caused by the sorting out of the crews, Colts "C" settled down into a rhythm of gentle bickering between the members of the crew.

At first, with rumoured words of encouragement from other coaches, the crew's enthusiasm was strong. But after suffering defeats from Colts "B" and Junior Colts "A", although not by much, and some hair-raising moments and accidents due to our rather inexperienced cox, this enthusiasm ebbed away. It rose again, however, as we neared our first official race, against Silver Jubilee School 1st VIII. The first glimpse of them rather shocked us, as they looked the size of our 1st VIII, but it turned out that we were evenly matched, and after being half a length down at the Plaza, we only lost by half a canvas. This, I feel sure, we would have pulled back, had it not been for the race finishing at the 500 metre mark, owing to a painter's barge moored under the Suspension Bridge.

The G.C.E. examinations, as usual, put an end to serious rowing for the duration, but after them we went full tilt, training for the Bedford Regatta. This was a disappointing result, as we did not expect the Bedford Modern crew to be so strong. The official result was a win for Bedford Modern School "B" in the first round of the Novice Eights, by four lengths.

D. G. SYKES.

*The crew were:* Harding (bow), Price, Panton, Sykes, Maltby, Boutall, Eifion-Jones, Cawthorn (stroke), Morris (cox).

The Junior Colts "A" crew improved enormously on their Pangbourne standard when they came back to the eight after breaking up for the Junior House IVs. The extra racing, especially as it was keenly contested, proved a great stimulus and we hoped that with some help from the draw we might go some way in the Regatta.

Unfortunately we met the winners in the first round and though we pulled ahead a little off the start St. Edward's took the lead by the Town Bridge. The crew fought well so that they were not clear until below the weir, but St. Edward's drew ahead then to win by two and a half lengths in 3 min. 52 sec. *Our consolation had to be that our time was our best for the season and the second fastest in the event.*

R.H.F.C.

*The crew were:* Knight (bow), Streather, Dalton, Kingston, Battle, Gaskell, Shaw, Beckett (stroke), Greensted (cox).

### School Regatta

The Regatta this year was rowed during the week before the end of term. There was a much larger entry than usual with all members of eights entering in sculls, and juniors entering in both sculls and pairs. Because of this increase and the fact that only a week could be spared for the Regatta, a new course, from the Town Bridge to the Suspension Bridge, was used with both the sculls and the pairs racing three abreast. This made for some very entertaining spectating.

In the Junior House Fours, as was expected, Ashburnham and St. Peter's won through to the final. But it was not all easy and the other Houses tried very hard and produced some exciting races. In the final Ashburnham beat St. Peter's, time 2 min. 35 sec.

The Junior Lower House Fours was won easily by St. Peter's, who beat Ashburnham by two lengths in the final. Again credit must be given to the remaining crews who all worked hard and put in a lot of effort.

The Senior Sculls were raced in the new fibreglass sculls, which meant that many people unable to reach the Suspension Bridge swam to the bank instead. As was expected

Elliott, later to be entered for the Town Regatta, beat Peplow in the final by one and three-quarters lengths in 2 min. 29 sec., after some very entertaining preliminary heats.

*Results:*

*Junior House:* 1 Ashburnham.

*Junior Lower House:* 1 St. Peter's.

*Senior Sculls "A":* R. M. Elliott.

*Senior Sculls "B":* C. D. Walwyn-James.

*Senior Coxes Sculls:* A. H. Pryce.

*Junior Crosbie Pairs:* P. J. Kingston and M. C. Dalton.

*Junior Colts Sculls:* A. C. Gaskell.

*Junior Sculls:* C. J. P. Rigby.

### Junior House Fours

This year, in the School Regatta, the House Fours were rowed in the new blue fibre fours. This helped speed up the times tremendously. The times of the races were used to decide the finalists. Fortunately the weather was good and some times were very fast. The course was from the Town Bridge to the Suspension Bridge. Ashburnham were obviously favourites, having four Junior Colts in their crew. In the first round Ashburnham raced Bromham and won easily. Paulo-Pontine raced St. Peter's and lost by a canvas, and Crescent had an easy victory over St. Cuthbert's.

Next round, which was the finals, St. Peter's raced Ashburnham, and after clashing blades Ashburnham went on to win by a length, thus winning the event. Later St. Peter's raced Crescent to decide second and third places. St. Peter's won this by a length and a quarter and thus obtained second position.

*Crews:*

*Ashburnham:* Kingston, Dalton, Knight, Stileman; Oswald (cox).

*St. Peter's:* Crump, Shaw, M. M. Crichton, Pillow; Desroy (cox).

*Crescent:* Beckett, Hicks, Strether, Ewans; Cook (cox).

*Bromham:* Duddy, Gaskell, Herschell ii, Winter; Herne-man (cox).

*Paulo-Pontine:* Agnew, Battle, Marshall, Rogers ii; Garbett (cox).

*St. Cuthbert's:* Ballingall ii, Carter, Kettle, Yates; Middleton (cox). A. J. M. M. CRICHTON.

## SHOOTING

BISLEY, 1969

This was a most auspicious return for the School to what is the most important single competition in the shooting calendar: the *Ashburton Shield*. That only 85 schools had entered teams this year was due solely to the calls of the examiners, and next year the Schools Meeting will take place after the exams are over.

If we had all burnt incense in front of our favourite idols, we could not have had a more successful three days than we had as the guests of the National Rifle Association. Setting out completely in the dark as to what was in store for us, we found that, quite by chance, we had made all the right choices as to accommodation and meals, so that we were able to muddle through the first two days of preliminary competition with an ingenuous enthusiasm that boded well for 10th July, the third and final day, the day of the *Ashburton Shield* itself.

Our experiences in those two days were memorable and varied as we learnt to find our way through the labyrinthine lore of Bisley. We had to shoot on the "Siberia" Ranges, and they were so far away from the camp that we considered them most aptly named, half expecting to find salt mines in the butts. We experienced a cloud burst, on the Wednesday afternoon, which turned the "Century" Range into a sea of mud and produced a record low score from the team members unfortunate enough to be shooting at the time. Nigel Penn discovered an unsuspected talent with a shot gun on the clay pigeon range. Experts crowded round us with exclamations of amazement at our old-style "leaf" sights (I overheard a certain N.C.O. say: "What do they fire out of those things? Arrows?") We had the last laugh: we beat that N.C.O.'s school!) Old Bedfordians sprang up out of the ground to welcome and help us, and I would like to record the Club's thanks in particular to Air Commodore Sowman who happened to be the liaison officer between the schools and the N.R.A. As a further coincidence, he had shot for the School the last time we had been represented at Bisley. In these two days, we picked up five prizes within the various competitions, although we did not in fact know this until the following day.

The Thursday of the Ashburton Shield dawned grey and damp, but the rain did little more than threaten as the day wore on. Gleaming with spit and polish, we were on range at the appointed hour. It was a fine sight to see all the schools lined up in their military uniforms along the Century Range—about 1,000 competitors took part—and we felt decidedly nervous and highly insignificant as the first competition got under way: the "Ninth Man", an individual competition for the reserve to the VIII. David Lord scored 47/50, one point behind the winner, and would have won the bronze medal if he had not been "counted out" for third place. (When there is a tie, the competitor with the best finishing sequence of shots is the winner, and the others are "counted out"). This was a tremendous morale booster and, despite a poor showing by the cadet pair in their competition which followed the "Ninth Man", the VIII went into action at 200 yards with their tails up. Now, at last, our Tuesday evening practices at Barton Range with Cambridgeshire began to pay off, and, as the competition wore on, we realised that we were doing well. Just how well did not strike us fully until we heard on the grapevine that, at the halfway stage, we were being posted among the leaders. Indeed, we finished the 200 yards shoot lying 14th equal, with the tenth highest score. This exceeded even our wildest hopes so that, when at 500 yards we fell back to 44th, we still knew that we had "arrived". We obviously need more practice next year at 500 yards, and we must hope that more opportunities come our way, since the team did not have a single full practice before arriving at Bisley.

But every cloud has a silver lining—or, as in this case, a bronze—and our poorer team showing at 500 yards was offset by a brilliant individual shoot in the "Spencer Mellish" (the best individual from each school competing) by Justin Smith. He finished 7th on a "count out" with 48/50, one point behind the winner, to qualify for one of the twelve bronze medals. It was especially good to end our first visit with a flourish, and Justin Smith's parents were able to be present to witness him achieve the last of a memorable series of successes for the School.

#### Results:

Ashburton Shield: 44th, 487/560.  
Ninth Man: — 47/50.  
Cadet Pair: 65th, 105/140.

#### Prizes were won in:

Spencer-Mellish: J. M. Smith (Bronze Medal).  
Iveagh: J. M. Smith, R. S. C. Hockly, A. P. Sykes.  
Gale and Polden: A. P. Sykes.  
Cadets' Rifle Aggregate: J. M. Smith.  
Schools' Hundred: D. R. H. Steen.

The Club N.R.A. Bronze Medal was awarded to J. M. Smith for the best overall performance at Bisley.

The Club Donegall Bronze Badge was awarded to D. R. H. Steen for the highest individual aggregate in the Ashburton Shield (the "Schools' Hundred").

*The VIII was:* R. S. C. Hockly (captain), J. M. Smith, I. A. Clarke, D. S. Tansley, D. R. H. Steen, A. P. Sykes, S. S. Hawkins, N. W. Penn.

*Ninth Man:* D. A. Lord.

*Cadet Pair:* S. L. Smith, A. B. Keith.

Minor Sports Colours were awarded to R. S. C. Hockly, J. M. Smith, D. S. Tansley, D. R. H. Steen.

#### BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY OPEN T.R. MEETING

The County Target Rifle Meeting took place on the last day of the holidays, and of the eight of us who entered, four of us picked up prizes: A. P. Sykes, D. R. H. Steen, D. A. Lord and T.J.E. But we shot very badly overall, and it was a salutary lesson to be comprehensively outclassed. Once again it was at the short ranges of 200 and 300 yards that we did best.

With the County S.R.A. Championships (Service Rifle as issued) coming up some time in October, it is clear that we must buckle down to some hard training again. We have had a comparatively successful first year under the new regulations, and the advantages of running a team squad throughout the three terms have been amply demonstrated, and this not so much by the brilliance of one or two individuals as by the general consistency of the squad under competition pressure. T.J.E.

## TENNIS

Since the last issue the 1st VI played in the Area finals of the Glanville Cup, competing against Rugby and Hertford Grammar School. As expected Rugby were a strong team, with a very good first pair, but their victory was by no means overwhelming.

During the holidays the School entered for the Clark Cup (Senior) and Milbourn Cup (Junior). Endersby and Littler-Jones played well in the Clark Cup to reach the second round, although Gray and Gunn were beaten in the first round by Millfield, the eventual winners, in the Milbourn Cup.

As usual the School also entered for the Youll Cup (Senior) and Thomas Bowl (Junior). The Youll Cup team (Endersby, Shaw; Crockett, Littler-Jones) beat Epsom in the first round, but lost to St. Paul's in the second round. The Juniors (Gray, Gunn; Saunderson, Dimmock) played well but unfortunately lost to St. Paul's and Haileybury respectively.

The increased match experience gained from both the competitions at Wimbledon, and the Glanville Cup, have undoubtedly helped in improving the standard of tennis throughout the year. C.J.C.